

**CITY OF NORWALK  
BIKE/WALK COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
September 13, 2021**

ATTENDANCE: Tanner Thompson, Chair; Christine Bisceglie; James Carter; Colin Grotheer; Barbara McCabe; Audrey Cozzarin

OTHERS: Greg Pacelli, Transportation Planner, Theresa Argondezzi, Asst. Director of Health; Brad Craighead, Norwalk Green Living Properties

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Thompson called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

**2. PUBLIC INPUT**

There was no public comment this evening.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**\*\* MR. THOMPSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.  
\*\* MR. GROTHEER SECONDED THE MOTION.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **4. NRV T OPENING DAY PLANNING UPDATE**

Mr. Carter said the construction for the northern section of the trail from New Canaan Avenue to Broad Street will not be completed by the October 16, 2021, but the southern section of the trail from Belden Avenue to Union Park may be completed so it is possible the trailhead from for Riverside Avenue to Union Park will be finished by October 16<sup>th</sup> so the current plan is to make a determination by early October, and if still on track will hold a ribbon cutting ceremony, but will not have any of the grand festivities but that will be done in the spring when there will be more time to make it into a grand event. He said that he anticipates that all the construction will be completed before winter and the trail opened in the spring.

Mr. Carter said we are also working on the WilWalk section of the trail which runs from Grist Mill Road north into Wilton and is also still under construction because it had been damaged in the storm and the amount of damage was approximately \$15,000, and we are raising the funds to repair it and the plan is to also have that section open before the winter as well.

#### **5. CALF PASTURE BIKE PUMP STATUS UPDATE**

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

Mr. Tanner said the planning committee is rewriting the zoning code and are taking a lot of public input and there are meetings scheduled for this Friday as well as a few days the following week. He said the meeting that will pertain to the Bike/Walk committee's work will be held on Monday at 11:00AM and is on alternative transportation and he plans on attending and encouraged the members of the committee to also attend.

#### **6. NEW BIKE RACK INSTALLATIONS**

Mr. Pacelli reported and said that TMP has been moving forward on installing four bike racks at different locations that were previously provided by the commission and should all be installed by the end of the week, and they have also submitted encroachment permits to DPW for the installation. He said that five bike racks were purchased and will be installed at the Main Street Lot, the Norwalk Police Department on the South Main Street side, Webster Lot near the entrance to MLK Drive and the SONO train station on the New Haven bound side. He said there will also be a shark bike rack has been purchased by TMP and presented the concept design and said we are waiting to take delivery and it will be installed at the exit of the Maritime Garage on North Water Street, and he will keep the commission updated on the delivery and installation. Mr. Carter asked if any consideration was given to install the bike rack where the trail is where there is more bike traffic and greater visibility. Mr. Pacelli said he would have to discuss that with TMP staff to possibly add another one at that location in the future as the completion of trail moves forward. Mr. Thompson agreed with the idea of visibility and a better location would be toward the south end of the lot near the main entrance to the Maritime Aquarium. Mr. Pacelli requested an aerial photo of the area showing the proposed bike rack installation locations to present to TMP. Mr. Thompson

requested that Mr. Grotheer provide the proposed location on an Ariel photo to present to staff. Mr. Pacelli said the fifth bike rack location will be at Veterans Park and will be working with Mr. Hughes on the installation.

Ms. Mc Cabe asked if anyone has seen Mr. Aley's suggestion on installing a bike rack at the trail head of the NRV. Mr. Thompson said "yes" and he had spoken with Mr. Carter on Friday and he had given a verbal agreement that TMP would purchase the bike rack. Ms. Bisceglie pointed out that it is difficult to take a left out of Veteran's Park. Mr. Pacelli said that intersection is included in the connectivity grant for improvements for biking, but it does not include the area of the driveway and that the state and the city would need be involved and he will add it to the deficiencies.

## **7. UPDATE ON CT COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY GRANT PROJECT**

Mr. Pacelli provided an update on the connectivity grant and said the DOT is still reviewing the design plans that were submitted and they are doing a complex review of the plan due to the length of the project and the changes. He also said that this is the longest bike route that has been proposed by a municipality. Mr. Grotheer suggested a press release be done to capitalize on this for all of the effort. Mr. Pacelli said agreed once it has been approved.

## **8. NEW SIDEWALK FEASIBILITY AND CONCEPT DESIGNS, ROWAYTON AVE., WITCH LANE AND HUNT STREET UPDATE**

Mr. Pacelli said the city has tasked VHB to explore feasibility and create concept designs for sidewalks to improve Connecticut and pedestrian access in Rowayton specifically along Rowayton Avenue, Witch Lane and Hunt Street. Mr. Grotheer asked what the budget is for this. Mr. Pacelli said we are currently looking at feasibility and concept and will report back on the cost. Mr. Grotheer said the first step before a feasibility study is done is usually a cost estimate and, in this case, he sees roads that are deficient but if the cost estimate is high and will only serve a certain amount of residence it may be more beneficial to locate another area where more residents would be served. Mr. Thompson requested that Mr. Grotheer's feedback be reported to Mr. Travers. Ms. Bisceglie said there is a need for sidewalks in South Norwalk.

## **9. /WALL STREET CORRIDOR RFP**

Mr. Pacelli said a few months ago TMP had issued an RFP for the Wall Street corridor project to perform an overall design for the project and received over 12 responses and TMP directed a walkthrough of the area and showed the consultants the improvement areas that the city would like to see. He said the next step in the process is to select an engineering firm to put together cost estimates and an extensive study of the area and multiple design concepts and are hoping to make a selection by the end of the year, and there will be significant public engagement and the bike/walk commission is encouraged to participate in that.

Ms. Cozzarin asked what work is being done inside the curb on Belden Avenue @ Mott Street because the construction material has been there for some time. Mr. Thompson said he would contact Mr. Carr and report back to the commission.

## **10. STREET TREE PLANTING EVENT, WEST MAIN STREET NEIGHBORHOOD**

Ms. Argondezzi reported and provided an update on a pedestrian infrastructure project we are working on with TMP staff where there were some funds from a state grant to work on the Nor Walker program. She said they had suggested the installation of street trees and had identified the West Main Street area as needing some improvements as far as tree canopy. She said we will be contributing some funding from the grant and TMP will also be allocating some funds from their budget to install street trees in that neighborhood and are looking at an installation date in October. She said she will share the date once it is determined, and she is hoping that the commission will be involved and is also hoping to get the community involved and educate them on what street trees are and improve the quality of life. Mr. Thompson said he is very excited because street trees provide great benefit to a city for multiple reasons.

## **11. CROSSWALKS AROUND THE TOWN GREEN**

Mr. Craighead said connectivity is needed in the Norwalk Green area which is the gateway to Wall Street and said that 1,000 people live in walking distance as well as 22 commercial and 6 mixed use properties and on average has 15-20 people in them on any given day. He said none of the traffic lights are close to this area and he is proposing to have a traffic light and crosswalk installed and a Bettswood Road and is requesting the committee make this a priority for TMP and the city. Mr. Thompson said not only is this on his radar and the commission, but it is also on Mr. Traver's radar and he is looking forward to the opportunity to improve walkability in the city. Mr. Pacelli said that he has spoken to TMP staff extensively regarding this area and recognize that there is a serious need for pedestrian improvements along this portion of East Avenue, but at this time the city just does not have the funding for projects such as this without any data backing or concept plans or study and will be asking the consultant to come up with some suggestions as part of the Wall Street improvement study, but at this time there is not funding allocated for an improvement of this size and would be irresponsible to install a mid-block crosswalk without a comprehensive detailed plan and design of the area. Mr. Grotheer said the green is not very inviting due to the rate of speed the cars are going on East Avenue as well as accessibility. Mr. Craighead said they had discussed trying to get the speed limit lowered from 30 MPH to 25 MPH. Mr. Pacelli said the speed limit was lowered to 25 MPH about two years ago. Mr. Craighead suggested installing additional signage so that people are aware.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* MR. THOMPSON MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* MS. MCCABE SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:35PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd