CITY OF NORWALK
BIKE/WALK COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
January 6, 2025

ATTENDANCE: Emily Burnaman, Chair; Nicholas Pappas; Manny Salgado; Becca Stoll; Tanner Thompson

OTHERS: Greg Pacelli; Transportation Planner

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. Burnaman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

ROLL CALL

At roll call, there were four (4) committee members in attendance.

IV. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting: Monday, December 2, 2024

The minutes were tabled due to a lack of a quorum.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Finalize Commission 2025 strategic goals and initiatives.

Mr. Chenard said there will be an active transportation meeting held by the state and it will be held in Stamford. Ms. Burnaman said there will be a few meetings held this week and will be held in Bridgeport and New Haven, and she will post the information to the commission subscribers as well as on social media to spread the word and get people to attend. She said the meetings are more of a community open house where people will be allowed to give feedback on active transportation on a state level.

Ms. Burnaman shared the progress that has been made since the last meeting regarding the strategic goals. She said at the last meeting she had requested that each of the commissioners review the outline of the strategic plan and decide which areas of focus they align with most and how to continue to build on this from the last strategic plan. She said the document is based on the 2024 goals as well as the ordinance and the prime areas of focus include education, communication and outreach, infrastructure and accessibility, events, grants and recognition, get NOrWalkers biking, and accountability and reporting.

Ms. Burnaman said the goal for education is a primary motivator and in the meeting with the mayor this is something he supports and especially this year wants to encourage avenues for the commission to build on and partner with other local organizations and schools on promoting education. She said the first goal is to offer safe cycling courses and is hoping to partner with CT State over the summer and fall and to certify another league-certified instructor. She said the final goal for education is to recruit more subject matter experts and get more people involved in the educational subcommittee to meet monthly and hopefully have speakers to either attend the commission meetings or participate in webinars or have educational materials and have an educational opportunity with people who are in that focus of pedestrian safety. Mr. Pacelli suggested the commission educate the public on the infrastructure that the city incorporates that may not be known to the public. Ms. Stoll suggested starting with young motorists and working with the driver education course instructors at the high schools and the DMV to educate motorists to look out for pedestrians and cyclists.

Mr. Pappas joined the meeting at 6:10 PM.

Ms. Burnaman reviewed the goals for communication and outreach and said the goal is to increase positive engagement online and to post educational content that will be created and have one short video per quarter to circulate as well. She said the other goal is to develop bilingual content and have the social posts available in both English and Spanish. She asked if it is possible to have the complete streets guide available in Spanish. Mr. Pacelli said that would most likely need to be outsourced as it is a long document with a lot of information. Mr. Thompson said he does not think translating the design guide is necessarily the best use of resources and the document is long and technical and would be a big lift that is not even done for zoning or city ordinances.

Mr. Craighead said it would be helpful to know what TMP is doing with its budget, priorities, progress, and how it will be communicated to the public. Mr. Thompson said in the past someone from the TMP attended the commission meeting during the budget season and went through the budget line by line and he found that to be very helpful. Mr. Pacelli said that the Common Council ultimately approves the budget requests, but he does remember Mr. Bolella presenting the budget to the commission. Ms. Burnaman said she would follow up with Mr. Pacelli regarding a budget presentation.

Ms. Burnaman reviewed the goals for infrastructure and accessibility and said one goal is to meet quarterly with TMP because there are so many open projects. She said the meeting would be to review and provide advice on transportation and infrastructure for walking and biking in the city in collaboration with TMP and the meeting would be held with two commissioners and the TMP team to review any open projects and any feedback that the commission is getting from the public. Mr. Pacelli said he would speak to the TMP team to see how that can be moved forward to meet quarterly. Mr. Thompson requested that the review of the budget be presented at the commission's monthly meeting.

Ms. Burnaman said there will be a committee for complete streets and the commission will have Mr. Thompson as the representative. Mr. Thompson asked if there were any additional details about what the process would look like. Mr. Pacelli said the design guide is still in the open comment period and will review them and get the design guide finalized and the next step will be to form the committee. Ms. Burnaman asked if it would be finalized by the February meeting. Mr. Pacelli said “yes” it should be.

Ms. Burnaman said the Pedestrian and Bikeway Transportation Plan is outdated and part of the commission's initiative was to review the documents and make improvements and it has been an ongoing process. She asked who on the commission would be interested in leading the effort to prioritize it for this year. Mr. Thompson said he had reviewed the whole plan, and he would be interested but would welcome other commissioners who are interested in working with him on this. Ms. Burnaman said she would like to work with Mr. Thompson and asked if there were any other commissioners interested in reviewing and updating the document. Ms. Stoll said she would also be interested. Ms. Burnaman said communication with TMP is critical as it ties into the complete streets guide as well as a lot of the work that is actively happening.

Mr. Thompson asked if the Bike/Pedestrian Master Plan come up in discussions with TMP in the last few months regarding what they think is the future of that document. Mr. Thompson said “no”. Mr. Thompson asked about the Transportation Master Plan. Mr. Pacelli said that just needs to be finalized and the draft is finalized and just needs to move forward for final adoption. Ms. Burnaman asked if there was anything the commission could do to support that formal adoption. Mr. Pacelli said he would let her know once they move forward with committee and council approval.

Ms. Burnaman reviewed the goal for events and said this is another primary goal and will continue the goal from last year of providing bike valet at four community events and thanked Mr. Pappa’s for leading this effort. She said she also included Mr. Pacelli as a point of contact regarding the insurance requirements. Mr. Pacelli said that if fine but to give him advance notice of the event. Mr. Burnaman said the goal is to do four events but can go beyond that and that Ms. Stoll suggested that the events be diversified so that they are not all focused on South Norwalk. Mr. Salgado suggested adding the film festival to the list of events.

Ms. Burnaman said another goal under events that Ms. Bisceglie suggested was prioritizing the underrepresented community groups. She said that they have connected with Filling in the Blanks recently. Every other Saturday of the month they offer food distribution at the SONO School so will be using that as an example to engage with those community groups and also to hold another bike repair clinic potentially and there is a budget this year to pay a technician from bike repair shops to help assist. Ms. Stoll suggested looking to see if any organizations would be willing to train in bike repair.

Ms. Burnaman reviewed the goals for grants and recognition and said the goal is to secure grants for non-infrastructure projects and have started to identify some potential grant opportunities. She said the commission had applied to the Active Transportation Micro Grant last year and did receive some funding and will continue to look for and apply to grants like that. She said the second goal for recognition is achieving bronze bicycle-friendly community status but would involve the process of resubmitting the application and requested a representative from TMP to help with the application along with forming a subcommittee to continue the application. Mr. Thompson said the application is due in June and that he would be willing to work on it provided that TMP is on board with the idea that it is worth submitting. Mr. Pacelli said the issue with the due date being in June is that it is in the middle of construction season and a lot of the infrastructure improvements for 2025 have not been completed yet and will also need to look at staff time and are currently stretched very thin at

TMP, especially with having two open positions and can't guarantee this can be done by the June deadline. Ms. Burnaman said it would make sense to apply for the 2026 application and still form a subcommittee.

Ms. Burnaman reviewed the goals under Get NorWalkers biking and said the goal is to continue the coordination of events to encourage more walkers and bikers last year held a very successful bike, walk, roll, to school event and she would like to build on that. She said another goal is to co-host a bike-to-work week event with local businesses and transit hubs.

Ms. Burnaman reviewed the last goals of accountability and reporting and said the goal is to get quarterly strategic plan progress updates and to present the annual report to the mayor and the common council. Mr. Thomspon said when he spoke with Mr. Goldstein, he said he would prefer that the commission compile a written progress report and send it to him, and he would schedule a presentation with the Economic and Community Development Committee. He said he would be happy to help to assist.

B. Upcoming 2025 Events

- **Bike Valet Services for 2025 Events**

  This item was discussed under the strategic plan.

C. Commission Partnerships with local organizations

- **Filling in the Blanks**

  Ms. Burnaman said she had a follow-up meeting with representatives from Filling in the Blanks and they hold an event the second Saturday of each month and would like the commission to have a table at the event. Mr. Salgado said he would like to be part of the conversation.

D. Discuss collaboration with the Norwalk Transit District on improving bus shelter accessibility and walkability.

Ms. Burnaman said that a representative from the Transit District attended last month's meeting and discussed the bus shelters.

E. City of Norwalk's Draft Complete Streets Design Guide

- **Public Feedback Period Ends on January 11, 2025**
- **http://www.norwalkct.gov/3464/complete-streets**

Mr. Pacelli reminded everyone that the comment period for the Complete Streets Design Guide began on December 12th and will end on January 11, 2025, and have been receiving some comments and asked the commission to continue spreading the word to provide comments.

VI. DISCUSSION

A. Discuss expenditures for the remaining FY 24-25 Commission Budget

Ms. Burnaman shared a spreadsheet with the suggestions from the commissioners for expenditures for the remaining 24-25 commission budget and said due to the grant that was received there are additional funds available for bike helmets, bike locks, league cycling instructor training, broachers, and special event permits. Mr. Thompson suggested adding training for commissioners, city employees, or public officials to become more well-educated on topics related to biking and walking. Ms. Stoll added a request for a bike rack wish list and helped fund it after approval by TMP. She also suggested to help fund community events that align with the commission's goals. Mr. Pappas suggested adding requests that the commission thinks are relevant and not associating a budget number to remind the commission that is something we may want to spend money on.

Ms. Burnaman said she would send the spreadsheet to the commission so they can review the potential budget expenses.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. THOMPSON MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
**** MS. STOLL SECONDED THE MOTION.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd