

**CITY OF NORWALK
BIKE/WALK COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
August 2, 2021**

ATTENDANCE: Tanner Thompson, Chair; Christine Bisceglie; Sam Ebert; James Carter;
Colin Grotheer; Barbara McCabe; Jud Aley

OTHERS: Greg Pacelli, Transportation Planner; Carly Kramer, Redevelopment Agency

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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

**** MS. MCCABE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**

**** MS. BISCEGLIE SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. RESTRUCTURING THE SUBCOMMITTEES

Mr. Thompson said based on committee discussions he suggests that as a way to move away from the current subcommittees in particular the bike and walk subcommittees towards a shorter term more focused goal oriented working group. Ms. Cozzarin said that she was co-chair and Chair of the Pedestrian Committee and with not being a commissioner found it to be a big undertaking to try and keep the committee relevant. She said the city was handling a lot of the projects that were being discussed and questioned since the Bike/Walk Commission is focused on walking and biking and asked if there is a need for two separate committees and suggested it may be more productive to have special projects working groups. Mr. Aley asked how the projects would be selected and how many would be chosen. Mr.

Thompson said they would be chosen organically as projects come up. Mr. Aley said he thinks it may help to have an ongoing fixed sub-committee for biking to discuss bike routes as well as for pedestrians that looks at projects constantly at sidewalks and crosswalks that reports back to staff and he would like to get back to meeting on a monthly basis. Mr. Grotheer agreed and said that some things need to be long term and have a continued effort but agrees with Mr. Thompson with having shorter term goals and special projects as having a much more effective use of everyone's time, but still need an overhead view and said the subcommittees may not need to meet as often and suggested meeting monthly or quarterly to evaluate the work that has been done on the special projects and that shorter term goals would be better.

Mr. Pacelli said we are still in the process of collecting a more in depth sidewalk, crosswalk and ADA ramp inventory. Mr. Thompson asked what level of direction from the commission member's staff would like to have rather than just coming through the chair. Mr. Pacelli said he would prefer that it is streamlined as much as possible.

Ms. McCabe said she supports the idea of having the sub-committees because there is continuity to that.

Mr. Thompson said if the sub-committee that a chair is needed for the pedestrian committee and asked if anyone is interested to contact him.

5. CONNECTIVITY GRANT/SIDEWALK INVENTORY

Mr. Thompson asked for a status on the sidewalk inventory. Mr. Pacelli said he was able to incorporate what Mr. Thompson had sent him a sample from google my maps into the GIS and the only thing that is limited is the amount of attributes that can be attached are he is looking at other methods of collection to see what would be the best method.

Mr. Pacelli provided an update on the connectivity grant and said it was submitted to the state for DOT review and are optimistic that he can be put out to bid by the end of the year. He said we are incorporating as many bike lanes as possible and put sharrows in the areas where bike lanes were not possible and of the 17 miles of roadway for the project there are 1.2 miles of buffered bike lanes, 6.2 miles of conventional bike lanes and the remaining 9.6 miles are sharrows. Mr. Grotheer said he met with Mr. Pacelli to review the plans and he had done a lot of work on the plan and it looks good and is appreciated and is a good first step in getting buffered bike lanes, but the city does not have the capacity to clear a delineated buffered lane and hopefully as this expands there can be a capital budget request for a mini snow plow that can do this. Mr. Thompson asked at what point this can be shared with the public. Mr. Pacelli said once it is approved by the DOT. Ms. Cozzarin asked if any of the connectivity connect to the NRV. Mr. Grotheer said "yes" at Washington Street.

Mr. Pacelli said staff received notification the use of bike boxes was approved and was the first to be approved on a state road and last week began putting one on Fitch Street at the intersection of East Avenue and are looking at further opportunities to install additional bike boxes. Mr. Grotheer said this is a huge milestone and should be put on social media so that people are aware. Mr. Thompson requested that Mr. Grotheer and Ms. Bisceglie coordinate of line to get some photos of the bike box.

Mr. Pacelli said that TMP has also installed a half mile of bike lanes in each direction on Aiken Street and the signage will be installed later this week. Mr. Thompson requested that photos also be taken of this bike lane.

6. LOTCIP GRANT/CROSSWALK FOR WALL STREET AREA

Mr. Thompson provided an overview and said the grant was approved by the state DOT. Mr. Pacelli said the project can't be put out to bid until the bid authorization is approved from the DOT and the funds are released. Mr. Grotheer said that he and Mr. Aley have been working on getting a crosswalk installed at Knight Street and he would like to revisit the conversation and have the plans reviewed by TMP staff to see if anything can be done in the near term to install bollards or reclaim traffic space for pedestrians. Mr. Pacelli said it is already in the approval process so at this time the project can't be changed because the DOT is already in the final approval process but TMP will be submitting an RFP for a design consultant for the Wall Street corridor

7. NRV T RANT OPENING BRAINSTORMING

Mr. Carter reported and said that October 16, 2021, is the grand opening of the NRV T and new signage will be installed on the trail from Calf Pasture Beach to Broad Street. He said the grand opening is tentatively scheduled for 10:00AM and there will be a ribbon cutting in the morning and hope to have events throughout the day and suggested the Bike Walk Commission may want to look into hosting a "slow roll" as it would be a great way to introduce people to the trail. Mr. Grotheer suggested a scaled down event. Mr. Thompson suggested that the map of the trail include points of interest and include the bike rack locations. Mr. Thompson said he will contact the commissioners that would like to be involved in the event over the next few weeks.

7. OTHER ITEMS FOR COMMISSIONERS AS NEEDED

Mr. Ebert said the pump has been shipped to TMP for the bike repair station and the next step is to replace the existing pump with this one and to send the old one back and asked staff if they have received it. Mr. Pacelli said he will confirm with staff and report back.

Mr. Aley said there is a lot of truck traffic on Water Street and a lot of dirt and gravel fall onto the road and he used the Click & Request App. To request the area be swept because the bike lanes become almost un-rideable but the request just gets closed without being swept. He requested that Water Street and the bridge be swept every week in the summer months because the areas are heavily traveled.

Mr. Aley said that Fifth Street now has sharrows and suggested sharrows are installed to connect Fifth Street and Beach Road. Mr. Ebert added that a yield sign would also be very useful because cars do not care about cyclists. Mr. Thompson said the round a bout is a key bike strategy of the city and the NRV T goes though it and is "sketchy" and would like to see the long and short term plans for it.

Mr. Aley asked if there are any sharrows installed yet on Hanford Place. Mr. Pacelli said not yet but will contact TMP staff for an update.

Ms. Biscegelie said she received an email from the New Haven Transit group and they have funds from the federal rescue plan and asked if Norwalk is slated to receive any funding. Mr. Pacelli said he will inquire and report back.

Mr. Grotheer said while traveling through Wall Street the city was removing the barricades in front of Troupe bar where this is outdoor dining which follows on the heels of the removal of the barricades on Washington Street but is unclear why this would be done when things are becoming more uncertain and outdoor dining is a positive experience. He went on to say that on Friday he received an email from Sabrina Church stating that the Mayor has authorized to continue outdoor dining with extended hours beginning July 31, 2021 and he is very discouraged with the mixed message the city is putting out. Mr. Aley said he believes TMP is working on a program to install park lets to replace the barriers. Mr. Pacelli said he will contact TMP and report back. Mr. Thompson requested that he report back to the commission via email due to the time sensitivity.

Mr. Thompson reminded the commission that tomorrow night is National Night Out at the Police Department and urged everyone to attend to help with the table if possible.

8. ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. GROTHEER MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** MR. ALEY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:40PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd