

**CITY OF NORWALK
BIKE/WALK COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 12, 2021**

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

OTHERS: Greg Pacelli, Transportation Planner; Michael Yeosock, Principal Engineer, TMP; James Travers, Director, TMP; Theresa Argondezzi, Heath Department; Sgt. Gulino, Norwalk Police Department, Carly Kramer, Redevelopment Agency

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CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Rosett called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment this evening.

Mr. Thompson introduced Sergeant Gulino and said she is the representative to the commission from the police department and Carly Kramer who is the representative from the Redevelopment Agency. Ms. Kramer said she has been with the Redevelopment Agency for about a year and she is excited to join the Bike/Walk Commission.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JUNE 14, 2021 MEETING

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

**** MR. EBERT SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. TANNER THOMPSON – CHAIR’S REPORT: REVIEW OF COMMISSION PURPOSE AND GOALS

Mr. Thompson provided an overview of the city ordinance that had established the Bike/Walk Commission and said that Mr. Aley and Mr. Grotheer have worked a lot of the bike plan over the past few years and continue to be defined and asked Mr. Aley to provide an update. Mr. Aley said the subcommittee has not worked on the plan since March due to the decrease in road width standard for the city from a 12' standard to a 10' standard which has opened a lot of possibilities that did not exist prior to that and is hoping to hear a report from staff tonight on how many miles would be completed this paving season. Mr. Thompson said the committee is making progress on the bike plan but there is no pedestrian plan and that should be one of the commissions top priorities given we have been charged by the city to do that. Ms. Cozzarin said as far as a pedestrian plan the commission is also after better quality sidewalk situations and crosswalks and in some cases enabling both bicycling and walking in the same space and that may not be in a plan but that is the goal always. She said she would also like the committee to look at car free districts in certain areas for when festivals and events take place in populated parts of the city. Mr. Argondezzi said there is a pedestrian plan that is posted on the Bike/Walk commission's website that had established some broad goals and outlined some the infrastructure safety components that the commission would like to see for pedestrian accessibility but will probably require an update and suggested it is a good place to start.

Mr. Thompson said as part of the ordinance is to provide advice to transition components to the POCD and one of them includes identifying green routes which are routes throughout the city to prioritize for planting trees, and to also provide impact to projects that will impact biking and walking and he and Mr. Grotheer have been discussing how real estate development projects also have an impact on biking and walking and to review the proposals as they come into the Zoning office and provide advice. He said he will be thinking of ways to accomplish these as a commission and asked the committee to feel free to reach out to him if they have any ideas on how to achieve these.

Mr. Thompson asked Sergeant Gulino to give a brief overview on how important it is to engage the community in biking and walking issues and the effectiveness. Sergeant Gulino said she is a Public Information Officer for the City of Norwalk and she primarily handles the social media pages as well and suggested stepping up the bike rodeo and perhaps do something either monthly/annually and have different starting locations along the trail to encourage people to go. Ms. Cozzarin there is a program that started in Detroit called "The slow roll" which is where members of the community meet at a certain location and do a bike ride together to introduce people to different segments of the city. Mr. Thompson said he would love to see this happen especially with the opening of the Missing Link and asked what the opening schedule is for that. Ms. Cozzarin said late August or early September.

Mr. Thompson said he will start an email thread with Sergeant Gulino, Ms. Cozzarin and Mr. Carter to begin planning a group ride or walk along the new section of the trail

3. UPDATE OF PROJECTS AROUND THE CITY- GREG PACELLI

Mr. Pacelli presented an update on the connectivity grant and said we are finalizing the design plans and will be submitting them to the DOT very shortly. He said it includes approximately 17 miles and seven miles of bike lanes and 10 miles of sharrows that will be implemented and are aiming to create more consistent travel lanes and updates to facilities as well throughout the entire corridor. He also said that bike lanes were implemented wherever the roadway was applicable and edge lines were added for traffic calming in the areas we could not get a bike lanes. Mr. Aley asked if it will be implemented this year. Mr. Pacelli said that is the goal but the state still needs to review the plan. Mr. Pacelli said once this project is complete we can look at other sources of grant monies that are available. Mr. Thompson asked how often a project like this can be done. Mr. Pacelli said the state had come out with another grant last year but unfortunately we could not apply for it because we were working on this one but once this is complete we can move onto to apply for another one.

Mr. Grotheer asked about buffered bike lanes and the transition between edge line to a shared lane and what the current marking standard is. Mr. Pacelli said a buffer can be applied wherever it could be and as far as the transition from a shared lane to a bike lane a 50' extension line was added and put the signage close to where the bike lane ended so it tells the vehicle and the bicyclist where the bike lane is ending. Ms. Cozzarin suggested at some point install some portion of the routes can have some sort of hard scape. Mr. Travers said when this plan began it was an entire route of sharrows and now in one project has doubled to amount of dedicated bike lanes we have in the city and significantly impacting a marked bike route. He said that staff shares the concerns regarding sharrows and we do not like them but this is a 20 page plan that included detailed pavement markings for every foot of the intersections and is detailed to get to this point and he does not think Mr. Pacelli gave himself enough credit on how much time and effort that he has spent to make this happen, and this will be a fully connected bike route from points most north of the city to the southernmost point of the city and into Westport. Mr. Thompson thanked Mr. Pacelli and Mr. Travers for all of their hard work on this project.

4. INTRODUCTION TO COMPLETE STREETS, UPDATE ON COMPLETE STREETS WORK IN NORWALK- MIKE YEOSOCK

Mr. Yeosock provided an overview on the concept of complete streets and said they are designed to operate and prioritize safety and support all forms of mobility and for people of all ages. The concept of complete streets encompasses many approaches to planning, designing and operating roadways and rights of way with all users in mind to make the transportation network safer and more efficient and today there are about 1600 complete street policies in place including 35 states, and Norwalk is looking at it now and the overarching design guide is to make streets safe, healthy, provide economic benefit and are environmentally friendly that include improved crosswalks, bike lanes, add curb ramps and audible pedestrian signals for those with disabilities, sidewalks and bus only lanes. He said this is accomplished by reviewing the information obtained in the transportation master plan which we are currently in the process of updating, set a complete street policy, and incremental approach and are often followed up with a vision zero policy.

5. SPONSORED TOOL SETS- COLIN GROTHEER

Mr. Grotheer said he had proposed to work on a mechanism to fund the purchase of some low cost floor pumps and basic multi tool that would be available either from the commission or another city agency at a reduced cost to subsidize the needs of bike maintenance for members of the community that need it. Mr. Thompson asked if the commission has the ability of offer things for sale. The commission agreed that it would be better to just give them away rather than to sell them. Mr. Ebert said the majority of riders that would be most in need of this kind of support have bikes that are largely serviceable with an adjustable wrench and in fact a metric allen key set will not benefit them because they don't have allen keys on their bikes and he found a good 6" adjustable wrench and can be purchased for .90 cents if 100 are ordered and suggested that would be one potential solution. Mr. Thompson suggested asking people the National Night Out event to see which tool they are most comfortable using and said that the expenditure will be authorized at a future meeting.

6. NATIONAL NIGHT OUT- BARBARA MCCABE

Ms. McCabe reported and said there are two events coming up and the first is the demonstration of the bike repair station and suggested holding it on a Wednesday night when the concerts are held at the beach because they are well attended. She said the dates on the concerts are July 14, August 11, August 18th and August 25th and Mr. Ebert had agreed to do the demonstration but in order to move forward to submit the application to the city she would like commissioner buy in and that she will staff the table but it requires two people so one other person would be needed and asked if any of the commissioners would like to attend. Ms. Cozzarin said she may be available and she will contact Ms. McCabe offline. It was decided that the event would take place on August 11th from 6:00PM to 8:00PM.

Ms. McCabe said the second event will be National Night Out and it will be held on August 3, 2021, from 5:00PM to 8:00PM and that volunteers from the commission will be needed and she also suggested having someone that speaks Spanish because a large part of the crowd is Spanish Speaking. She also requested funds to purchase healthy snacks to give out at the table. Sergeant Gulino said that setup will be from 4:00PM to 5:00PM and will be shutting down that section of South Main Street and Monroe Street at 4:00PM so we are asking anyone who is setting up table to be there before 4:30PM and once she gets the registrations form in she will be putting together the packet of information that she distributes for parking for vendors etc. with instructions to follow. Mr. Thompson said he will be attending the event and invited all the commissioners to attend and it is a great opportunity to receive feedback from the community. Ms. Cozzarin volunteered to make lanyards with name badges with the Bike/Walk affiliation for the commissioners.

**** MR. ALEY MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MR. THOMPSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE FOR HEALTHY SNACKS FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$50 AND THE EXPENDITURE FOR THE LANYARDS AND NAME TAGS FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$35.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

7. STREET SIGNS FOR TRAFFIC CALMING- AUDREY COZZARIN

Ms. Cozzarin said she has observed that people around town are doing some grass roots efforts to slow down traffic and are installing lawn signs and suggested the commission produce our own signs and offer them to residents and neighborhood associations and she spoke with Ms. Harris and she is willing to have the library be a site to store the signs and they can also be given out at events. Mr. Travers said this would be against the city ordinance and when signs are installed they are picked up by DPW and disposed of and there has also been numerous studies regarding these types of signs and none have proven to have any change in driver behavior. He said the Transportation, Mobility and Parking Department is working to create a sign manual that will give guidance to reduce some of the sign clutter and install signs that we want people to pay attention to as well as doing an education campaign that would speak directly to driver behavior. Mr. Grotheer suggest a mailbox drop in the neighborhoods that have the yard signs to invite them to a special session with the commission so that we could listen to their concerns. Mr. Thompson said he will follow up with Ms. Cozzarin and Mr. Travers to further discuss ideas for traffic calming.

8. OTHER ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS AS NEEDED

There were no other items discussed this evening.

9. ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. MCCABE MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:35PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd