

**CITY OF NORWALK
BIKE/WALK COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 7, 2019**

ATTENDANCE: Nancy Rosett, Chair; Barbara McCabe; Jud Aley; Christine Bisceglie;
Gary Washinsky; Brian Brown; Jim Carter (6:10PM) Colin Grotheer
(6:20PM)

OTHERS: Deana D'Amore, Director of Health; Greg Pacelli, Transportation Planner;
Kathryn Hebert, Director, Transportation, Mobility and Parking; Sabrina
Church; Director of Business Development and Tourism; Tanner Thompson

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Rosett called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment this evening.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. September 9th

**** MR. ALEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**

**** MS. MCCABE SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. CHAIR'S REPORT

Ms. Rosett said because we are a public commission it is possible the commissioners' emails can be subpoenaed for a Freedom of Information complaint. She said that some members have chosen to create an email account that is just dedicated to the Bike Walk Commission and she

requested that if anyone would like to do that to let her know what the email address is so she can use it for communications.

Ms. Rosett said that she will be having business cards made for the commission and they will include the logo, contact information and website information.

Ms. Rosett said the Ms. Bisceglie attended the Common Council meeting on behalf of the commission for the rainbow crosswalk and it was approved. Ms. Hebert said that there is a meeting scheduled this week and the contract has been signed. She said the plan is to have the installation completed by the end of October or the beginning of November. Ms. Bisceglie asked if a ribbon cutting ceremony will be held. Ms. Hebert said “yes”.

Ms. Rosett said that she had met with the Ordinance Committee in September and she presented the proposed Ordinance change to the commission. She said the proposed change includes the removing the Director of Public Works because that position no longer exists adding the Chiefs of Economic and Community Development and Operations and Public Works as well as the Transportation Planner as ex officio members. She said that staff support will also be moving from Public Works and Health to Economic and Community Development. She said that the Ordinance Committee did accept the changes that were recommended and they will now hold a public hearing and then will go to the Common Council for approval and the process should be completed by November.

Ms. Rosett asked Mr. Aley to report on the sidewalk improvements of Woodward Avenue. Mr. Aley said that Woodward Avenue is on the paving schedule for 2023 and as a temporary repair the sidewalks have been overlaid with asphalt and has made a huge improvement.

Ms. Rosett said that she met with the Health, Welfare and Safety Committee at the end of September and she presented the evaluation of the Strategic Plan for 2018/19 and the goals for 2019/20.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Bike Plan

Mr. Aley said there is a meeting scheduled on September 16th with Mr. Yeosock. Ms. Rosett said that she is hoping the plan will be presented to the full commission in November.

b. Events

Ms. Rosett said the Oyster Cross Training Series are held each Tuesday during the month of September and are held at Oyster Shell Park. She said that Mr. Aley and Mr. Grotheer had gone and distributed information about the Bike Walk Commission.

Ms. Rosett said this past Saturday she and Ms. McCabe attended the DPW Open house and Touch- A –Truck and that 1600 people had attended. She said that they had given out backpacks and the KIWANIS Club had given out bike helmets. She said they also collected names for the mailing list and are now up to 174 people.

c. Bike Share

Ms. Rosett said that she that unfortunately the Bike Share will not launch in October and are currently regrouping with the vendor to establish a new plan.

d. Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT)

Mr. Carter said that progress is being made but continues to be frustrating. Ms. Hebert said that Mr. Yeosock will be receiving a report from STANTEC next week.

e. Pedestrian Plan

Ms. Brown reported and said that they had covered half of the Pedestrian Plan at the last Pedestrian Committee meeting and will finish at the next meeting. He said that next meeting is scheduled for October 22, 2019 at 2:00PM at the Health Department.

g. Safety and Education

Ms. Bisceglie asked if any of the educational materials were distributed at the Touch-A-Truck event. Ms. Rosett said “yes” as well as the helmet fitting instructions in both English and Spanish.

Ms. Bisceglie said that she had received an email from New Haven which said in August six pedestrians were hit and five were killed. They will be holding a free class run by League Cyclists Instructors to anyone in New Haven to anyone over 16 years old. She said she had spoken previously about approaching businesses to become bicycle friendly and receive a designation from The League of American Cyclists. She provided a background on The League of American Cyclists and said that it was founded in the 1800’s and that there is a history behind the organization. She said she would like to provide an update from the league each month to the commission because they provide a lot of updates on statistics and complete streets. Ms. Rosett suggested Ms. Bisceglie include it as part of her report each month.

Ms. Bisceglie suggested that when the Bike Share kicks off that a rules of the road session is offered for whoever may be interested.

h. Strategic Plan

Ms. D'Amore said that she will present the updates to the Strategic Plan at next month's meeting.

i. Website

Mr. Brown said that he and Ms. Rosett had met this morning and discussed the changes to the website. He presented the changes and said they will include updating the logo and will be adding a link to the city's calendar. The goals will be updated later this week. He said that he had sent the changes to Ms. Argondezzi and she will be making the changes within the next couple of days. Ms. Bisceglie suggested rather than having "helpful links" to change it to "resources". Ms. McCabe suggested the NorWALKer program be added to the list. Mr. Grotheer suggested separating out the city resources and external resources. Ms. Rosett said that if anyone thinks of any additional links to add to contact Mr. Brown.

j. Walking Update

Ms. D'Amore said that Ms. Argondezzi will be summarizing the results from the School Committee walkability survey and present them at the next meeting and as of September 25th she had 164 responses.

Ms. D'Amore said the new Health Education Associate is scheduled to start on October 15, 2019.

k. Transportation, Mobility and Parking Update

Mr. Pacelli reported and said that they have been working with Steven Birney who is the city's GIS Analyst to update the bike lane and sharrow locations across the city. He said once that is completed, he will coordinate the information with Mr. Brown so the website can be updated.

Mr. Pacelli said the Connecticut Connectivity Grant Project for RT. 136, Richards Avenue up to RT. 123 including the new sidewalks across from Ponus Ridge Middle School is in the process of being finalized on the city side and they will be submitting the

plans to the State DOT for approval. He said once they have approved it the project will go out to bid with the scheduled the installation next summer.

Mr. Pacelli said that they are also working on some safe route to schools projects and will keep the commission updated. Ms. Bisceglie suggested also looking at senior housing areas that are in need of sidewalks.

Mr. Aley said he believes the Human Relations Commission has funds available for crosswalks and ADA ramps. Ms. Hebert said they received a grant for ADA compliance citywide. Ms. D'Amore said she will contact Ms. Keegan.

5. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed this evening.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Calendar of Meetings for 2020 (see attached)

Ms. Rosett presented the meeting schedule for 2020 and said the meetings will be held the first Monday of each month with the exception of September due to Labor Day and that all the meetings will begin at 6:00PM.

****MR. ALEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2020.**

**** MR. BROWN SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

b. MLK Corridor

Ms. Church provided a background on herself and said that she has been in her new role as the Director of Business Development and Tourism for two months and that prior to that she was with the Redevelopment Agency for three years.

Ms. Church said that the state has partnered with Freedom which is a faith-based organization planning firm to do an initiative that encapsulates the MLK corridor for a variety of different planning reasons including small scale improvement planning for three MLK corridors in the State of Connecticut. Norwalk happens to be one of them. She said they had started this in 2017 and have just gotten to the point of doing outreach to see what people would like to see happen in the area. She said that two open houses were held last week at the South Norwalk Library and both were well attended. She said some of suggestions were centered around the South Norwalk Railroad Station and bike and pedestrian infrastructure, and a huge demand to have MLK have a complete streets concept. Some of the suggestions may be impossible because it is a dedicated truck route and a state road, but we may be able to look at some of the ideas going forward with improvements to the nearby neighborhoods. Ms. Rosett asked if changes to MLK are impossible or just very lengthy. Ms. Hebert said it would be very lengthy but by looking at the surrounding neighborhoods they can make a big difference that way. Ms. Rosett said she bicycles on MLK fairly regularly and she does not have a problem with trucks. Mr. Aley said he agrees. Ms. Biscegle asked if evening truck traffic was discussed at the meeting and suggested negotiating reducing the hours of truck traffic with the state. Ms. Church said “no” but that they are in the process of creating and distributing a survey that will also be pushed out through social media. Ms. Rosett said that she would like to see one lane of traffic in each direction on MLK with a dedicated left-hand turn which would allow for bike lanes on either side. Mr. Thompson asked what data if any is there on the trips that people currently make within Norwalk. Mr. Pacelli said they have data from traffic counts that were done in certain areas but not citywide.

Ms. Church said they would like to have the input of the Bike Walk Commission on some intersections that they think are problematic and areas they think should be focused on.

- c. Discuss additional crosswalks on Wall Street at the intersection of Commerce, River and Isaacs Streets.

Mr. Aley said at the intersection of Isaac Street @ Wall Street and River Street @ Wall Street there are no crosswalks and people cross there often. Wall Street is designed for cars but needs to be more pedestrian friendly. Mr. Pacelli said part of the POCD is to update Wall Street and there are grants to update the sidewalks, lighting and traffic signal. Mr. Grotheer said that he knows the city is focused on getting grants but it is possible if small investments are made that development would become more attractive and private developers would purchase parcels and make the needed renovations. He said that the tax base would then be there because the project would be more desirable and then there would not be the need to apply for grants. Ms. Hebert said there are funds available that could go towards this request and staff will look into it. Mr. Grotheer said he agrees that schools are a priority but that urban core areas also need to be looked at. Mr. Carter said that he believes that within the next one to three years that the Norwalk River Valley Trail will be coming down from Cross Street into this area and will be dumping a lot of people in the area so something is needed in the area that works better

than it does now. Ms. Rosett suggested that Mr. Grotheer and Mr. Aley meet with Mr. Pacelli and Mr. Yeosock for further discussion.

d. Signage for Bike Trough on Clay Street

Mr. Aley said a sign is needed at the bike trough on Clay Street. Mr. Thompson suggested a sign that is language agnostic. Ms. Rosett requested that Mr. Brown sketch a design for the sign.

Mr. Brown said that sidewalks and bike paths are the two issues that people think the Bike Walk Commission deals with and he would like to propose that part of their plan is to increase both of those issues. He said that he has had an email correspondence with Anthony Carr and he said there are approximately 240 center line miles of City Street, and the miles of sidewalks and bike paths should be used as markers and each year should increase.

7. ADJOURNMENT

- ** MR. BROWN MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** MS. BISCIGLIE SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:40PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd
Telesco Secretarial Services