

**CITY OF NORWALK
TRAFFIC AUTHORITY
SPECIAL MEETING
JULY 23, 2019**

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Harry Rilling; Commissioner Charles Yost; Commissioner Collier-Clemmons

STAFF: Chief Thomas Kulhawik; Deputy Chief Susan Zecca; Deputy Chief James Walsh; Kathryn Hebert, Director TMP, Mike Yeosock, Assistant Director TMP; Greg Pacelli; Transportation Planner

OTHERS: Craig Yannes, Tighe & Bond; Richard Bonenfant; Nancy Rosett, Chair, Bike Walk Commission, Bobbie Kinn; Anna Keegan, Fair Rent; Tyler Tinken; Eric Epstein; Sean Michael; Jeff Arnold; Diane Jellerette; Audery Cozzarin; John Eimstman; Brian Brown

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 4:32PM. A quorum was present.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mayor Rilling suggested that the public participate when the item is being discussed.

1. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC AUTHORITY MEETING OF MONDAY, JUNE 18, 2019.

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 18, 2019 AS SUBMITTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. APPROVE THE ROAD CLOSURE PLAN FOR THE SONO ARTS FESTIVAL FROM AUGUST 3 TO AUGUST 4, 2019.

**** COMMISSIONER YOST MOVED TO APPROVE THE ROAD CLOSURE PLAN FOR THE SONO ARTS FESTIVAL FROM AUGUST 3 TO AUGUST 4, 2019.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. APPROVE THE ROAD CLOSURE FOR MONROE STREET FROM CHESTNUT STREET TO SOUTH MAIN STREET FOR NORWALK POLICE NATIONAL NIGHT OUT ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2019 FROM 5:00PM—9:00PM.

**** COMMISSIONER YOST MOVED TO APPROVE THE ROAD CLOSURE FOR MONROE STREET FROM CHESTNUT STREET TO SOUTH MAIN STREET FOR NORWALK POLICE NATIONAL NIGHT OUT ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2019 FROM 5:00PM TO 9:00PM.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. APPROVE THE LIGHT FOR KARA 5K RACE ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 25, 2019.

Mr. Yeosock said that the route is the same as last year.

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE LIGHT FOR KARA 5K RACE ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 25, 2019.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

5. APPROVE THE WILLIAM RAVEIS RIDE AND WALK ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2019.

Mr. Epstein provided an overview of the event and said there are three cycling routes and that this is the fifth year that the event has been held.

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO WILLIAM RAVEIS RIDE AND WALK ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2019.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. APPROVE THE INSTALLATION OF DECORATIVE PAVEMENT MARKINGS ON THE EDGE OF THE EXISTING CROSSWALKS AT THE INTERSECTOIN OF WEST AVENUE AND CONNECTICUT AVENUE.

Mr. Hosten stated that the Triangle Community Center is applying for a rainbow crosswalk at Connecticut and West Avenue.

Mr. Michael stated the rainbow crosswalk has been done in numerous cities around the country to give recognition to the LGBTQ community, and to also show support from the local community for the LGBTQ persons. He said they would like to put forth an application for the rainbow crosswalk but there is a slight issue in the application regarding the indemnity agreement due to the broadness of it and requested that the Corporation Councils Office review the verbiage. Ms. Hebert said that she has contacted the Corporation Councils Office and the verbiage only pertains to applicants that will be doing the work themselves but in this case the City of Norwalk will be performing the work. Mr. Arnold requested that the Corporations Councils office provide alternative language in the indemnity agreement for clarification.

Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked if the payment for the crosswalk will be made by the applicant. Ms. Hebert said that it is a shared cost up to \$7,500 and the funds will go into an escrow account. Mr. Hosten said that they have secured the funds.

Ms. Keegan read the following statement from the Human Relations Commission into the record as follows:

The Human relations Commission of the City of Norwalk would like to express its support for the building of a rainbow crosswalk in Norwalk. One of the mandates of the Human Relations Commission is to “encourage and bring about mutual understanding and respect among all groups in the City, an eliminate prejudice, intolerance, bigotry and discrimination” and it is pursuant to this goal that we support the installation of a rainbow crosswalk.

Our society has a long history of oppression and marginalization of LGBTQ+ people. Although we have made great strides in that area, and now recognize and value the diversity of experience and understanding they bring to our community, many still remain at daily risk, when lesbian gay and bisexual youths being five times more likely to attempt suicide that their heterosexual counterparts, with LBGQTQ+ youths experiencing significantly higher rates of homelessness, and with LGBTQ+ people nearly twice as likely to be sexually assaulted, and still facing discrimination in many areas, including healthcare, employment and housing.

Although in the face of all these problems a rainbow crosswalk may seem a small symbol of acceptance, it is important not to overlook the power of such symbols to move our society forward. In order to show this recognition, the State of Connecticut has recognized June as Pride month. We at the Human Relations Commission hope to show that same recognition with the installation of this crosswalk to show that Norwalk stands against discrimination of every sort and welcomes all people of every sexual and romantic orientation, gender identity, and every sort of gender expression.

Ms. Keegan added she looks to symbols like this to see where it is safe to be out and they are powerful and important to her as an individual.

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE INSTALLATION OF DECORATIVE PAVEMENT MARKINGS ON THE EDGE OF THE EXISTING CROSSWALKS AT THE INTERSECTOIN OF WEST AVENUE AND CONNECTICUT AVENUE.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

7. APPROVE THE INSTALLATION OF A CROSSWALK WITH A RRFB ON EAST AVENUE AT THE INTERSECTION OF EAST AVENUE AND PARK HILL/ST. PAUL'S PLACE.

Mr. Yeosock said that they have been working with the neighborhood association over the last few months to come up with a solution to cross East Avenue near St. Paul's Church. He said by installing the crosswalk at the intersection of East Avenue and Park Hill will solve a lot of the issues with crossing the street. Mayor Rilling said that the volume and high speed of traffic in that area has been a concern and asked if the design will provide safety and not give someone a false sense of security. Mr. Yeosock said "yes" and they will also be installing variable messaging.

Ms. Jellerette stated that she is a member of St. Paul's Church and that this will be a way for people to safely cross East Avenue because currently it is not safe and will also be traffic calming.

Ms. Rosett said on behalf of the Bike Walk Commission they support the crosswalk and thanked the city for installing a crosswalk on the other side of the green across Park Street.

Mr. Bonenfant spoke in opposition of the crosswalk and said it is currently difficult enough to get in and out of Park Hill Avenue and by installing a crosswalk the cars will stack up which will make it even more difficult to get in and out of Park Hill Avenue. He said he thinks that it is also too close to Westport Avenue and questioned how it will be funded. Mr. Yeosock said that it will be funded through a capital budget account and that the cost is approximately \$5,000.

Mayor Rilling requested that the Traffic Department look at the area to see if there are any other traffic calming measures that can be implemented to slow traffic down.

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE INSTALLATION OF A CROSSWALK WITH A RRFB ON EAST AVENUE AT THE INTERSECTION OF EAST AVENUE AND PARK HILL/ST. PAUL'S PLACE.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8. APPROVE THE INSTALLATION OF A CROSSWALK ON WILSON AVENUE AT HIGHLAND AVENUE.

Mr. Yeosock said they recently installed a sidewalk on Wilson Avenue up to Highland Avenue and they have met with the state to allow them to mark the installation for a crosswalk and they requested that there be an approval from the Traffic Authority.

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE INSTALLATION OF A CROSSWALK ON WILSON AVENUE AT HIGHLAND AVENUE.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

9. APPROVE THE PROPOSED PHASING REVISIONS TO THE TRAFFIC SIGNAL ON MAIN AVENUE AT THE INTERSECTION OF GLOVER AVENUE AND CREEPING HEMLOCK AND FORWARD TO THE OFFICE OF THE STATE TRAFFIC COMMISSION FOR CONSIDERATION.

Mr. Yannes presented and said they had performed a review of the intersection operation and collision data and were specifically looking at the operations of the northbound left turn onto Glover Avenue and onto the Merritt Parkway. He said they had found that there is existing capacity safety issues with that movement and are proposing to switch the side street signal phases so the Creeping Hemlock goes first after the main line stops and Glover Avenue will come next. He said they have spoken to the State regarding this and have had a positive initial reaction from them but requested the approval from the Traffic Authority prior to the submission of the application.

Ms. Kinn stated that she is delighted that anything is being done with the intersection but that part of the problem is when traffic is heading north on Main Avenue and attempting to make a left onto Glover Avenue under the best of conditions three cars can make the turn, and because of the positioning of the traffic light and the stop bar once someone goes north to make the left turn the traffic signals can no longer be seen. She asked Mr. Yannes if they have considered increasing the length of the left hand turn arrow to allow more time for traffic to clear the intersection and also make a delayed green light on Creeping Hemlock. Mr. Yannes said that the issue with the timing is that it is optimized but in terms of the delay they will look at the timing of the yellow and all red and will make the adjustments accordingly. Mr. Yeosock said that it will be an improvement and an interim step until the 7/15 project.

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATION FROM TIGH AND BOND HOWEVER, THE PUBLIC INPUT THAT REQUESTED INCREASING THE LEFT HAND TURN ONTO GLOVER AVENUE WAS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNNANIMOUSLY.**

10. APPROVE THE INSTALLATION OF A NO PARKING /NO STANDING ZONE ON FAIRFIELD AVENUE FRONT OF THE FIRE APPARATUS REPAIR FACILITY.

Mr. Yeosock said that he received a request from the Fire Department to restrict parking on Fairfield Avenue in front of the apparatus repair facility. Mayor Rilling asked how many parking spaces will be removed. Mr. Yeosock said three.

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE INSTALLATION OF A NO PARKING /NO STANDING ZONE ON FAIRFIELD AVENUE FRONT OF THE FIRE APPARATUS REPAIR FACILITY.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Brown came forward and introduced himself and said he is part of the newly created Citizen Traffic Safety Committee and he is looking forward to working with everyone to improve traffic in the city.

Mr. Einstman came forward and stated that his residence at 8 Elmcrest Terrace faces the Post Road and there is currently utility work being done, and there are two police officers doing traffic control and one of the officers was on her phone and the other was doing pushups on his car and asked if having two officers in necessary if they are not directing traffic. He said he pay taxes and if he had taken a photo he would have sent it to the newspaper. Mayor Rilling requested that Deputy Chief Walsh look into the matter.

Ms. Audrey Cozzarin came forward and introduced herself and said she is also part of the newly created Citizen Traffic Safety Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COMMISSIONER YOST MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 4:47PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd