



**CITY OF BURLINGTON, VERMONT  
CITY COUNCIL TRANSPORTATION, ENERGY &  
UTILITIES COMMITTEE**

c/o Department of Public Works  
645 Pine Street, Suite A  
Post Office Box 849  
Burlington, VT 05402-0849

802.863.9094 VOX  
802.863.0466 FAX  
802.863.0450 TTY  
[www.burlingtonvt.gov](http://www.burlingtonvt.gov)

**Councilor Maxwell Tracy, Chair** *WARD 2*  
**Councilor Jack Hanson,** *East District*  
**Councilor Franklin Paulino,** *North District*

**Inquiries:**  
**Phillip Peterson**  
802.865.5832  
ppeterson@burlingtonvt.gov

**Transportation, Energy and Utilities Committee of the City Council**  
**Thursday, July 25, 2019 5:00 PM**

**Burlington Department of Public Works – Front Conference Room  
645 Pine Street – Burlington, VT**

**–AGENDA–**

**1. Agenda**

MT Motion on the agenda – passes 5:03

**2. Minutes of 06/27/2019**

JH: Motion

FP: second to approve

**3. Public Forum**

Allen – Lakeview Terrace resident

Railroad facilities: Amtrak coming to Burlington as part of VT tourism, funded by taxpayers

Taxpayers should decide where a train can overnight

Can't claim zoning doesn't apply because federal law permits it. This is not the case here.

Urban reserve doesn't allow idling of cars – this is in the town plan and zoning (this proposal not conforming to this)

RPC should look into this

Why wasn't this in the evaluation criteria?

Cliff Rader – Lakeview Terrace resident

Final report is improved

VTrans is making the decision but what is the roll of the city, schedule, etc.

More transparency is needed

Railyard option needs more details

Noise is one of biggest concerns

June of 2018 – presentations said no idling overnight

Then said maybe some idling

Where does this specify in new report?

Train warning horns are a concern

No information of timing, decibel levels, other impacts on residents. This needs to be looked into.

Laura - Main Street Landing resident

Location is still at the top of list for options despite push back

What servicing will the train involve? This has not been specified

Hot start engines not running as long as it was first proposed but other things, services, sewage, etc will be done.

This is industrial things in residential areas

St Albans is a more viable option

Malinda - Lakeview Terrace resident

Burlington doesn't have a good option for the train  
Causing neighborhoods to be pitted against each other  
Decided upon slowly enough and it can go to St Albans  
In Favor of Amtrak but doesn't want it to create a diminished value area in the city

Public comment from a Councilor:

Decision making authority and the process  
Community needs to know where the responsibility rests and the process for making it  
Report is vague  
Ranking system had inherent flaws in previous reports  
TUEC communicate through DPW to VTrans that this needs more thought  
People want it to happen but don't want it to create animosity from people who are burdened (this is a small community) benefit is wide spread but burden is narrow. This can't happen  
Site in Essex or St Albans may be viable as said  
VTrans should come in and speak to all of this so the public can input

Keren Director of Local Motion

Advocates and supportive of Amtrak  
Hard to work with rail line issues  
Thoughtfulness and transparency is necessary  
Make sure people are aware before it shows up  
Benefit to waterfront but is it appropriate for train to be parked on the waterfront?  
Ranking system could be adjusted  
Multimodal center is good but don't want to set back waterfront progress  
Must allow people to continue to use the bike path and take the train

#### 4. Shelburne Roundabout Update and Condemnation Process

- a. Olivia Darisse, DPW and Laura Wheelock, DPW presenting
- b. 15-minute duration
- c. Action requested.

See memo.

Update on Project and Condemnation Process. Seeking support for advancing this project on August 12<sup>th</sup> to City Council Meeting

Overview:

Area identified as VTrans top 50 crash location. – Confusing, high speeds, long pedestrian crossings, etc.

Eligible for 100% federal funding under VTrans Safety Program

Initiated in 2008/2009 with improvement study by RSG which investigated several alternatives including the current preferred alternative. Proffered because is it safest and least expensive, multimodal accommodating, room to expand into double lanes if needed.

Full depth construction, utility improvements, connected sidewalks and crossing, lighting, landscaping, etc.

Major components:

Utilities – relining of sewer (could not withstand construction). DPW would perform work but it would be reimbursed through the state. Would start in 2020. New high/low water system, rerouting of electrical, new lighting, relocation of telecommunications, gas relocation, etc. Happens before construction of roundabout

Soils – could significantly impact schedule. Unsure how/what is contaminating. Soils investigations will be complete by the end of the year. Then city will develop soils management plan and provide to DEC in the winter and go out to public

comment for appeal. DEC approval dependent on many factors but could be next summer. Undetermined who will pay for soil management. Federal funds don't usually cover this. Still negotiating with VTrans.

ROW process/condemnation- 17 total private properties. VTrans has agreement with all but 4 properties. Currently 1 completely unresponsive 3 in negotiation. Up to another year of work to complete - important to keep moving forward in order to obtain ROW clearance and move on to final phase of design. Legal service used is same firm as Champlain Parkway so they are familiar with process.

CC BOF on August 12 for approval to set a hearing date for final property/properties. Sept 23 is anticipated date

Very thorough Traffic management plan has been developed for each phase of this project. Includes estimated durations for each phasing, sequencing for efficiency, maintaining access to businesses, etc.

This work will be staggered with work on the Champlain Parkway on Pine. If this work on Pine has not been completed yet then won't move forward with the roundabout until that is done.

See schedule in memo.

#### Questions

FP: Thoughts on one car lane option first rather than two lanes to begin with?

OD: Safer. No merging. Less confusing. Much cheaper to construct. Less of a ROW footprint

P: M-F peak hour concerns

LW: This design meets traffic volumes. Number of trips has decreased since the study was done. Could be influenced by Burlington's push for bike/pedestrian alternative modes.

OD: will cut back on idling time and increase flow

FP: insure it's not a bottleneck. Otherwise great idea. Very unsafe currently especially for bikers

LW: council presentation in August. VTrans will be there and can answer questions as they were the designers. In the past they indicated queues are all continuously moving but where lanes merge from 2-1 there is some congestion.

P: Show other options with similar traffic volumes and show how traffic flows so they can be compared

LW/OD: This is a unique site but we can look into similar cases

JH: Excited for this. How would a biker navigate?

OD: Can get on shared use path prior to entering the actual roundabout.

LW/OD: no bike lanes in roundabout but they can take the lanes as they are wide to accommodate trucks

LW: inner circle is mountable if needed to avoid bikers

LW/OD: shared use path can accommodate bikers with use of crosswalks.

JH: What happens with unresponsive Property Owner?

OD: CC necessity hearing date. Issue notice. Post for 30 days. Property owner will have chance to appeal. If they don't respond then project moves forward. Council determines compensation value for Property owner.

Public Comment: Stated it could be expanded into two traffic lanes by sacrificing the bike. This is the wrong attitude. We need to move away from cars and towards multimodal transportation.

LW: City pushed towards one lane with bike lane. We still push for this concept. This is just a fall back if huge safety concern happened.

Gene: Public Comment: Would be helpful to show where merge happens. Width of shared bike path is a concern. Riverside Ave is great. Hope this is a similar shared path. Could this design go further back? The sidewalk area could be used to expand shared use back further

Karen Public Comment: August it goes to city council?

LW: For necessity of condemnation

LW: Design is mostly finalized. Will look into merging and shared use path as Gene mentioned

Karen: Connects with Plan BTV Bike walk?

LW: They had these conceptual plans when that was made so yes

MT: Pedestrian crossings? What are enhancements?

LW: RRFBs for all 5 similar to current conditions

MT: any bus or transit stops?

LW: believes they are currently far away because intersection is so dangerous. They should remain where they are

FP: clarify motion is because of the four properties (mainly 1 property)

JH: motions to advance this condemnation to the CC

FP: Second

No discussion on the motion

FP: votes against.

