

**CITY OF NORWALK
BIKE/WALK COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 6, 2022**

ATTENDANCE: Tanner Thompson, Chair; Christine Bisceglie; Colin Grotheer; Jud Aley; Emily Buraman

OTHERS: Greg Pacelli, Transportation Planner, Michael Yeosock, Principal Engineer, TMP; Jahliah Green, Health Education Associate; Carly Kramer, Community Planner, Redevelopment Agency; Brian Boland; Shari Brennan; Ben Hanpeter; Audrey Cozzarin; Mike Matthews; Dawenson Saintilus; Alex Keyes

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>.

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mike Matthews- 20 Day Street

Mr. Matthews stated that he is new to the community and the unveiling of the new SONO bike rack on Washington Street was fantastic.

Ms. Brennan stated that the article regarding the new bike rack was wonderful.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Sono Bike Rack unveiling

Mr. Thompson said there was a group of approximately 20 people that had attended the bike rack unveiling and press conference and the new rack is in the shape of the word SONO. He said that Mayor Rilling spoke as well as Mr. Travers and himself and that a few of the business owners in

the area also attended the event including Brad Turner from Eco Evolutions who has offered 10% off for anyone who bikes to his store. Mr. Thompson said he has been working with the bicycle coop and there was a repair event held on Sunday and there was a bike left over that was unrideable but still in good condition and have locked it up to the rack because a lot of people didn't realize this is a bike rack.

- Jim Himes ride

Mr. Thompson said that Congressman Jim Himes did a ride with some members of the commission the day after the bike unveiling and is an avid bicyclist and is excited about getting some funding for cycling. He said the ride was well attended and they rode the length of the NRV from the Maritime Aquarium to Union Park and back and will hopefully lead to more investment in the biking and walking infrastructure in Norwalk.

- Free CT buses extended to December

Mr. Thompson said the Connecticut State Legislature extended the suspension of the gas tax and along with that suspended all fares for state and local buses so any state or local bus will be free through December 1, 2022.

- Bike rack wish list delivered

Mr. Thompson said that TMP staff had contacted him and said they want to purchase bike racks and requested some location ideas so he had sent an email to the members of the commission and those that had attended a commission meeting as of late and Mr. Hampeter helped him brainstorm and compiled a list of some locations that included 70 locations that are on public property, as well as 70-80 on private property and welcomed any public input on any additional locations. He said the project is well defined and Mr. Bolella and Mr. Travers are working on a bike rack application process and said if anyone would like to start contacting some of the businesses about having a bike rack on their property to contact him. Mr. Pacelli said that an RFP was put out but unfortunately due to the rising costs of materials most companies did not want to be locked into a price so will now look into ordering a bulk order of bike racks and would like to have the locations already determined because there are limited storage facilities. He said they are also looking to put together an on-call services for smaller concrete infrastructure projects. Mr. Pacelli said the next step is that staff will review the list of locations and do some site visits and determine what will be needed to have them installed. Mr. Thompson presented the list of locations and said there is a total of 85 locations and 147 bike racks and have imported and prioritized all the locations onto the publicly accessible bike rack map and there is a link to the map on the Bike/Walk Commission's website.

Ms. Cozzarin asked if there are signs that indicate there is bike parking available. Mr. Thompson said there are multiple signs at the South Norwalk Railroad Station. Ms. Cozzarin said they may serve an extra purpose which would let drivers know that there is bike parking and there may be bicyclists in the area and may slow down when they see bike parking signs. Mr. Thompson agreed and said it was a great idea and asked if that would fall under TMP. Mr. Pacelli said "yes" but they are trying not to over clutter signage but there are valid reasons to install bike parking signs especially in the higher density areas. Ms. Bisceglie also agreed that the signs are a good idea and a good use of money.

SCAVENGER HUNT REPORT

Ms. Bisceglie said she loves the idea that Mr. Ebert had about a bike corral at events. Mr. Thompson said that last year Mr. Ebert was in discussions with the Seaport Association regarding valet bike parking and due to his work schedule will not be able to take that on this summer, but if someone wants to take the project and contact the Seaport Association to contact him and he will make the connection.

Ms. Bisceglie provided an overview of the scavenger hunt and said that stances were put at 14 bike racks and people uploaded photos to a website and that t-shirts were provide the Contemporary Print Shop and suggested having a small event to give them out to the participants. Mr. Grotheer suggested having the event at the print shop or at a location that is accessible by both bike and vehicle. Ms. Brennan said there were 27 submissions and had one person that completed the poem with all the bike racks.

Mr. Thompson said he purchased a domain at bikenorwalk.org and once the scavenger hunt is over it will be redirected to the commissions page.

TMP UPDATES

- Highland Avenue

Mr. Pacelli reported and said the Highland Avenue sidewalk project and said the contract documents have been sent to the vendor to begin the construction and should begin later this month and are hoping to have the portion around the schools completed by the end of the summer.

- CT Community Connectivity Grant

Mr. Pacelli provided an update on the Community Connectivity Grant and said he is working with the CTDOT and have finalized all the design plans for the encroachment permit along RT. 136 and are now working with the Policy and Planning Bureau to finalize the cost estimates and receive a final submittal to release the funds.

- SONO Station Garage bike racks

Mr. Pacelli said they are still working with the Snyder Group on they are working on the designs for the bike rack area at the South Norwalk Railroad Station and they may have a sharrow installed to guide the cyclists into the garage and are looking to install them on State Street from Martin Luther King Blvd.

- Complete Streets RFP

Mr. Pacelli provided an update of the complete streets RFP and said that it has closed, and two qualified vendors have submitted and will now begin the interview process over the next couple of weeks. He said they are now looking for a design consultant to do a complete streets manual that the city will use as the design standards as part of any roadway infrastructure projects. Mr. Thompson underscored the importance of this and said once these guidelines are drafted and adopted every project that involves a road in Norwalk will have to conform to these new updated standards and the whole point of these new standards is they are designed to accommodate all users. Ms. Bisceglie asked what the timeline is for the guidelines to be completed. Mr. Pacelli said that will be determined once a vendor is selected and will keep the commission updated.

- Wall Street Design Kick Off Public Meeting

Mr. Pacelli said that on June 14, 2021, there will be an open public forum at the Wall Street Theatre to discuss the Wall Street improvement project which will be very public driven. He said all the components of the project will be discussed and would love the commission members as well as the public that are on this meeting to attend to provide input. He said one of the major goals of this project is to implement a dedicated directional bike facility. Mr. Thompson said that Wall Street is a critical connection between east and west Norwalk.

- Paving Schedule Updates

Mr. Pacelli said TMP staff continues to meet with DPW staff on a weekly basis for updates on the paving schedule and Richards Avenue has been moved up on the schedule. Mr. Grotheer asked for a status update on the NRVV paving. Mr. Yeosock said they are just waiting for CTDOT to approve the pavement mix. Mr. Grotheer asked if there is a timeline for that. Mr. Yeosock said “no”. Mr. Grotheer said it will be an asset for the community once it has been completed to get people from the Broad River area to South Norwalk not using main roads.

Mr. Cozzarin asked if sidewalks can be widened to become a dedicated walking/biking pathway. Mr. Pacelli said the connectivity grant funding will allow for a dedicated bike lane on both sides of Richards Avenue from Route 1 to Fallow Street and will fill in the gaps where there are no sidewalks. Ms. Cozzarin said that Fallow Street is also in need of being paved. Mr. Thompson said if anyone has feedback on a specific street the better course of action is to contact the customer service center. Mr. Hanpeter asked if there are crosswalks planned for Richards Avenue @ Connecticut Avenue. Mr. Pacelli said the area is not conducive for pedestrian crossings but there is a Route 1 corridor study that will commence soon that they have funding for and is an intersection that needs to be addressed. He said a sidewalk audit for the city has just been completed the vendor is now building the platform and will help to identify where the missing sidewalk gaps are and where the non-compliant ADA ramps are and will help to prioritize the areas that are needed the most. Mr. Thompson requested that once staff receives the audit that a summary is presented to the commission.

Mr. Aley joined the meeting at 7:05PM.

BUDGET MODIFICATIONS

- Walkable Cities Seminar- Vanessa Valadares- DPW
- NRV T Grand Opening
- SONO Station Garage bike racks

Mr. Thompson said \$1500 was allocated in this fiscal year to the NRV T grand opening but has been delayed, and the bike racks at the SONO garage will also not be completed by June 30,2022, and there is an opportunity to attend a seminar at Harvard on walkability which he would like the commission to focus more on and he proposed to use the remaining funds in the budget to send him and Vanessa Valadares who is the Principal Engineer for the city. He said the cost is \$1600 per person and he can have 1/3 of the cost covered by his employer through a continuing education benefit.

**** MR. ALEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE FUNDING FOR MR. THOMPSON AND MS. VALADARES TO THE EVENT AT HARVARD.**
**** MR. GROTHEER SECONDED THE MOTION.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

SWAG PROCUREMENT

Mr. Aley said the order for the swag has been placed after receiving pricing from two vendors.

APPROVE MINUTES FROM MAY MEETING

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

Ms. Green said a large area of her work is focused on the NorWalker program and the goal of the program is to encourage walking in the community and have been planning walks for the month of June on Wednesday's at 6:00PM using the NorWalker maps that can be found on the Health Department's website, and the next walk is scheduled for this Wednesday will begin at Tracey School. She said they are also now working on the calendar for walks in July which will also be posted to the website.

Ms. Green said the second program that they have launched is the stair wellness program which they are still working on and are looking for any employer interested in worksite wellness that has an accessible stairwell and elevator to all employees. She said this program will encourage employees to use the stairs instead of the elevator to increase physical activity.

Ms. Green said they are also hoping to do walks at the summer concert series and are working on finalizing the plans for that.

Mr. Thompson said there is a podcast called Active Towns and encouraged the committee members to listen to it.

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

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:25PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd