

**CITY OF NORWALK
BIKE/WALK COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 5, 2018**

ATTENDANCE: Nancy Rosett, Chair; Colin Grotheer; Kevin Kane; Peter Libre; Jud Aley;
Mike Heslin; Deborah Lewis

OTHERS: Paul Sotnik, Civil Engineer DPW; Kaitlin Latham, Health Dept.; Deanna
D'Amore, Director of Health; Tim Sheehan, Executive Director
Redevelopment Agency; Wendy Bjerke, Sacred Heart University

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Rosett called the meeting to order at 6:01PM. A quorum was present.

1.PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one from the public present.

2. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 5TH MINUTES

- ** MR. KANE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.**
- ** MR. HESLIN SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Bike Plan

Ms. Rosett said that the bike plan has had two focuses. One is the planning for spending the approximately \$38,000 that is left over in this fiscal year, and the other is looking ahead to fiscal year 2018/19. Mr. Grotheer reported that he had received the GIS data from the City which he has imported into Google Maps. He presented the overlaying of the completed facilities and said that in this current fiscal year they are looking to spend the remaining budget money on the east side of town including parts of routes 53 and 136. The City has the permission from the State to put bicycle facilities on Route 136 as long as we pay for it. We would need to apply for permission for Route 53. Mr. Sotnik

said that DPW will put the plan together and submit it to the State for the permit. Mr. Libre asked if they will be bike lanes or sharrows. Mr. Grotheer said that they are mostly sharrows, but there are a few sections where the road is wide enough for bike lanes. Mr. Libre said that everyone feels most comfortable with a protected bike lane and there are not many places where there is room, but the next best thing is a bike lane which is definitely better than a sharrow and asked if we feel like we are hurting somebody or embarrassed to install bike lanes. Ms. Rosett said that we want to put bike lanes in where it makes sense to the average person. Mr. Grotheer said for 2019/20 they will be focusing on the west side of town.

b. Bike Share

Ms. Rosett said Kathryn Hebert will be heading this program on the City side. Ms. Hebert and Ms Rosett went the New Haven for the soft launch of their bike share program which is being done by one of the two vendors that we are considering for Norwalk. She said that the group is meeting next week and they hope to either select a vendor, or determine what other information is needed and hopefully by the next meeting that a vendor will have been selected. She said that once the vendor is selected it will need to go to the Legal Department and ultimately be approved by the Common Council. They are hoping to launch in the spring of 2019.

c. Pedestrian Plan

Ms. Lewis provided a background of the pedestrian plan. She said that she hopes to have a draft of the plan and the goals done by the end of this month .She said that the group has identified seven goals and have taken some actions steps within those. She said that the goals are as follows:

- Expand the NorWalker program
- Increase awareness of walking in the Norwalk public schools and the benefits and techniques of walking.
- Develop relationships with city community leaders with a stake in safe walking and running.
- Understanding the engineering and design components of safe and pleasant walking and running.
- Identify pedestrian funding sources.
- Review existing applicable Federal, Local and State regulations in order to inform Norwalk's pedestrian access policies.
- Identify guidelines and scorecards for measuring the extent of walking and running

She said that she welcomes specific feedback and thinks they are several weeks away from finishing the plan. Ms. Rosett said that she thinks the specific action steps will be incorporated into the Commission's annual strategic plans. Mr. Libre said he wonders if it will be helpful to either incorporate or have a separate approach identifying the places that are most dangerous for pedestrian by looking to see where people walk in the street.

Ms. Rosett said that she will circulate Ms. Lewis's document to the Commission for review and comment.

d. Pump Track

Ms. Rosett said that the New England Mountain Biking Association has a grant that the group working on the pump track has applied for. The grant deadline was March 1st. She received an email from Mr. Waldman stating that they had submitted the grant application. She said that there were many letters of support and that there is a private individual who will contribute \$5,000 to the pump track after we have received the first \$10,000 worth of donations or grants. Mr. Heslin asked Ms. Rosett if she had received an email on what was donated from the Fairfield County Giving Day. Ms. Rosett said that she did not but that she will follow up.

e. Safety/Outreach

Mr. Aley said last month we had discussed the Maple Street issue and that there were different opinions on how it should go out to the press. At the sub-committee meeting they took Mr. Kane's talking points and had sent it to Ms. Rosett and gotten her approval. Mr. Kane said that he had sent it to the Norwalk Hour and will be sending it to Nancy on Norwalk. Mr. Aley said the next talking points to the press will be highlighting NCC and what was done there. Mr. Aley said that if anyone has anything that we have worked on that they would like highlighted to email him. Mr. Kane said that one of the goals is to get into the schools to discuss bike helmet and safety and to try and get into one school by June. Ms. Rosett suggested he contact Ms. Latham or Ms. Argondezzi for contacts at the schools.

f. Strategic Plan

There was no report.

g. Website

This was discussed under item 4A of the agenda.

4. OLD BUSINESS

a. Walking Update

Ms. Latham said that Ms. Lewis leads the walks in Silvermine each month and that this past weekend led a group of five and that next walk is scheduled for April 7, 2018, at

8:00AM and will meet at Silvermine School. She said she is still working on getting volunteers to run the other neighborhoods and that the beach walks that occurred over the summer prior to the concerts on Wednesday nights will begin again this summer. She said there will be a meeting with the Parks and Recreation Department to discuss incentive ideas.

Ms. Latham said that last Friday she met with the “Watch for me Connecticut” campaign which is focused on pedestrian and bicyclist safety and promotion. They have hired someone to manage and oversee the campaign and are looking for ways to partner with the Commission because they are very impressed with how much we have gotten done in such a short amount of time. She said that they would like to meet with us in the next couple of months to see how we can best partner with them. She presented their website and said that they have a lot of great resources that we can promote via social media or other events.

Ms. Latham said that there is a grant opportunity from the Connecticut Keep Kids Safe grant program, and that the grant is between \$5,000 and \$10,000. They would like to fund programs that are going to improve the health and safety for kids under the age of 18. She said if anyone would like anymore information she would get it and pass it along and that the application is due on May 14, 2018. She said that she will send the RFP via email and decide if we want to apply.

Ms. Latham presented the website and said that it has been updated and includes the GIS maps and said it will be a great resource and is user friendly. Ms. Latham said that if anyone had any feedback or changes they would like to propose to contact her.

b. DPW Update

Mr. Sotnik discussed the paving schedule. Ms. Rosett said that if anyone sees any streets that they think should be discussed with DPW to install bike facilities to contact either her or Mr. Sotnik.

c. Crosswalk on Wall Street @ Knight Street

Ms. Rosett said to install the crosswalk a parking space would need to be eliminated and it will need to go to both the Parking Authority and the Traffic Authority for approval. Mr. Sheehan asked if there is already a plan designed for that. Mr. Sotnik said “no” Mr. Sheehan said it will be helpful to see what the plan on the crosswalk design will be once it is completed. Mr. Sheehan also said if on street parking space is going to be taken there will be an impact on the businesses adjacent to that space and suggested that the businesses be informed and get a sense of support. Mr. Sotnik said that DPW will put together a layout and talk with the Redevelopment Agency. Once approved by Mr. Chimento, he would suggest presenting it to the businesses in the area.

d. Bike Trough Repair

Mr. Sotnik said that Mr. Yeosock will be reviewing.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. Sacred Heart University's Goat Trails Project

Ms. Bjerke presented the Goat Trails Project that looks at problematic pedestrian areas, specifically goat trails. Her students combined the CDC walk ability audit with a mapping tool to identify a goat trail, create a presentation and report it to the class. In many cases they have selected goat trails in their local town and presented to their local Health Department which has resulted in changes. She said that she has also been putting all the goat trail data into a database. Mr. Libre said a good project be to see how many people walk in the roadway on East Avenue to get to the railroad station. It should not be difficult to put a walk able spot there.

b. Intersection of Glover Avenue and Grist Mill Road

Mr. Sotnik said to date no plans have been received by the DOT regarding the intersection. Ms. Rosett said that this should be kept on the radar to be sure as things progress that there is improved pedestrian and bicycle access. It was suggested that roundabouts be discussed as an option.

6. ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. LIBRE MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** MR. GROTHEER SECONDED THE MOTION.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:40PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd
Telesco Secretarial Services