

**CITY OF NORWALK
BIKE/WALK COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 6, 2023**

ATTENDANCE: Tanner Thompson, Chair; Colin Grotheer; Emily Burnaman; Christine Bisceglie; Jud Aley; Sam Ebert

OTHERS: Greg Pacelli; Transportation Planner; Jahliah Green, Health Department; Ben Hanpeter; Brian Boland; Phil Chiaia; Paul Chenard; Sheri Brennan; Audrey Cozzarin

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

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments this evening.

BWC BUDGET

- General swag order
- T-shirt order for Bike Month
- Banner/tablecloth for Bike Month

Ms. Burnaman provided an update on the proposed swag order and proposed logo and said it includes T-shirts, stickers, baseball caps, tablecloth, and bike lights but the immediate need is to order T-shirts for bike month. Mr. Aley asked what the total budget is for swag and suggested including bike locks in the order. Mr. Thompson said that \$4,000 was authorized to spend on swag last month. Ms. Bisceglie said that she is in the process of gathering quotes for a banner and tablecloth, and she will share the quote once she receives it. Mr. Thompson asked that Ms. Burnaman, Mr. Aley, and Mr. Grotheer work together to get the order placed as soon as possible.

Mr. Grotheer joined the meeting at 6:05PM.

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

Ms. Burnaman left the meeting at 6:10PM.

BWC STRATEGIC PLAN DISCUSSION

Mr. Thompson presented the strategic plan that included the feedback he received from the commission and said that the responsibilities are divided into six sections, and they describe the high level of work that the commission does, what the commission is expected to do, and what responsibilities the commission should expect other entities to do. He said that the goals still need to be worked on and need to be measurable. Mr. Thompson asked if anyone had any comments on the vision statement. There was further discussion ensued and it was decided that a special meeting will be held to further discuss the strategic plan.

**** MR. ALEY MOVED TO APPROVE TO SCHEDULE A SPECIAL MEETING AT THE END OF MARCH TO DISCUSS THE STRATEGIC PLAN.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2022 TMP ANNUAL REPORT OVERVIEW

Mr. Pacelli reported and said that TMP had put out an annual report for their accomplishments and ongoing projects as well as what is planned for beyond 2022. He said the report is broken up into four different responsibilities that TMP oversees, and he shared some of the highlights of the annual report that included addressing the community's concerns for traffic efficiency and safety and will be advancing the existing grant funded projects and will continue to coordinate with DPW on the pavement management program. He said that six traffic signals were updated in-house this year to the current technology and plan on upgrading four more signals next year. TMP received nearly 300 service requests from the community and 50 of those requests required further traffic investigation. He said they continued their short- and long-term transportation planning and data collection initiatives, and the drafting and completion of the Transportation Master Plan and have submitted the RFP and RFQ for complete streets and awarded it to FHI Studios. He said they have already begun the process of getting the guidebook created and want the Bike/Walk committee to be a major part of that once the public information process begins. He said in 2022, TMP had applied for over \$50 million dollars of requested funding and have received \$3.1 million dollars in additional funding through developers for numerous transportation improvement projects throughout the city and created public/private partnerships. He said that parking operations is also a major part of TMP and oversee four parking structures, eight surface lots and over 2,000 on street parking spaces and are planning for the South Norwalk Railroad Station and Yankee Doodle Garage updates, and Park Norwalk is not just for vehicle parking but is for bike parking as well which is an added benefit. He said that traffic signal and operations oversee the traffic maintenance and operations, pavement parking management, installation of signage, and city streetlights. He said the crash data was also included in the report from 2015 to 2022.

Mr. Grotheer asked if the report is available on the website. Mr. Pacelli said "no" but that he will share it with the commission. Mr. Thompson asked what the total value was for the grants that were awarded. Mr. Pacelli said some are still pending.

CHAIR'S UPDATE

Mr. Ebert said he will be moving to Germany to work on mobility so he will be leaving his position on the commission, and he will be submitting a letter of resignation.

- Letters of support for grant applications
 - NRV T Raise
 - Redev CT Recreational Trials
 - FCG CT Recreational Trials

Mr. Thompson reported and said he was contacted this month for three letters of support from the NRV T, the Redevelopment Agency and Fairfield County Greenway Partnership.

- The Street Project Screening

Mr. Thompson said that on Friday they screened the documentary titled the Street Projects and it was well attended and was held at the South Norwalk library and was very successful and he thanked everyone for all of their help especially Ms. Burnaman for coordinating the event.

- WestCOg Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Mr. Thompson said the metropolitan transportation plan is updated every four years and they released a draft a few weeks ago and the comment period ends in three days and said if anyone on the commission wants to comment. Mr. Hanpeter said overall the plan looks pretty good and it includes adding more active transportation to the region and decreasing vehicular travel moving forward and he will share the notes he took with the commission. Mr. Chenard said that one of the things in the plan that will affect the area is a dedicated bus only lane and he has submitted a comment regarding that and suggested it be combined into a bus/bike lane, and when they are doing studies around tight corridors combining the sidewalk into a multi-use path.

- State legislative session

- SB630- Norwalk Transit District
- SB1079- Community Connectivity Grant Program

Mr. Thompson said the state is in the middle of a legislation session and bill SB-630 which is about the Norwalk Transit District and if passed would dissolve the Norwalk Transit District and would be run by the state which he testified, and the other bill is SB-1079 which is about the community connectivity grant program which would allow municipalities to apply for two projects at a time which is currently capped at one.

- Bike Friendly Community Connectivity Grant Program

Mr. Thompson provided an update on the application and said he is targeting the deadline for the fall, and he has been working with Mr. Hanpeter on the application and if anyone on the commission is welcome to participate.

- Earth Day Event

Mr. Thompson said the commission will be participating in the Earth Day event on April 22, 2023, from 11:00AM-2:00PM as was done last year and will lead or find a leader for a bike ride.

Ms. Cozzarin said there can be more than one ride and the theme for this year's Earth Day event is "getting to the green without a machine". Ms. Cozzarin said that the next planning meeting will be held on March 13th at 12:00 PM. At St. Paul's Church. Mr. Aley said he will request free parking from the Parking Authority.

- **NRVT Grand Opening**

Mr. Thompson said he and Ms. Burnaman have been working with Ms. Rosett on the NRVT grand opening and will start with the ceremony at the trailhead and will then walk to Union Park.

- **Calf Pasture Beach Open Street Event**

Mr. Thompson said he has been working on this project with TMP and Recreation and Parks and he has been working on traffic flow plans for the event for the proposed event on May 13th that would involve taking two lanes on Calf Pasture Beach Road and turning them into a temporary greenway for people for walking, biking etc. He said once the event has been approved if anyone on the committee would like to lead a programming event they are welcome to. He said he will be attending the Traffic Authority meeting on March 20th and Mr. Boland and Mr. Hanpeter will be filling out the special event permit.

- **Bike-to-Work Week**

Ms. Bisceglie reported and said that bike to work week is March 15th- March 21st and will be setting up four stations in the mornings for people to stop. She said there will be another meeting held at the end of the month for anyone who wants to participate.

TMP UPDATES AND REQUESTS

- **Capital Budget Request for East Avenue Planning Study and Design**

Mr. Pacelli reported and said this item was not included in the CFO's recommended budget and if anyone would like to see his recommended budget it is available on the Finance department's website. He said the mayor has not yet sent in his recommendations and the original request was for \$750,000 for East Avenue and Mr. Travers will advocate through the mayor's submittal of \$400,000 for the planning and design study. He said the CFO did recommend \$750,000 for next year's budget and if the commission would like to advocate for any item moving forward that was not included in the recommended budget to contact their Common Council representative. Mr. Thompson asked if the \$400,000 would be enough for the planning and design. Mr. Pacelli said it is a large area, but it may be enough for the planning and design phase.

- **Next steps for using sidewalk audit for on call concrete contract.**

Mr. Pacelli said that they have received approval from the Common Council for the concrete services contract and gives the opportunity to have an on-call contractor to install sidewalks around the city. Mr. Grotheer asked if it would include ADA ramps at sidewalks. Mr. Pacelli said if it were an existing sidewalk that would fall under the purview of DPW this would be to fill the gaps where there are no existing sidewalks. Mr. Thompson asked if the first round of projects have already been determined and the next round will be determined based on prioritization from the sidewalk audit data. Mr. Pacelli said "yes". Mr. Thompson asked if the results from the

sidewalk audit will be shared with the public. Mr. Pacelli said “yes” and that the map will be on the website.

- Signage at new SoNo station garage bike parking

There was no update.

- Bike Rack purchasing and business request form.

Mr. Pacelli said he is waiting on the final two quotes for the hoop style bike racks that will be placed throughout the city and will keep the committee updated on the timeline of the installations. Mr. Thompson asked how many bike racks will be purchased. Mr. Pacelli said approximately 20 but that does not include the artistic bike racks. Mr. Thompson said he was contacted by someone in the community who is interested in the old-style bike racks if they are removed. Ms. Bisceglie suggested the newer style bike rack be placed at city hall.

Mr. Thompson said it was previously discussed to have a form for businesses to fill out if they are interested in having a bike rack in front of their business and asked if they form can be put on the website before September. Mr. Pacelli said “yes”. Mr. Aley asked if there is any thought to install additional bike repair stations. Mr. Pacelli said that one was installed in the SONO garage. Mr. Aley suggested that instead of purchasing more bike racks to purchase additional bike repair stations at high use locations. Mr. Pacelli said that can be considered prior to placing future orders.

I-95 EXIT 16 INTERSECTION DESIGN AT EAST AVENUE, CT DOT PROJECT UPDATE

Mr. Pacelli said there is no update at this time for the conceptual plans for East Avenue but CTDOT is considering the diamond interchange for that section but there has not yet been a formal conceptual plan released but he will share any updates for CTDOT with the commission. Mr. Grotheer suggested that TMP contact the CTDOT to see how many options are on the table. Mr. Aley asked if the crash data is available. Mr. Pacelli said “yes” and is on the crash data repository. Mr. Thompson said he will provide the link.

Ms. Burnaman rejoined the meeting at 7:45PM

VICE CHAIR ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr Aley said that he will be stepping down at Vice Chair of the commission but will still be a commissioner.

- ** MR. ALEY MOVED TO NOMINATE MS. BURNAMAN AS VICE CHAIR.**
- ** MS. BISCEGLIE SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 6, 2023

- ** MR. ALEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**
- ** MS. BURNAMAN SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Bisceglie said that a Norwalk resident was struck and killed by a car in Westport on Saturday. There was a moment of silence.

Mr. Chiaia said the Norwalk Tree Alliance will be sponsoring a bike ride on Saturday at 9:00AM. Mr. Thompson said that the commission will be co-sponsoring the ride and that Mr. Chiaia will be leading the ride and that it will begin at Fodor Farm and to the Farm Creek Preserve and back.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. BURNAMAN MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:55PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd