

**CITY OF NORWALK
BIKE/WALK COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
JUNE 14, 2021**

ATTENDANCE: Nancy Rosett, Chair; Christine Bisceglie; Sam Ebert; Tanner Thompson;
Jud Colin Grotheer

OTHERS: Greg Pacelli, Transportation Planner; Michael Yeosock, Principal Engineer,
TMP; Gary Washinsky

To allow public access, anyone may access a meeting by telephone, Zoom, and/or the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. Specific instructions and links can be found at <http://www.norwalkct.org/meetings>.

CALL TO ORDER

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

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

Patricia Houser

Ms. Houser stated that she is from the City of Milford and are very interested in the Norwalk Bike/Walk Committee's doings and they would like to get bicycle infrastructure on their agenda. Ms. Rosett said if there is anything the Commission could do to be helpful to contact us and that there is also a website that includes the email addresses for the commissioners.

2. APPROVAL OF MAY 3RD MINUTES (SEE ATTACHED)

**** MR. EBERT MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. CHAIR'S REPORT

Ms. Rosett reported and said it was discussed last month that on the city calendar the commission meetings are scheduled from 6:00PM- 7:00PM and that she followed up on that and it has been changed to 6:00PM-7:30PM.

Ms. Rosett said there is some funds left in in the account which will revert back to the city on June 30, 2021, and suggested purchasing another bike repair station to be placed in South Norwalk and requested

that Mr. Ebert and Mr. Pacelli work together to find a suitable location and report back to the commission in July or August with their recommendations. Mr. Thompson suggested Ryan Park because there is a lot of community participation in that park. Ms. Rosett said as previously discussed the second repair station was going to be placed for commuting cyclists rather than for recreation so she is not sure if Ryan Park will fulfill that. Mr. Ebert said that a few locations should be evaluated and that he and Mr. Thompson are suggesting to include Ryan Park to the list of potential locations. He also said that that General Manager of Cannondale North America has agreed to purchase five of the repair stations and suggested purchasing a bicycle parking corral and that the mayor has said that he would be willing to give up a parking space for bicycle parking and he thinks that would be the best thing to introduce into SONO. Ms. Rosett said that the commission could look into purchasing that after July 1st and requested that Mr. Pacelli order a bike repair station with the pump included.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Transportation Planner

Mr. Pacelli reported and said that they are getting close the finalizing the plans for the connectivity grant so that that the plans can be sent to CTDOT so that they can release the funds, and the goal is to have it installed by the end of this year.

Mr. Pacelli said it was discussed to have a collective sidewalk inventory as well as other pedestrian facilities around the city to incorporate into the GIS and that he met with some members of the commission a few weeks ago and discussed ways to put a comprehensive inventory of the sidewalks together, and he will also be reaching out to other towns to see how they had collected the data. Mr. Thompson requested that Mr. Pacelli schedule a follow up meeting to discuss updates.

Mr. Pacelli said they are waiting on CTDOT approval for the proposed design for the intersection of Highland Avenue and Flax Hill Road because it is a state funded project. He said once we receive approval for the plan a public meeting will be scheduled and he will keep the commission updated.

Mr. Pacelli said the artistic crosswalk on Connecticut Avenue @ West Avenue will be installed on Wednesday and Mayor Rilling will have a ribbon cutting ceremony on June 29, 2021, at 12:00PM and he invited the members of the commission to attend.

Mr. Thompson requested going forward that notes and diagrams be sent to the commission on the projects that Mr. Pacelli will be reporting on.

b. Bike Plan

Mr. Aley presented a list of all the bike parking in the city and a list of six locations for the bike racks to be installed. He suggested that the racks be placed in the pre-approved bike share locations. Mr. Pacelli requested that the locations be presented to Mr. Travers to see if any of the locations have changed before the installation moves forward. The commission agreed that Mr. Pacelli present the six locations to Mr. Travers for his approval. Ms. Bisceglie said the bike rack that is installed at the Maritime Aquarium is covered in overgrowth so once the racks are installed they will need to be maintained. Ms. Rosett requested that Mr. Pacelli see who is responsible for the maintenance. Mr. Thompson said he will keep the list of the bike rack locations updated moving forward.

Mr. Grotheer said he thinks the city should have a standard bike rack that is a better quality and requested it be included as an agenda item for next month.

**** MR. ALEY MOVED TO REQUEST TMP APPROVAL ON THE SIX LOCATIONS AS PRESENTED FOR THE LOCATIONS ON THE PLACEMENT OF BIKE RACK LOCATIONS.**

**** MR. THOMPSON SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

c. Events

Ms. Rosett said the Wednesday night concerts at the beach will be starting up again and that there is one scheduled for July and three in August and Ms. McCabe's intent is to hold another event in August during the concert at the bike repair station at the beach and Mr. Ebert has volunteered to attend to show people how to use it. Ms. Rosett asked for a status update on the pump for the repair station. Mr. Yeosock said that the pump has been received but has not yet been installed. Ms. Rosett requested that Mr. Yeosock follow up with Mr. Hughes on when it will be installed.

d. League of American Bicyclists

Ms. Bisceglie reported and asked if the organizational membership renewal fee for the League of American Bicyclists can be added as a line item in the budget annually. Mr. Yeosock said he believes that is already in the budget.

Ms. Bisceglie reminded the commission about doing an application to potentially gain an award as a bike friendly community. She said she would also like to invite the Chair of the "Bike New York" to attend the August meeting to speak to the commission about the application.

Ms. Bisceglie presented and provided an overview of the INVEST Act that the League of American Bicyclists has been working on and they had written a statement. Ms. Rosett requested that Ms. Bisceglie share the link with the commission.

e. Pedestrian Committee

Ms. Rosett said that Ms. Cozzarin could not attend tonight's meeting but that she had send her report that was read as follows:

The Pedestrian Committee is working on the sidewalk surveys and collecting data and are planning a new effort using newer technology and will be looking for volunteers to collect the data.

Ms. Zanvettor is working with Mr. Yeosock and Mr. Rios to have pedestrian stanchions installed in the crosswalks at the schools and that Mr. Yeosock has been in contact with the Board of Education and is working out the scheduling of the delivery of the stanchions.

Ms. Green and Ms. McCabe have been video documenting walking paths for the NorWALKer program and they will be made available soon. Ms. Rosett said that Ms. Cozzarin also spoke about the curated walks around the green and said that more are planned but the concern is the roadways around the green, East Avenue and Park Street because they are dangerous and

unfriendly for pedestrians and cyclists, and this group is trying to increase the awareness and support for remedies and are seeking a cooperative relationship with the First Taxing District. She said the East Avenue is partly route 53 which is a state road so will also need to work with the state.

There is a private patio in the Head of the Harbor South that is that prevents pedestrians from accessing Wall Street and they are working on getting that removed.

Ms. Rosett said that she and Ms. Cozzarin met with Michael Purdy who is the owner of Riverside Cemetery to discuss possible access through the cemetery to the NRV Missing link along Riverside Avenue, but he does not want to create a formal access but he welcomes pedestrians to walk through the cemetery because it does help to cut down on some of the unwanted activity in the cemetery. She said we did mention to him that we would like to see a crosswalk from the cemetery across Riverside Avenue and he was very much in favor of that.

Mr. Yeosock said that we are in the initial stages of developing an updated master plan and one of the tasks in the study is for the consultant to provide some concepts for various transportation improvements around the city with Riverside Avenue as one of the locations they will be looking at. Ms. Rosett said she thinks we should be on target for the crosswalk installation next spring.

Ms. Rosett since Ms. Cozzarin has taken over the Pedestrian Committee, she has been doing a great job moving forward on a number of different fronts. Mr. Thompson agreed and thanked Ms. Cozzarin for all of her work.

Mr. Grotheer asked if the pedestrian stanchions that will be installed at the schools will also be done at the locations where there are crossing guards or crosswalks. Ms. Rosett said we had not thought about that but there are currently only five of them. Mr. Grotheer said he thinks that would be a good initiative to get them into the walking areas of each of the schools. Ms. Rosett requested that Mr. Grotheer send an email for Ms. Cozzarin with that request.

f. Social Media

Mr. Thompson reported and said that a lot of the work that he has been doing on social media recently has been for the bicycle co-op and we have had four events and at each event have repaired between six and fifteen bikes so the audience on social media has been growing quickly for the co-op, and he has been cross posting and the plan long term is to grow the audience for the commission by posting periodically on the co-op and vice versa because the mission is very similar.

Mr. Thompson asked if it is against city policy to ride bicycles on the sidewalk. Mr. Yeosock said “yes” it violates the city ordinance. Mr. Grotheer asked if that excludes children. Mr. Yeosock said he does not believe so. Mr. Thompson said he would like to get the commission opinion on if that is worth trying to change. It was decided that the commission look at the ordinance to see what it states before making a decision. Mr. Yeosock said that he will email it to the commission.

- g. Strategic Plan

There was no report.

- h. Walking update

There was no report.

5. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Bicycle Parking at the Oyster Festival

Mr. Ebert presented and said he had met with representatives of the Seaport Association and he explained to them what the commission wants to do and they have agreed to give the commission a space located at the entrance and exit of the Oyster Festival at no cost. He said they were very interested in offering that and said it should promote increased ridership through the weekend. He said that Mr. Toni has requested that a contract be drawn up and he will look into if event insurance will be necessary. He said they will provide 15 entry tickets to the bike parking volunteers, and signage will not be provided but it is recommended and they will promote this through their channels. He said over the past week he has also spoken to the head of the North American at Cannondale and she is interested in potentially collaborating for the event space and they would absorb any of the cost. Ms. Rosett suggested that Mr. Ebert work with Mr. Pacelli to work with the Legal Department regarding the insurance and the contract. Ms. Bisceglie said the idea is great and suggested that it be expanded to other events in the city such as the NICE Festival.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Recruiting for the Commission

Ms. Bisceglie said she would like a more diverse commission and suggested using the events at Ryan Park to promote the commission and speak to avid bike riders and people of color. Ms. Rosett said that if we find people that are interested in biking and/or walking to get them to help with some of the work of the commission because you don't need to necessarily need to be a commissioner to help out and is a good way to involve a group of more diverse people. Mr. Thompson suggested the commissioners invite someone to a meeting each month and to set a goal of a certain amount of people to invite to try and find people who are interested in doing this work with us.

- b. Additional Pump and Tool Stations

Mr. Grotheer said one of the most basic pieces of bicycle maintenance that someone needs to do is to inflate their tires so that they can reliably get to where they are going and suggested putting together a package to include a pump and a tool and give them to a few city organizations for a very low cost so that someone would not have to go buy a lesser quality pump. Mr. Ebert said that is a great idea and he would like to follow up with Mr. Grotheer. Mr. Thompson said this is a great way for the Co-op and the commission to work together. Ms. Rosett suggested that Mr. Grotheer, Mr. Thompson and Mr. Ebert work together on a more specific proposal to present to

the commission. Mr. Aley asked when the Co-op's are held. Mr. Ebert said they are held at Ryan Park on the second and fourth Sunday of each month from 2:00PM to 6:00PM.

Ms. Ashley Cheah stated that she is happy to be here and is happy to contribute and she just starting biking again and she is looking forward to learn more about the efforts that the commission is doing. Ms. Rosett said that the commission generally meets the first Monday of each month from 6:00PM to 7:30PM and she is welcome to join anytime.

Ms. Houser stated by way of clarification she was attending the meeting on behalf of the efforts of the Milford environmental concerns coalition which is an environmental advocacy group and their current project is to initiate more discussion and plan an event to engage public on the issue of protected bike lanes and based on what she has heard this evening is it safe to say "we want to be you when we grow up" She said she has kicked off our advocacy with a paper column in the Milford/Orange Times. Ms. Rosett said that she will share the link with the commission and thanked her for joining the meeting tonight and is welcome to attend anytime.

Mr. Ebert said he does not think the commission should purchase another repair stand because he knows we can expect Cannondale to purchase between four and five of these units and suggested purchasing additional bike racks or bike corral with the funds that are remaining in the budget this year. Ms. Rosett said she would rather purchase the bike repair station but is open to what the commission would like to do. Mr. Thompson asked how much money is left in the budget to be spent. Ms. Rosett said approximately \$2,500 and the bike repair station is \$1,900 with the pump. Mr. Ebert suggested scheduling a special meeting next Monday at 6:00PM. Mr. Pacelli said that he will need to have a discussion with Mr. Travers and the Parking Authority regarding the bike corral. Ms. Rosett asked if the corral is not doable would the commission be comfortable with ordering one repair stand and as many of the pedestrian stanchions as we can afford. The commission agreed they would support purchasing the repair station if the corral is not an option.

The commission thanked Ms. Rosett for her service and dedication to the commission.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

**** MR. GROTHEER SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:30PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd