

City of Norwalk
Norwalk Bike/Walk Taskforce
Meeting Minutes
June 6, 2016, 6:00pm
Health Department, 2nd Floor Library
137 East Avenue, Norwalk CT 06851

Attendees: Mike Mushak, Peter Libre, Tim Callahan, Nancy Rosett, Gunnar Waldman, Colin Grotheer, Kevin Kane

1. The May 2nd minutes were approved unanimously.
2. Nancy Rosett shared updates highlighting five roads next up for paving.
3. Tim Callahan, Kaitlin Latham and Nancy Rosett met with the Mayor on Tuesday, May 31st to discuss the updated strategic plan. They reiterated the Task Force needs more teeth. We seem to be making slow progress. One example is the plan for Calf Pasture Beach Road where we thought we agreed to have four foot bike lanes and now DPW is saying they're considering sharrows. The Mayor said he wants dedicated bike lanes. We will be meeting with the Mayor and Bruce Chimento in the next week or two to follow up on progress and discuss next steps.
4. There was a discussion of signage on our proposed North/South and East/West bicycle routes with a focus on what needs to be done. There was also a discussion about fixing the bike lanes on Strawberry Hill Road to address complaints and confusion about what is/is not the bike and/or travel lanes. We need to get stripes in parking lane to reiterate it is not a travel lane.
5. The Mayor will back an ordinance establishing Complete Streets in Norwalk if we write it for him. Kevin Kane recommended tasking Department of Health Interns to research/mimic Ordinances done elsewhere in CT - others have done it, let's not reinvent the wheel. Colin Grotheer reiterated that there be an end of route or zoning feature such as a bike rack in the zoning regulations so bicyclists will have a place to park their bikes at their destinations. The key is the ordinance needs to be specific and detailed. Or it should explicitly reference appendixes of regulations that must be adhered to with no vague avenues to override - i.e. a 3/4 majority of the Common Council would be needed to override. Peter Libre volunteered to Chair the subcommittee - we need others to assist Peter. Tim Callahan noted Brian McCann, Norwalk Corporation Counsel could be source of info/pre-read of draft
6. The Mayor and his department heads are currently updating the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) as required by state law every ten years. Tim Callahan will notify us what the timing is so bicycle and pedestrian issues can be inserted including city wide bike and pedestrian plan.
7. Kevin Kane and Gunnar Waldman summarized their call with Janie Katz-Christy, Director of Green Streets Initiative - <http://gogreenstreets.org/>. Green Streets is dedicated to celebrating and promoting the use of sustainable and active transportation. Its mission is to inspire people

to rethink their commutes through its monthly Walk/Ride Days. She said the program works best when tailored to specific locality and has the pull of Corporate Challenge/Competition. Mike Mushak suggested working with Liz Stocker of Economic Development in Norwalk. Another option would be to use our existing routes for some kind of promotional program. We agreed this is a worthy program but should be tabled until 2017 due to lack of bandwidth in Task Force and it not being fully aligned with our current Strategic Plan.

8. Kevin Kane, Nancy Rosett and Colin Grotheer had a conference call with Brian Riordan of Strava (<https://www.strava.com/features>). CT DOT bought access to Metro which shows every Strava trip on every street in Connecticut. This is a very powerful tool vs sitting on a curb counting bikes. Kevin sent three emails to Kevin Tedesco at CT DOT asking for a conference call to share how DOT is using Metro but has had no response. Kevin will follow up by phone.
9. We can nominate ourselves for a maximum of three awards from USDOT, US Conference Of Mayors for the Mayor's Challenge (<https://www.transportation.gov/mayors-challenge>). Nancy Rosett will email Task Force members for their review, comment and recommendations by June 15.
10. Tim Callahan and Kevin Kane provided a recap on presenters at last Friday's Bike Walk CT Summit (<http://www.bikewalkct.org/>) - advocates all fighting the good fight to improve bike and pedestrian initiatives. Sara Bronin presented Hartford P&Z rules. The keynote speaker - Mark Fenton - www.markfenton.com - provided walk auditor training and summarized Best Practices and realities of the need for bike/ped matters to come to the forefront. Tim Callahan will follow up on mention by Dr. Mehul Dalal - CT Dept. of Public Health that funds may exist to assist with advocacy efforts. Kevin Kane will summarize Summit takeaways by June 15.
11. Jonathan McMenamin-Balano, a task force member who teaches at Norwalk Community College, asked if we could provide a link from our proposed North/South bike route, which goes by the college, to one of the train stations. Darien would be the most practical. Tim Callahan spoke with his counterpart in Darien who spoke with the First Selectwoman. She is very supportive of the idea. Also, NCC President Levinson is on board. Once our route is further defined, we will meet with Darien.
12. Nancy Rosett shared summary detailing where we'd like sharrows on Route 136 where it is part of our East/West bike route. The request will be sent to Bruce Chimento who staffs the Traffic Authority. The Traffic Authority is the body that has to make the request of the State. The request will be sent to Bruce after the meeting with the Mayor described in paragraph 3 above.
13. Nancy Rosett will change the first sentence of the proposed letter to the editor to read "This letter is prompted by the recent pedestrian fatality on Newtown Avenue and serious injuries on Van Buren Avenue" and send it to The Hour and Nancy On Norwalk.
14. Mike Mushak reported we will have 4 foot bike lanes on Calf Pasture Beach road. He reiterated we do not support the invented standard of sharrows to left of bike lane.

15. Peter Libre led a discussion of the Wall/West Ave. Plan. He suggested engaging Bret Holzwarth, the engineer with Redniss & Mead to enlist his support. We'd like to see bike lanes on West Avenue. In addition to reverse angle parking on Wall Street, there should be sharrows on the eastbound side with curbside bike lanes westbound. Colin Grotheer will rough sketch what the Task Force ask is of this area to use at our June 17th meeting with DPW.
16. Bruce Chimento had asked CT DOT for two northbound and one southbound travel lane under the reconstructed railroad bridge over East Avenue which would have allowed for bike lanes. ConnDOT mandated four travel lanes with no bike lines which is unanimously opposed by the Task Force. We will add this topic to our June 17th meeting with DPW.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.