

CITY OF NORWALK  
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**CITY OF NORWALK  
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE  
May 5, 2020**

**ATTENDANCE:** George Tsiranides, Chairman; Barbara Smyth; Tom Keegan; George Theodoridis; Manny Langella (7:33pm); Tom Livingston; Darlene Young; David Heuvelman; Greg Burnett; Dominique Johnson

**STAFF:** Anthony Carr, Chief of Operations and Public Works; Vanessa Valadares, Principal Engineer; Paul Sotnik, Senior Civil Engineer; Jessica Paladino, Waste Programs Manager; Mike Yeosock, Assistant Director of Transportation; Jessica Casey, Chief of Economic and Community Development; Darin Callahan; Assistant Corporation Counsel

**OTHERS:** Diane Lauricella via email

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. A quorum was present.

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Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be read into the record, they should be submitted at least three hours in advance of the meeting start time. Please email Monique Cipriano at [mcipriano@norwalkct.org](mailto:mcipriano@norwalkct.org) to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

Mr. Tsiranides called to order the Public Works Committee meeting on Tuesday, May 5, 2020. He stated that the meeting is being done by video conference. He announced all of the

Committee Members by name and each member responded for attendance. A quorum was present. Mr. Tsiranides gave instructions on how the public comment will be addressed. Public comments via email or zoom video conferencing. Mr. Tsiranides began the meeting with Public Hearing.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

#### **PUBLIC HEARING TO HEAR ALL PARTIES INTERESTED FOR THE HONORARY NAMING OF THE PORTION OF CHESTNUT STREET FROM MONROE STREET TO MERRITT PLACE TO OFFICER CESAR RAMIREZ DRIVE.**

Ms. Cipriano read the comment from Ms. Diane Lauricella that was sent via email, she stated that she wholeheartedly supports naming a portion of Chestnut Street after Cesar Ramirez and because he has passed on after a gallant fight against a Brain Tumor the Council should unanimously vote to honor him and his family.

There were no further comments.

Mr. Tsiranides closed the public hearing portion of the meeting at approximately 7:11p.m.

### **PUBLIC INPUT**

#### **PUBLIC INPUT (GUESTS AT COMMITTEE MEETINGS MAY SPEAK TO ANY ITEM ON THE AGENDA. COMMENTS SHALL BE LIMITED TO NO MORE THAN THREE (3) MINUTES PER SPEAKER.)**

Mr. Tsiranides opened public input and went over the public input item on the agenda. He informed all of those signed up to speak to keep their comments to three (3) minutes or under.

Ms. Cipriano read an email from Ms. Diane Lauricella for public input. Ms. Lauricella stated in her email regarding the Norwalk River Valley Trail, she has been a long-time proponent of this trail even in the days when she was founding President of the Norwalk River Watershed Association. She stated that she understands that some kind of environmental review was done behind the Casatelli (?) Marble facility on Riverside Avenue. Ms. Lauricella asked if there was a professional Phase I and/or a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) done on that property? Historic records should show that the land was taken / given to an auto dealer/repair shop by the CT-DOT in the 1970's or 1980's which could lead to possible contamination from old gasoline tanks, paints, solvents, and cleaners. If so, who conducted the Phase I and/or Phase II ESA? She would like to review the report as she has over 25 years of professional experience conducting this type of assessment. She did not see any copy of report in the back up documents. If an official Phase I and/or II ESA has not been done, it should be even if the State would pay for its cleanup. It is well documented that when contamination is discovered after construction begins, it could delay expensive contractors as a cleanup is conducted. A properly-conducted Phase I ESA could help clear up any mystery and even a partial Phase II ESA could test to see the extent of contamination.

Mr. Tsiranides stated that public participation is only for agenda items. He said they do not have the Norwalk River Valley Trail on the agenda tonight but as a courtesy he offered Ms. Lauricella an opportunity to reach out to him via email and they will follow up to answer those questions.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- 1. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING OF MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2020.**

There was no discussion on this item.

**\*\*MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED THE ITEM  
\*\*MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

- 2. APPROVE THE REQUEST FOR THE HONORARY NAMING OF THE PORTION OF CHESTNUT STREET FROM MONROE STREET TO MERRITT PLACE TO OFFICER CESAR RAMIREZ DRIVE.**

There was no discussion on this item.

**\*\*MS. YOUNG MOVED THE ITEM  
\*\*MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Chairman Tsiranides read both Items 3 and 4 for joint approval.**

- 3. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO ENTER INTO A TEMPORARY RIGHT OF ACCESS AND ENTRY AGREEMENT WITH SONO TOD, LLC TO ENTER OVER A CERTAIN PORTION OF 30 MONROE STREET FOR CONSTRUCTION ACCESS PURPOSES. [SEE ATTACHED MEMORANDUM OF JESSICA CASEY DATED APRIL 30, 2020].**
- 4. 8-24 REFERRAL – DPW – TEMPORARY RIGHT OF ENTRY AND ACCESS AGREEMENT OVER 30 MONROE STREET – REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION ACTION.**

Mr. Keegan said he discussed this with Ms. Casey yesterday and for the record his question is, will the City receive any compensation.

Ms. Casey responded no. The City will not receive compensation for the Temporary Right of Entry or Access. She said they are receiving, as part of the overall project and the zoning permission approvals, approximately \$300,000.00 in streetscape improvements which include lighting, sidewalks, street trees, and bike racks. Some of these will be along Chestnut and Monroe. Sidewalks, lighting and trees will be along Railroad Place. The sidewalks along Monroe will be doubled in width. The \$300,000.00 in streetscape improvements does not include landscaping. They expect and anticipate \$250,000.00 in Building Department fees to be paid to the City for the construction of the building itself. The foundation permit was \$32,000.00. They also anticipate payment for a permanent easement which will come within the next 60 to 120 days. She said from a standpoint of compensation, they looked at the minimal amount of time that the Right of Entry and Access is in place which is a six (6) month period of time. At any point in time during the six (6) months, the Right of Entry can close by the City with notice or

the developer with notice. She said given the temporary nature of the request, they did not seek compensation.

Mr. Livingston asked if this would generate tax revenues?

Ms. Casey answered correct.

Mr. Livingston asked for an overview of the project.

Ms. Casey stated that the project is between five (5) and six (6) stories, 106 units of a mix between studios, one (1) bedrooms and two (2) bedrooms. The location is the corner of Monroe and Chestnut, all the way to Railroad Place which is the public access way to get into the train station, then it extends down Chestnut to 11 Chestnut close to the historic building. There will be a ground floor retail about 5,600 to 5,800 SQ FT. The first and second level is for parking and the apartments are above that.

Mr. Livingston asked about the building's timeline.

Ms. Casey responded that the foundation work was scheduled to begin over the next 60 to 90 days then that would give them time to work on the permanent easement, at which point in time they would take the permanent easement through the City process for a decision and they would be able to pull a building permit in approximately 90 to 120 days.

Mr. Livingston asked what the permanent easement is for.

Ms. Casey responded that the permanent easement is to access the second level of parking. The first level of parking is accessed off of Chestnut and the second level of parking would be accessed through the public access way which is Railroad Place and then turn left. She shared her screen to show the rendering and explained it to the Committee.

Mr. Tsiranides said for clarification, the items to be voting on does not apply to the permanent easement, this is just for the Temporary Access.

Ms. Casey replied this is for the Temporary Access for Right of Entry so they could lay down the foundation in a safe and secure way. There is no construction access and no construction related to this particular ramp as part of the approval. She said what they are asking only relates to Right of Entry to be able to come up against City property so they can lay the foundation properly for the building.

Mr. Livingston asked if that would affect pedestrian traffic.

Ms. Casey responded no.

Ms. Young asked about the entrance on Chestnut and if cars would exit onto Chestnut.

Ms. Casey responded there are two (2) levels of parking, the first level is accessed off of Chestnut and the second level is accessed off of Railroad Place.

Ms. Smyth asked about car traffic leaving after a train has come and wanted to know if this would be a traffic issue.

Ms. Casey said that a traffic study was conducted and they did not foresee any traffic issues. She said part of what they will be doing for transportation is actually strengthening the public access wing which is Railroad Place. They are widening the entry and exit wing where it meets up at Monroe to be able to allow traffic to flow more efficiently and effectively. There are two (2) entrances and exits to the SoNo Train Station, one (1) off of Monroe and the other is off of Henry.

Ms. Young asked if that parking is primarily for the residents/tenants that would be in that building.

Ms. Casey said it is parking for the building itself.

Mr. Tsiranides asked if they would add any pedestrian parking for the stores.

Ms. Casey responded no, not this particular project. There is consideration for an additional phase which has not yet been submitted. If there is another phase, it may be additional parking for commuters. There is no additional parking for this phase of the project.

Mr. Tsiranides reiterated that this is just for the Temporary Easement. He said the Committee will have a chance to discuss the permanent easement at a later date.

Ms. Young asked if the project was on schedule and if the soil has any contamination.

Ms. Casey said the target date was mid-April but COVID19 delayed everything. The developer is eager to get on site and they are ready to pull the foundation permit which allows them access to the site and the Right of Entry is to help advance that foundation to completion. They would like to access the site as soon as possible, shovels in the ground and work on the foundation. The delay has been a couple of weeks. Ms. Casey said she would get back to the Committee regarding the contamination.

Ms. Young asked if they are voting on the easement.

Mr. Tsiranides answered no, only the Temporary Right of Access.

Ms. Casey said that they are voting on the Temporary Right of Entry/Access which is a six (6) month period of time and can be cancelled in writing at any time by the city or the developer.

Mr. Tsiranides asked what happens if they go over the six (6) month period.

Ms. Casey answered they would need to make a request for an extension then they would go through this process once again.

**\*\*MS. SMYTH MOVED THE ITEM  
\*\*MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **INFORMATION / DISCUSSION**

### **A. DISCUSSION**

#### **1. SEDIMENT REMOVAL CONTRACT**

Mr. Carr reported on this. He said that this is the dredging project at five (5) locations. They have made very good progress with the State DEEP. Four (4) out of five (5) applications have been approved for Friendly Pond Area, Lloyd, Hunters and Kellee. They are still waiting for approval for June Avenue. Formal approval for Friendly Pond should be received within the week. Construction is set to begin by the end of May and as the other locations receive formal approval, the contractor will begin in those areas.

Mr. Tsiranides said that is fantastic. A lot of residents will be happy to hear that.

#### **2. HEAVY PIPE CLEANING CONTRACT**

Ms. Valadares reported on this. She said there are six (6) locations in this contract. They are West Cedar near Scribner, North Taylor, Andrew's Field, some County, Bouton, Surrey and Hunter's Lane. Three (3) locations have been completed and they are West Cedar, North Taylor near Oak Hills and Andrew's Field. Andrew's Field is taking a little longer because there was a lot of sediment. They are working with highway on this as well and it should be completed in a couple of weeks. Surrey Drive is next. A manhole was also elevated on Surrey Drive. They exposed the manhole located on Surrey Drive near #9 and #17. At 15 Surrey Drive there is a grate and they added a manhole cover so now there will be easy access for maintenance. They are putting a lot of effort on Surrey Drive.

Mr. Tsiranides was very pleased to hear about Andrew's Field getting clean. He asked if they have been keeping up with the schedule.

Ms. Valadares replied yes. She said they have been very lucky with construction on site. She issued a memorandum to all the contractors working in the Right of Way, to send a preparedness plan for COVID19 and they have received most of them already. All of these plans are on file with no reports from contractors that any of their employees are sick.

#### **3. FLOOD STUDIES STATUS**

Mr. Carr reported on this. They are coordinating a meeting with Woodard & Curran, the consultant for the flood study. Woodard & Curran would like to review

the proposed final draft of the executive summary and the report content which would

include a more narrow cost for the capital improvements and their recommendations. He said the City has to balance the cost to the benefit. In the last couple of weeks, Woodard & Curran were able to do some work with the stormwater model and they have a more exact precise cost and they have engineered the improvements further to what you will consider a 30% design. That is what the flood study will generate. There will be a set of recommendations, cost and 30% design. He said they will have to go into contract with them again to get from 30% to 100%. There will be additional soft costs to advance the design, bidding, and full construction. If everything goes on schedule, it is anticipated the improvements will be completed by next Spring or next Summer, depending on Local, State or Grant funding for the Friendly Pond Area.

#### **4. NORWALK RIVER VALLEY TRAIL: CITY-STATE LEASE AGREEMENT**

Mr. Tsiranides stated that this is just a discussion item.

Mr. Carr gave a brief summary. He said the Corporation Counsel assisted with the negotiation of the lease agreement with the State to allow for Phase I and Phase II environmental testing. The State was not in favor of environmental testing.

Mr. Yeosock stated that a couple of months ago the lease agreement was approved for a parking lot off of Riverside Drive. Phase I is completed. They found low risk and limited exposure in that area.

Mr. Callahan stated that he and Mr. Yeosock was asked by Corporation Counsel to put this item on the agenda. He said it was anticipated that the Phase I report would come back prior to the approval process but that didn't happen. It was put back on the agenda as an informational item because the State of Connecticut has standard specifications that essentially say they will not alter under any circumstances. Some of the language in the lease agreement gave the Corporation Counsel's office pause. They couldn't get the language changed. Ultimately they revised the specifications and the language is now agreeably more favorable.

Mr. Livingston said that Ms. Lauricella made reference to an auto body shop, did you find mention of that in Phase I.

Mr. Yeosock responded yes, it was mentioned. He said that the auto body shop is south of where they are leasing the property so the property will not be affected by it.

Mr. Tsiranides asked if those findings were posted anywhere on the City website.

Mr. Yeosock responded no and added that it is a very large document, approximately 700 pages.

Mr. Tsiranides asked if the report can be posted for the public to see.

Mr. Yeosock responded that he will work on it with the IT.

**B. MONTHLY SOLID WASTE REPORT – FEBRUARY & MARCH 2020**

Ms. Paladino reported on this. She said there has been a general increase in solid waste. Due to COVID19, more people are spending time at home so services have increased. Curbside garbage increased 10% as well as MSW.

Mr. Tsiranides asked if they are seeing less usage for businesses.

Ms. Paladino replied that they do not have those statistics. She mentioned there was a slight increase in recycling as well.

**UPCOMING PROJECTS**

Ms. Valadares said there will be a sediment removal contract kick off meeting next week. In June they will put out a bid for concrete sidewalks. Paving will begin in two (2) weeks.

The Public Works Committee all wished Ms. Valadares a Happy Birthday!

Mr. Keegan said that the day the City reopened the facility on South Smith Street, he was there and was pleasantly surprised how well everything turned out. He said the employees were very nice and helpful so he thanked them for that.

**ADJOURNMENT   \*\*MR. KEEGAN MOVED TO ADJOURN**  
**\*\*MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING:   Tuesday, June 2, 2020**  
**Public Works Committee**  
**7:00 P.M. Location TBD**