

**CITY OF NORWALK
BIKE/WALK COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
June 3, 2024**

ATTENDANCE: Tanner Thompson, Chair; Emily Burnaman, Vice Chair; Christine Bisceglie; Nicholas Pappas; Manny Salgado

OTHERS: Greg Pacelli; Transportation Planner, Jahliah Green, Health Department; Ben Hanpeter

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CALL TO ORDER

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

At roll call there were five (5) committee members in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments this evening.

2024 OPEN STREETS EVENT DEBRIEF

Mr. Hanpeter provided an overview of the open streets event and said that Calf Pasture Beach Road was closed on the northbound lanes from Marvin Elementary School to the beach so that people were able to walk and bike, and the southbound lanes were split into two for vehicular traffic. He said the event was a huge success and he was excited about the number of people that came out for the event and thanked everyone who made this possible as it was an enormous effort. He said they already have some ideas that they would like to improve next year but overall was very happy with the way the event turned out.

Mr. Thompson agreed and said he was very pleased to see the turnout they had gotten and thanked the Norwalk Public Schools for partnering with the commission because he thinks due to their influence and network, they were able to reach was key. He especially thanked Ms. Zanvetter and Ms. Kress. He also thanked Ms. Bisceglie for helping with the bike rodeo and connecting the commission with the Kiwanis

Club. Ms. Bisceglie said they also had volunteers from AITE and Americares, which was wonderful and approximately 50 families came through the bike rodeo.

Mr. Pacelli echoed Mr. Thompson's comment and read a comment from Mr. Travers as follows:

I am sorry I could not attend the second annual open street event due to a prior commitment, but it was an amazingly beautiful day and was excited to see so many people attend the event and would love to see more photos and requested they be sent to staff. It takes a lot of effort to put on a successful event and each of the commissioners should be proud of what they have accomplished and kudos to a job well done.

Mr. Pacelli and TMP staff also echoed Mr. Travers' comments and has heard great positive things from members of the public and expect bigger things for next year. Mr. Thompson said he would also like to give TMP credit as they helped in a lot of different phases of this but in particular the event had to be postponed in very short notice due to the closure of I-95 and the process for getting the event rescheduled was not clear and TMP was a huge help on informing the commission of the process.

Ms. Bisceglie requested a lesson's learned meeting be scheduled because she has feedback that she would like to share. Mr. Thompson said that notes were compiled that he will send to the commission and schedule a meeting. He said because the event had to be postponed to a date within beach season and the commission was not completely aware of the full implications of that but were able to stage volunteers in the right places to make all the drivers aware of the changes to the parking and as far as he knows no one received a parking ticket but is something to think about in the future. Ms. Bisceglie said they were also now aware of the ongoing baseball throughout the day. Mr. Salgado asked if the event next year should be held in May or June. Mr. Thompson said that one of the goals of the event was to show people that Calf Pasture Beach Road could look different but still work well and were able to demonstrate that to do it on a busier day but that will need to go to the Traffic Authority to be approved. Ms. Bisceglie said the vision is to have the event a few times a year. Mr. Thompson said he will schedule a debriefing meeting to discuss the event to further discuss the event.

Mr. Thompson thanked Mr. Salgado for helping to set up all the cones and directing traffic for the entire event and helping to remove the cones following the event. He also thanked Mr. Pappas for attending all the planning meetings. Mr. Hanpeter thanked Ms. Burnaman for also attending all the planning meetings.

STRATEGIC PLAN- QUARTERLY CHECK-IN

Mr. Thompson said the strategic plan was adopted early on this year to guide the work of the committee and keep them focused. He said there were goals that were set with owners attached to each of the goals and had agreed to check in once per quarter. The owners of each category provided an update.

PEDESTRIAN AND BIKEWAY PLAN DISCUSSION

- Review existing Pedestrian and Bikeway Plan
- Discuss update to existing Pedestrian and Bikeway Plan

Mr. Thompson said two of the five responsibilities as the Bike/Walk Commission in the city ordinance is to update the Bike Master Plan and the Pedestrian Master Plan and since he has

become chair, they have not given any attention to that. He said the most official document they have is from 2012 and over the last few weeks he has been reviewing it to get a sense of what is in the plan, the value it can still bring, and how much progress has been made towards the goals and recommendations put forward. He said the most detailed thing that he has done is assessing the tier I corridors for completeness and he believes TMP has done some similar work as well. Mr. Pacelli said that TMP did go through the corridor priority list and project areas and removed the projects that have been completed or are in the process of a longer-term project. Mr. Thompson said one of the things that is in this document is all of the major corridors in the city that were split into three tiers, tier I being the highest priority and providing detailed recommendations for the interventions that should be made. He said the reason he went through the plan was to get an idea of how far the commission has come on this plan and one of the directions they can go next.

Mr. Pacelli said the master plan provided direction to improve and expand the pedestrian bike facility goals to advance the transportation network throughout the city and looked at tier I, II, and III corridors. He said TMP references this all the time for grant applications and city capital projects and this document was vetted and planned with the community involved and they provided feedback and provided input on the deficiencies in the transportation network so whenever they are going for a grant program, they always reference this planning document which allows them to get awarded a lot of the funding for projects. He said that it is valuable but does need to be updated because roadway infrastructure in general has come a long way and needs to be updated in the newest version. Mr. Thompson said the political landscape has also changed and the volume and nature of support for walking and biking has changed a lot. Mr. Pacelli said the POCD has also been renewed and there is now a complete streets policy and their next goal of Vision Zero, so those things need to be applied to this type of document. He said the nice thing is that they have accomplished a lot of things from this document.

Mr. Pacelli said if the commission is open to moving forward and revising the plan suggested using the commission's capital funding for this year be applied to hiring a consultant and look at quotes to revise and update it. Mr. Thompson said he does not think there would be enough funds in their capital budget. Ms. Bisceglie agreed and said the plan is fabulous for the city and many agencies would like to be involved and asked who paid the consultant for the first plan. Mr. Pacelli said he is not sure but believes it was done through Planning & Zoning.

Mr. Thompson said the options include continuing to use the documents they have, have the commission update the plan, or to get whatever kind of work they can from the budget and hire a professional, or find more money from somewhere else either from a source within the city or a grant program. The biggest reason he seems to lean toward the latter is that a lot of best practices have changed and turned over and want to capture that. Mr. Pacelli said TMP would like to see the commission take this on, especially since it is in the ordinance but at the same time TMP is in the same position as the commission as far as funding is concerned and has a certain budget. Ms. Bisceglie suggested the commission do some research for grant funding for this and said she is willing to do some of the research. Mr. Pappas suggested starting by getting a quote on what the cost will be. Mr. Salgado asked if the plan evolves over a period of years. Mr. Pacelli said not so much over the years, but it is his recommendation to get to know the existing bike/pedestrian plan before reaching out to a consultant. Ms. Bisceglie suggested scheduling a meeting at the end of July to review the plan. She also suggested emailing the plan in a word document to the commissioners so they can begin to make comments. Mr. Thompson asked the committee if they

agree that they can review the plan before the next meeting. Ms. Burnaman said she would need it by the end of the summer. Mr. Thompson asked if it could be received by August. The commissioners said “yes”. Mr. Thompson said he will include this on the July agenda for an update on the review progress.

COMPLETE STREETS UPDATE

- Update on Design Guide

Mr. Pacelli provided an update and said for complete streets the consultant is in the process of developing the design guide, which is a very in-depth document, and a lot of work and consideration is being put into that. He said TMP is also in the process of finalizing the ordinance with the ordinance committee and he will keep the commission updated on the progress of the ordinance. He said the guide is not a “one size fits all” guide and still needs to incorporate best engineering and design judgement and there is still a lot of flexibility in the design guide and what can be implemented based on road typology and the uses of the road which will be defined in the design guide. He said there will also be a bikeway selection guide as well which will give guidance based on the volumes and generators of the street as well as the surrounding area and will all be available within the document itself. Mr. Thompson said one of the things he learned from reading the plan from 2012 is part of the document is a design guide. Ms. Bisceglie asked if the resources can be included in the chat or sent to the committee so they can begin to do some research. Mr. Pacelli said in the complete streets guidebook there will be a series of definitions and links to where those resources are and so for instance the National of City Transportation Officials are currently upgrading the urban bikeway design guide which will be released in the fall which is another document they will reference within the complete streets guide. He said they want to create a safe and efficient movement of all uses of the road efficiently and safely. Mr. Thompson said he is hoping to see more forward-thinking design elements at least available in the design guide that are described so that they are available to be used in Norwalk where they make sense, and he is thinking specifically about protected intersections and ones protected by a curb and asked if they will see either one of those as elements of the guide. Mr. Pacelli said there is a wide variety of ways to protect pedestrians, cyclists, and vulnerable pedestrians in intersections even outside of protected intersections. He also said their guidance refers to the primary resources and protected intersections will be part of the urban bikeway design guide so those are included in the primary resources that they can pull from for the more forward-thinking progressive roadway. He said the design standards is a living breathing document and will continually be updated as well as the primary resources and will also pull from the latest and greatest version that they reference.

Ms. Bisceglie said that she and Ms. Burnaman were interviewed by “Watch for Connecticut” regarding complete streets and the work the commission is doing, and they did an article which should be published soon.

- Demonstration Project

Mr. Pacelli provided an update on the demonstration project and said it will be held on June 23, 2024, and are looking for volunteers and would like to commission to attend and to extend the

invitation to anyone in their network. He said there is a registration process, and he will share the flyer that includes the registration information.

CT. DOT ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION MICRO-GRANT APPLICATION

Mr. Pappas said he has no updates at this time and is in the process of getting a better understanding of what the scope is. Mr. Thompson asked Mr. Pacelli if there is a deadline. Mr. Pacelli said “yes” and is June 28, 2024, and can be applied to up to twice a year and the grant is for \$5,000 per application and is done each quarter. Mr. Thompson said the grant is for anything that is not infrastructure related and is for active transportation. Mr. Thompson asked Mr. Pappas if it is realistic that the application will be submitted by the June 28th deadline. Mr. Pappas said “yes” he believes so and he will send it to the commission prior to submitting any feedback.

FY 2024 BUDGET REVIEW

Mr. Thompson provided an overview of the budget and said that there is approximately \$3,400 remaining but there are a few months of minute taking that will need to be posted and half of the cost of open streets event which was originally budgeted for a smaller amount but because more police officers were needed the cost was \$1,530 so the balance of the budget is approximately \$1,500. He that originally \$1,800 was allocated to purchase light sets from Smart Cycles but the price that was given is no longer valid, so he is proposing to use the money and allocate towards 100 taillights because they deal on the bike sets is no longer valid and have headlights but not taillights and he has been waiting to distribute them until they receive the taillights.

Ms. Burnaman said after going through the supplies she would like to spend some of the budget on a tablecloth and print materials. Mr. Thompson said that he agrees that there is a need for those things but there in only one month left in this fiscal year and would need to be paid for soon which is the reason he has been working with Smart Cycles, but if the money can be spend in June, then he is open to that as well but is not very optimistic. Ms. Burnaman said that Minuteman was used in the past and there was a quick turnaround. She also said she does not know if all of the budget will be needed for those items but she is proposing to spend \$500. Mr. Thompson suggested that Ms. Burnaman work on the quotes for those items, and he will work on the quotes for the taillights, and whichever looks most likely to come in before the end of the month they go with that and purchase the rest of July 1st.

Ms. Bisceglie said that every bike has a red reflector and she understands that a rear light is very important, but a lot of people are not even riding bikes never mind at night and she would like to see the money go to pedestrians such as safety vests that more people can benefit from and maybe purchase bikes to raffle off and/or a trailer to transport items.

**** MR. PAPPAS MOVED TO APPROVE ALLOCATED \$500 OF THE BUDGET ON PURCHASING A TABLECLOTH AND REMAINDER OF THE BUDGET TO PURCHASE TAILLIGHTS.**

**** MR. SALGADO SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

APPROVE MEETING MINUTES FROM MAY 6, 2024, MEETING

**** MS. BURNAMAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES FROM THE MAY 6, 2024, MEETING AT SUBMITTED**

**** MR. PAPPAS SECONDED THE MOTION.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. BURNAMAN MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
**** MS. BISCEGLIE SECONDED THE MOTION.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd