

**CITY OF NORWALK
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 5, 2024**

ATTENDANCE: Joshua Goldstein, Chair; Heather Dunn, James Frayer, Jalen Sead, Barbara Smyth, Darlene Young

OTHERS: Council Member N. Eaddy, Council Member A. Wennerstrand; Sabrina Godeski, Director of Business Development and Tourism; Greg Pacelli, Bike/Walk Committee; Benjamin Yeung, Senior Traffic Engineer; Bryan Lutz, Transportation, Mobility and Parking Assistant Director

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Goldstein called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Council Member Goldstein called the roll and announced that there was a quorum present.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no one present who wished to address the Committee at this time.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting: November 7, 2024

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SEAD MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 7, 2024 REGULAR MEETING.**

The following corrections were noted:

Page 2, paragraph 2, line 1: please correct the spelling of “Ms. Smythe” to “Ms. Smyth”
Page 2, paragraph 3, line 4: please correct the spelling of “Mr. Traverse” to “Mr. Travers”

**** THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 7, 2024 MEETING AS CORRECTED PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (FRAYER, SEAD, SMYTH AND YOUNG) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (DUNN).**

NEW BUSINESS

A. Transportation, Mobility, and Parking

1. Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling, to execute Amendment 1 to the Agreement between the City of Norwalk and Stantec Consulting Services Inc. for Project Closeout Services for Norwalk River Valley Trail-Phase 2 State Project 102-350”, for a lump sum fee of \$40,000. ACCT: 0922 4021 5777 C0234

**** COUNCIL MEMBER DUNN MOVED THE ITEM.**

Mr. Yeung, the Senior Traffic Engineer, greeted the Committee members. He then gave a brief overview of the recent completion of the Norwalk River Valley Trail Phase 2 project. He explained that the group needs to have a consultant to organize and submit the reimbursement to the DOT. Stantec Consulting was chosen to perform this because they are familiar with all of the forms and procedures required by the State.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling, to enter into any and all documents and agreements required by the United States Department of Transportation (US DOT) to accept grant funding under the Safe Streets for All FY24 grant program (Federal Award No. 693JJ32540311). ACCT: 0924 3750 5777 C0824

**** COUNCIL MEMBER YOUNG MOVED THE ITEM.**

Mr. Yeung said that the City was very excited to be awarded this Safe Streets for All FY24 grant program funding. They will be doing this with community input and focus on underserved communities. It will be a foundation for future safety grants. He gave the details.

Council Member Goldstein said that this was the next major step for the City in developing the safe street program.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**3. Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling, to execute any and all documents and agreements required by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) to accept grant funding under the Community Connectivity Grant Program for the Hospital Hill Village District Safety Enhancement Project.
ACCT: 363751 5799 G0067
0925 3750 5777 C0649**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER FRAYER MOVED THE ITEM.**

Mr. Pacelli from the Bike/Walk Committee greeted the Council Members and gave a brief overview of the grant funding. He said that this would be used to reconfigure an intersection at Stuart Avenue, Stevens Street and Magnolia Avenue that is very confusing. He hopes that

construction will start in the second quarter of 2025. Mr. Pacelli said that they were working on finishing the design work and then it will be submitted for bidding. The local business owners are very excited to know this reconfiguring will be done on a difficult intersection.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling, to sign an agreement with the Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG) for the Active Transportation Microgrant program for the release of the grant funds in the amount of \$4,788.00. ACCT: 363752 5329 G0068

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SMYTH MOVED THE ITEM.**

Mr. Pacelli gave a brief overview of the microgrant. This will help with providing safe bicycling with providing bike helmets, bike lights and instructors to train students on safe bicycling.

Council Member Smyth asked if there was a particular age group would be targeted. Mr. Pacelli said that the group had visited a number of different schools. The Bike/Walk Commission has partnered with NPS to present the item.

Council Member Frayer asked if e-bikes would be included. Mr. Pacelli said that there had been no mention of e-bikes. However, there may be educational flyers about e-bikes about riding with an e-bike. Council Member Frayer said that he was concerned about young children riding e-bikes because of the speeds they can attain. Mr. Pacelli said that he would bring this to the League of American cyclists (15:00) for discussion.

Council Member Dunn asked if there were any statistics on whether children are riding bikes to school. Mr. Pacelli said that they had done two assessments at two schools. He said that they are working on developing an infrastructure that would allow students living nearby to walk or ride their bikes to school. However, they do not have statistics on how many students are riding bikes.

Council Member Dunn said that the students need more access to bikes and it would be good to know how many students are bike owners. It may vary by locations.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

5. Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling to enter into any and all agreements related to Improvements to Richards Avenue and West Cedar Street as part of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) Local Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) with grant funding administered through the Western Council of Governments (WestCOG); and all other agreements and documents required thereunder.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SEAD MOVED THE ITEM.**

Mr. Yeung said that this item has been presented last month. WestCOG has endorse the project and there is \$5 million dollars for a round-about at the intersection at Richards Avenue and West Cedar Street just at the Norwalk Community College. This round about will replace an aging traffic light. It will be safer, and provide some traffic calming. There will be something located in the middle of the traffic circle. NCC is onboard with the project. There is no local match required for this.

Council Member Frayer asked for a timeline on the project. Mr. Yeung said that they had started conversations with the State and NCC. There will be a public engagement stage and he hoped to have a shovel ready project in the fall of 2025 with construction starting in the Spring of 2026.

Council Member Frayer asked if there would be detours. Mr. Yeung said that detours would be incorporated in the design phase. Council Member Frayer reminded everyone that there would be some work on a bridge over the Five Mile River less than 1 mile away during the same timeframe. Discussion followed about the details.

Council Member Dunn said that at the most recent Zoning meeting, a large scale development had been approved on Richards. Mr. Yeung said that it would be outside of this project area and he did not expect it would interfere with this project. TMP is aware of this development project. Council Member Dunn expressed concerned about the timeline. Mr. Yeung said that he did not know what the timeline was for the residential project but would look into it.

Council Member Sead said that having some inconvenience in 2026 will be hard, but at the end of project, he felt that it would be a major improvement. Mr. Yeung agreed and noted that it would make it safer for those walking up from Route 1 to the school.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling to enter into a License Agreement for Vehicular Parking with the Connecticut Department of Transportation for property located along Monroe Street, adjacent to the New Haven Main Rail Line.

**** Council Member Frayer moved the item.**

Mr. Lutz, the Transportation, Mobility and Parking Assistant Director, greeted the Committee and spoke about a 10 space parking lot by the rail line. The parcel is owned by the State and there have been concerns that the State would suddenly not allow the Police vehicles to park there without notice. He explained that this agreement would allow police vehicles to park there without being removed by the State. The City will receive notice if they have to move the vehicles for rail line maintenance.

Council Member Young asked why it did not specify the Norwalk Police Department. Council Member Goldstein said that it was the City of Norwalk agreement, not between the Norwalk Police Department and the State. Mr. Lutz said that the Police Department were concerned that they would show up one day and have the State tell them they can't use the lot.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

B. Business Development and Tourism

1. Authorize Mayor Harry W. Rilling to execute a contract with Cultural Planning Group in an amount not to exceed one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) to complete the Arts and Cultural Plan. ACCT: 140000-5796-ACMF2

**** COUNCIL MEMBER YOUNG MOVED THE ITEM.**

Ms. Godeski, the Director of Business Development and Tourism, greeted the Council Members and gave a brief overview regarding accepting funding for the Arts and Cultural Plan. The goal is to outline what is needed in the City and what already exists. She listed a number of items that they might be able to do with the funding and the previous plans that were done. Three different firms were interviewed. The price points were all about the same and the awarded group has a Spanish speaking staff member. The funding will cover designing the document and their travel costs.

Council Member Frayer asked how much time the consultants will be spending in the City. Ms. Godeski said that they expected to be present for three meeting with the public and two meetings with the steering committee. The City staff can present the final document to the Council. She added that the consultants will be making general suggestions about how to handle or display the artwork.

Council Member Goldstein said that many people have been working on this for a long time and this item was a major step forward. It will allow the City to apply for grants.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OLD BUSINESS

There is a Holiday Extravaganza on December 7th at 50 Washington Street and all are welcomed.

The Holiday Christmas Tree Lighting will be on December 6th outside City Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER FRAYER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services