

**MINUTES**  
**WEST HARTFORD PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE COMMISSION**  
**VIRTUAL REGULAR MEETING**  
**Monday, April 12th, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.**

To view the meeting recording here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UloGJrSqZ4>

1. Call to Order, Attendance – Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM
  - a. Members present Sandy Fry, Colin Gillespie, Dan Firestone, Paul Hogan, Daniel Johnson, Ken Livingston, Jill Morawski
  - b. Town Staff present: Shari Cantor (Mayor), Ben Wenograd (Town Council), Duane Martin (Town Engineer), Matt Hart (Town Manager), Joseph Balskus (VHB Consultants)
2. Approval of previous meeting's minutes – motion to approve last month's minutes raised at 7:05 PM, hearing no objections and given no corrections the minutes were approved
3. Old Business
  - a. West Hartford Pedestrian and Bicycle Survey: Closed March 31, 2021
    - i. 1,019 Responses
      1. Early review
    - ii. Meeting Scheduled with Duane Martin and Todd Dumais on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021
    - iii. Duane Martin, the Town will use the information to address and understand issues
4. Town Staff and Consultant Reports
  - a. Duane Martin – WH Town Engineer (items not North Main St)
    - i. Discussed outdoor dining being expanded for Spring
    - ii. Changes to traffic flow for Spring similar to 2020
      1. Traffic has picked up on Farmington Ave, 3 Lanes will remain
5. New Business:
  - a. Next steps based on Consultant and Town studies
    - i. Presented by Joe Balskus, VHB Consultants, with Duane Martin as lead engineer for the Town of West Hartford
      1. Open remarks by Commission Chair Daniel Johnson, Mayor Shari Cantor, Councilor Ben Wenograd, Town Manager Matthew Hart
      2. Duane Martin provided brief history of Road Diet
        - a. Public information will be held on April 29, 2021 6PM
          - i. Recording of April 29, 2021 meeting

1. <https://www.westhartfordct.gov/town-departments/engineering/transportation/north-main-street-road-diet-study>
  - b. Trial will be conducted during 6 month period after which the consultants will provide the Town report
3. Joe Baskus presented on behalf of VHB
  - a. For full details see the video
  - b. Trial will include South of Haynes and North of Loomis Dr (closes to WH center)
4. Scope of work
  - a. Capacity analysis
  - b. Trial will be evaluated to nine factors
    1. Crash frequency and severity
    2. Emergency vehicle accessibility/response time
    3. Pedestrian and bicyclist usage and safety
    4. Intersection or roadway segment congestion
    5. Neighborhood traffic safety issues
    6. Travel time runs results
    7. Traffic queue measurements
    8. Intersection/driveway accessibility
    9. Public feedback (summarized survey results)
2. Next steps for VHB
  - a. Incorporate PBC Coments
  - b. Public Information Meeing April 29, 2021
  - c. Finalize Construction Plan
  - d. Implementation
  - e. Monitoring/Analysis Thu Dec 21
  - f. Conclusions/Recommendations Spring 2022
- ii. Recommendation is to have 12ft, Two Way Left Turn Lane, optimize traffic signaling, 5ft buffer lane South of Haynes to Fern Street,
  1. 5' Shoulders South of Haynes to North Main Street to Fern
  2. 5' South bound shoulder and 3' North Bound shoulder North of Loomis to Fern. Loomis If Road Diet is successful VHB recommends widening the road to allow 5ft shoulder South of Fern
- iii. Question and Answer from Commission and Town Council

1. Town Councilor Ben Wenograd, why not include designated bike lanes?
  - a. Balskus, bike lanes are desired, if the road diet is successful then designate as permanent
2. Ken Livingston, what is the feedback from Emergency (First) Responders?
  - a. Duane Martin, the police and fire are engaged in the conversation. No official response in writing has been received at time of meeting
    - i. Balskus explained the Two-Way Left Turn lane can be used by Emergency responders.
3. Dan Firestone, asked for clarification on the "storage"
  - a. Balskus, the distance from traffic signal to another traffic signal and the count of vehicles that can be stored in red light situation
4. Sandy Fry, how likely is it the Town would be able dedicate the funds to widen the roadway on the South sections as proposed by VHB?
  - a. No response
  - b. Mayor Cantor addressed, 1) optimistic this will be something the Town will implement 2) the Town has discussed making this part of the budget including painting
  - c. Matt Hart, the Town would plan to put the funding into the capital improvement program
5. Ken Livingston, can the South area be a left turn only and reduce the TWLTL?
  - a. Not recommended by consultants
    - i. Duane Martin, driveways are not present but the people exiting driveway will utilize the TWLTL more than a dedicated Left Turn lane, this would require a buffer to accommodate the angle of the car if they cannot navigate a parallel scenario
6. Jill Morawski, asked for clarification from Mayor Cantor regarding a comment adjustment to other roads?
  - a. Mayor Cantor, the study will help the Town make decisions on parallel roads improvements
    - i. Duane Martin, clarified this was included in the scope and part of the study
7. Jill Morawski, will the traffic behavior be affected if the buffer is used as bike lane but not signed?

- a. Balskus, the expectation is motorists, cyclists, and pedestrian will change the environment. Expect change in driver behavior with the new buffer regardless of markings
  - 8. Daniel Johnson, asked about the survey by VHB
    - a. Balskus, VHB will conduct a survey to gather feedback
  - 9. Daniel Johnson, what is the reduction in risk for every foot gained in buffer?
    - a. Balskus, does not have the information at this time.
  - 10. Paul Hogan, what is the increased travel time
    - a. Balskus, did not have exact number at this time. Traffic analysis assumed they would try and maintain similar queuing
- iv. Questions voiced by participants
  - 1. What is the expectation for cyclist at the terminals of the road diet?
    - a. Balskus, recommendation does not include designated bike lanes due to this concern, and it is time for the bicyclist to decide
  - 2. What determines successful Pilot?
    - a. Duane Martin read, 1:23:58 into video
      - i. The Trial will be evaluated to nine factors:
        - 1. Crash frequency and severity
        - 2. Emergency vehicle accessibility/response time
        - 3. Pedestrian and bicyclist usage and safety
        - 4. Intersection or roadway segment congestion
        - 5. Neighborhood traffic safety issues
        - 6. Travel time runs results
        - 7. Traffic queue measurements
        - 8. Intersection/driveway accessibility
        - 9. Public feedback (summarized survey results)
  - 3. Question was asked on 10' Two Way Left Turn Lane instead of proposed 12' TWLTL
    - a. Consultants were not recommending at this time and considerations will be made during the trial period to reduce TWLTL
      - i. No standard
      - ii. DOT requires Twelve Feet
      - iii. Ashtow, 11ft may be appropriate

- iv. Emergency Vehicles accessibility
    - 1. The width and maneuvering
  - v. Engineering judgement
4. The Town will be placed a banner on the West Hartford unity green to provide awareness to residents
- b. New Business
    - i. Commission will respond to Town thanking them for the study and updated concept plan for increased shoulder with to assist with the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists
6. Reports
- a. Update from Bike West Hartford Inc
    - i. No updates
    - ii. Ethan Frankel, has concern about cyclists will approach the word diet
    - iii. They are planning bike rides for summer
    - iv. Working on memorial plan
  - b. Update from Cycling Without Age
    - i. No updates
7. Next meeting: MONDAY, May 10th, 2021, 7:00 p.m. (Virtual Meeting)
8. Adjourn

**Convening of BIKE WEST HARTFORD INC. as needed**

Procedural note: The Chairman intends to proceed with the Commission's business as presented in this agenda. The Chairman, in his discretion, may allow members of the public to participate in the meeting on matters before the Commission. Participants using caller ID blocking will not be permitted to participate. When prompted by the Chairman, participants will have three minutes to speak, except that a person representing a duly authorized position may speak up to five minutes. The Chairman reserves the right to further limit or expand the time allotted for the participants to speak.

ANY INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY WHO NEEDS SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN A MEETING OR PUBLIC HEARING SHOULD CONTACT SUZANNE OSLANDER, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES, 860-561-7580 TWO DAYS PRIOR TO THE MEETING OR PUBLIC HEARING.