

**CITY OF NORWALK
BIKE/WALK COMMISSION
OCTOBER 5, 2020**

ATTENDANCE: Nancy Rosett, Chair; Barbara McCabe; Jud Aley; Christine Bisceglie;
Colin Gotheer; Tanner Thompson; Sam Ebert

OTHERS: Greg Pacelli, Transportation Planner; Kathryn Hebert, Director of
Transportation, Mobility and Parking; Michael Yeosock, Asst. Director of
Transportation, Mobility and Parking; Gary Washinsky

To allow public access, anyone may access a meeting by telephone, Zoom, and/or the City of
NorwalkYouTube channel. Specific instructions and links can be found at
<http://www.norwalkct.org/meetings>.

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

1. PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input this evening.

2. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 14TH MINUTES

****MR. EBERT MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.
** MR. GROTHEER SECONDED THE MOTION.
THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. CHAIR'S REPORT

There was no report given.

4. STANDING REPORTS

a. Transportation Planner Update

Mr. Pacelli reported and said the connectivity grant plans are still in the process of being reviewed by the State but that the funds have been allocated.

Mr. Pacelli said that Highland Avenue is in the final phase of design and the funds have also been allocated.

Mr. Pacelli said there was a meeting held to discuss the improvements for Seaview Avenue and have established a preliminary concept design and will be working towards a final design. He said that they have gotten some data collection which includes traffic counts from the State and crash data from January 2015 to date, and there were eight accidents that occurred between East Avenue and First Street, and are analyzing those as they work on the design concept. He said since they last met, they have come up with a couple of other designs and will share it with the commission at a later meeting. He said that they will continue to put together some outreach plans with the property owners to make improvements to the roadway which will help with the design. He said the committee had also discussed Hanford Place and will be installing sharrows and signage which will connect to Monroe Street. Ms. Rosett said that there are funds in the commission's capital budget to pay for the painting for Hanford Place. She also complimented Mr. Pacelli and the team regarding their work on Seaview Avenue. Mr. Pacelli said as the project moves forward, he will keep the commission updated. Mr. Aley asked if Hanford Place will be done this fall. Mr. Pacelli said he cannot guarantee it will get done this year.

Mr. Pacelli said that there are a lot of people that will be retiring from City Hall on October 9, 2020, and asked that the commission bear with staff. Ms. Hebert said that 44 staff members will be retiring so the work will be reassigned and there will be a transition and consolidation and will take time to reorganize and understand what the responsibilities are.

b. Bike Plan

Mr. Aley said that Mr. Pacelli discussed this under his report but the increases in bike routes were delayed this year due to the pandemic, and he is looking forward to working with Mr. Grotheer and Mr. Washinsky and discussing the routes now that there is a better understanding of how the average daily traffic counts and speed limit effect where a bike lane can be installed and where sharrows will need to be installed. He said they will also need to rethink the routes that were determined last winter.

c. Events

Ms. McCabe reported and said she had no events to report.

d. Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT)

Ms. Rosett read Mr. Carter's report as follows:

The Missing Link has gone out to bid and the bids are due back in early November and are hoping to start construction in the spring and completed by the summer, and thanked Mr. Yeosock for his years of hard work.

The leases have all been signed that are required by the State for WilWalk and the NRVT is still working on the approvals with some of the town boards in Wilton, but it is progressing and are still anticipating to be in construction on WilWalk in the spring. There is a grant for WilWalk and as most grants it has the grantor pays 80% of the grant and the organization has to supply the remaining 20% and they did achieve the \$275,000 that represents the 20% match.

The NRVT has been working with the Redevelopment Agency on the Harbor Loop Trail and due to the amount of space between the parking lot and the Norwalk River trail. The trail was conceived as only being 4' wide instead of 8' like the rest of the trail and because the owner at that time did not want to lose any parking spaces. However, the new owner is amenable to us working with them to expand it to be 6' wide and will report back to the committee on the progress.

The NRVT is working with the commission on the on-road segments in Norwalk which consists of Calf Pasture Beach to the Maritime Aquarium, Seaview Avenue and relocating the trail head from Calf Pasture Beach to the water side of Ripka's Café. This is in conjunction with installing a bike lane on the road that goes around the parking lot so that it can be used as part of the NRVT but that it has been delayed due to the pandemic.

The NRVT has been researching larger signs to install on the roadway as well as signage that can be installed on the roadway and sidewalks.

e. Pedestrian Plan

Ms. Rosett reported and said there is a link to the survey included in the committee agenda that was discussed last month and encouraged anyone on the committee has not already filled out the survey to do so and the deadline to complete it is this Friday, and the results of the survey will be reported at the next meeting. He said the results will be used as a way to prioritize the next targets once we are finished improving the sidewalk access around the schools.

Mr. Thompson said that during one of his bike rides he had spoken to someone that has made a map of Norwalk and Stamford using Google Street view to map out where all of the sidewalks are located and the conditions. He said he seemed very willing to share the map and he will invite him to become more involved with the committee.

f. Safety and Education

Ms. Bisceglie reported and said that she did speak with the Recreation and Parks department and will be working closely with them to schedule an event this fall.

g. Social Media

Mr. Thompson presented and said last month he had spoken about outreach and that there are currently three channels and he has spoken with Mr. Ebert and Jahliah Green of the Health Department and saw a gap in both the mission statement and the goals of the commission and thought that could be a way to have a lot of impact on bicycling and walking in the city. He said when they make, they had come up with an additional goal which is to foster a community discussion about transportation as a quality of life issue and they have some ideas on how to foster that discussion. He said they also came up with ideas on how to organize the Facebook Group in sub-audiences that include NorWalkers and high school students to plan and go out on walks together as well as for transportation discussions.

Mr. Thompson said the next steps are to work with Jahliah Green in creating walking groups and asked if there is a budget for Facebook ad's which would help to open the area of effect. Ms. Rosett said the commission does have a budget and a request needs to be made to her and the commission will approve the spending based on the available funds in the budget.

Mr. Thompson invited the commission to "like" the Facebook page if they have not already done so and share the commissions Facebook page and invite people to do the pedestrian survey.

h. Strategic Plan

Ms. Rosett presented the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan and said the first goal is to complete compete streets programs and facilities for the east/west and north/south connections. The first strategy will be to work with the city to have the bike lanes and sharrowed routes implemented. She said they have the grant funding and are negotiating the details with the state.

Ms. Rosett said that goal two review, promote and update the City of Norwalk's Master Bike Plan and the objective is to determine the need for additional sheltered bicycle parking and/or secured locations at city owned facilities. She said there was a map created with all the existing bike racks are located on city property and is on the website. The next step is to identify specific sites for additional bike parking and to work with the city to add the sites that the commission identifies.

Ms. Rosett said that goal three is to review, promote and update the City of Norwalk's Pedestrian Plan and the objective is to focus on pedestrian safety near schools and the first objective is to gather information and prioritize the needs and work with the city to implement the improvements that are suggested.

Ms. Rosett said that goal number four is to review and provide advice on transportation and other projects having an impact on walking and biking in the City of Norwalk at the earliest stages possible. The objective is to work with other agencies to implement the portions of the POCD

assigned to the Bike/Walk Commission. She said she will be inviting Mr. Kleppin to a meeting to provide a broad overview of the POCD and drill down on the things that are assigned to this commission.

Ms. Rosett said that goal number five is to coordinate and promote public awareness campaigns, education and events related to bicycle and pedestrian uses. The objective is to participate in at least four community events; review website content quarterly; update social media monthly and work with the city's communications manager/grants coordinator to send news releases.

Ms. Rosett said that goal number six is to research funding opportunities to support the mission of the commission. The objective is to apply for a minimum of two grants and the objective is to work with the city's communications manager/grants coordinator and other city staff to apply for a minimum of two grants.

i. Walking Update

There was no report given.

5. OLD BUSINESS

a. Distribution of Safety Card

Ms. Rosett said the cards can be distributed virtually as well as having some printed. Ms. Bisceglie suggested having a table at the SONO Collection to distribute the cards. Ms. McCabe suggested also including the walking guides. She said that she will send the electronic version to Mr. Tanner so it can be posted to the social media pages.

Ms. Rosett said she will also speak with the library staff to see if they can include the safety cards into the bags they are using for the curbside pickup.

Ms. Bisceglie suggested giving some of the safety cards to Ms. Oster of the Early Childhood Program so she can give them out. She also requested they the cards be done in Spanish.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. 2021 Schedule of Meetings (See Attached)

**** MR. ALEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE CALENDAR.**

**** MR. EBERT SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

b. Review committee assignments (See attached)

Ms. Rosett reviewed the committee assignments and asked if anyone is interested in joining any of the committees. Mr. Ebert said he would like to join the Bike Plan Committee; the Safety and

Education Committee; the Social Media Committee. Mr. Thompson suggested adding Jahliah Green and Christine Bisceglie to the Social Media Committee.

Mr. Ebert and Ms. McCabe said they would like to join the Strategic Plan Committee.

Ms. Hebert said she will be retiring on October 9, 2020, but that it has been great working with the committee and she is happy that over the last few years that they have been able to bring the Bike Walk and Pedestrian Committee in front of mobility because it is a critical part of mobility. Mr. Aley thanked Ms. Hebert for all she has done.

Ms. Rosett also thanked Ms. Hebert for all her work with the commission and the creation of TMP has done a lot to help the progress of the commission. She wished her well in her future.

Mr. Aley suggested to include pedestrian sidewalks, crosswalks, etc. as a discussion at the Pedestrian Committee and at some point, may need its own sub-committee with Mr. Pacelli. Ms. Rosett said that the Pedestrian Committee is already doing that and Mr. Pacelli is on that committee.

7. ADJOURNMENT

****MR. ALEY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MR. EBERT SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Meeting adjourned at 7:30PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd