

Ward 8 NPA – Meeting Notes: 10/8/14

Commenced at 6:33 pm.

Public Forum:

1. Buell/Bradley/Isham gardening project: Oct. 10, 2014, 2PM – 3:30PM. Meet at 12 Colchester Ave., 1st Floor. Come dressed for gardening work.
2. Police Vehicle Idling: It has been noted that with an increased police presence on Bradley St. has also come an increase in the level of automobile idling by law enforcement. When approached about this by residents on Bradley, the officers have been described as being less than courteous.

Action Item: Kesha agreed to take the matter to the appropriate people at City Hall.

Election of Maria Church to Steering Committee:

Emily Lee moved that Maria Church be elected to the Steering Committee as a Youth Representative. Larry Crist seconded the motion. Maria was elected unanimously.

289 College Street Development Proposal:

Bruce Baker and Greg Doremus stated that they have a contract to purchase 289 College St. and are proposing to build an additional structure (to the right of the present building) that would have 12 single bedroom apartments. Two of the new apartments would be affordable units. The property currently has offices and a single 1 bedroom apartment, all of which will remain as they currently are. Parking would be at the rear of the building.

The presentation of the project, currently in early design stage, was met favorably.

Polling Place / Ward Clerk Discussion:

The first election for the new Ward 8 will be Town Meeting Day, March 3, 2015. In preparation for this election Ward 8 will need to identify, by Dec. 1, 2014:

- One Ward Clerk
 - Suggestions for a polling place which must be: ADA accessible, located in Ward 8, and have parking and transportation access.
 - Three Election Inspectors (residents of Ward 8 and representing different political parties)
 - Seven Election Workers (residents of Ward 8)
- Responsibilities for the aforementioned include: Ward Clerk being available the evening before the election (3PM – 7PM); Inspectors and Election Workers being available all day on election day (workers can operate in shifts).

Action Item: Identify potential Ward Clerk, Inspectors and Workers. Note, Larry Crist indicated that he would consider acting as the Ward Clerk in the event that such was needed.

Intergenerational Dialogue on Neighborhood Safety & Expectations:

Three issues were presented after seeking input from UVM students:

1. Landlord Accountability regarding housing safety and holding students accountable.
A lively discussion was held with varying points of view offered as to the challenges associated with students living in housing that does not meet codes, multiple students in a single unit and multiple units within a single building, annual student turnover and past failed attempts to address the issue. The issue of a lack of accountability on the part of landlords was a central point of discussion.
2. Student generated noise and a desire by students to be contacted by neighbors prior to the police being contacted.
Another lively discussion with varying viewpoints, including the complexity of student housing when there are students who are mindful of the noise issue living with students who are not as mindful. Several suggestions were made relative to holding beginning of the school and end of school neighborhood block parties as a way of creating a sense of community. It was also pointed out that multiple attempts have been made by permanent residents to little avail as students have come and gone.
It was suggested that this topic (and #1 above) deserve more in-depth discussion and that it may be possible that the NPA could serve as a mechanism to try and find methods of better integrating permanent and less permanent residents and hold landlords more accountable relative to how their property is being used and impacting the neighborhood.

Action Item: Explore ways to further this discussion.

3. Student safety in regard to the presence of hard drugs and homelessness in the area.
This point was not discussed due to time constraints.

Ward 1 & 8 Merger Overview:

This would be a merger for meeting purposes, not a binding merger with loss of sovereignty. Since many of the issues to be discussed by and with the two wards are similar, it would seem to make sense to combine for the lion's share of regular meeting time while still setting aside 30 minutes before each combined meeting within which to deal with ward-specific topics.

Adjourned at 8:04 pm.