Advances 2:1

#### **5. Amtrak Servicing and Storage Study**

- a. Eleni Churchill, CCRPC presenting
- b. 30-minute duration
- c. No action requested, informational only.

Anticipating Amtrak in 2022

Ethan Allen Express train line

See report.

See presentation.

Questions:

JH: what's the timeline for getting more clarification?

EC: No timeline from VTrans.

Karen: have been tracking project. Business is right there. Moving the path here is absolute and critical. Scoring noise impact but just residencies. Downtown waterfront activities, eating, outside, music – how is that factored?

EC: train is only there at night. In the evening but unsure what time. Still figuring out but need a site as well to get all the details worked out. This is a standard way of doing noise modeling. It is a good indication because train will be there overnight and residencies will be impacted.

Karen: at night there are many people at waterfront.

EC: the train will not idle. The train will be entering the station regardless. There will be little noise at night from the train.

Servicing will happen. No noise will come from the train or compartments.

Public comment: What happens below freezing temps? Won't they have to run the train?

EC: Amtrak says this does not matter. Powering up and down will take between 20-40 minutes in the morning and in the evening.

Public comment: How long to service the train?

EC: servicing may be included in this estimate.

Public Comment: Boarding?

EC: boarding and de-boarding will take 10 minutes

Public comments: we want hard answers

EC: this is what we have been told from Amtrak but they will work out details.

Public comments: no compressors?

Public comment: train won't freeze at night? Service vehicles – beeping back up is hazardous. Snow removal at waterfront was noise pollution. Prevailing wind is from the west so noise and pollution moves. Site and weather situations may not have been formally studied.

EC: we will get more information.

Public comment: how loud will pumping be for sewer and water?

Public Comment: Train cars are electric and will be heated this way. We had been told that the train will make it to Burlington in 2 years, EC stated 3.

EC: depends on Middlebury tunnel project. If this project finishes on time the train will be here in 2021.

CS: Burlington site does matter and when we can clear this up this can move forward with more planning. The longer it takes Burlington this project can be held up.

Councilor Pine: VTrans should be more involved with community during this project.

EC: couldn't be here today.

Councilor Pine: 50 million to relocate the current yard? Has anyone done diligence on if this is necessary?

EC: they said clearly they cannot have Amtrak in the yard. Moving the entire yard to a new place – 50 mil is reasonable estimate.

Councilor Pine: Public owns the land regardless of long term lease. This shouldn't be decided by the tenant.

EC: VHB met with them many times and agreed this would be difficult

Councilor Pine: this information should have been shared, he was unaware outside party looked into this price/feasibility.

FP: the yard seems like the number 1 site and this should be looked into. Concerned about the procedure for picking the site

CS: This report was just finalized last week. In an effort of transparency, we wanted to share it immediately. VTrans had little notice to make it here today. VTrans wants to make it and hear input. They want to make a decision with input.

FP: This is an amazing opportunity and a stop in Burlington would be great if it works for everyone.

Councilor Pine: spoke with Senator Ash about walking tour with VTrans present of the site. Discuss pros and cons. TUEC meeting with Senator Ash and VTrans present would be good

JH: agrees this will be great.

JH: following up on FP. Chapin mentioned Burlington's step is important. Burlington needs to give input is this what you mean?

CS: there are many things that need to be figured out and is a critical question that will effect design. Two unrelated projects that need to coordinate. This is a question for VTrans but public should be aware

JH: we should weigh in as a city ahead of this decision point.

Karen: ranking does not take into account the vibrancy of the waterfront. Big train stations can be hubs but they are designed for that. Burlington locations are all very narrow squeezed spots. If this can be designed well it could be great. Broad public should be aware of this. When that happens there will be interest. Waterfront is public space with so many people

Public comment: Is this a permanent plan for Amtrak?

EC: cannot speak to that. Problem with moving to St Albans is a very long track of rail between Burlington and Essex that needs to be upgraded. This needs to be updated before anything can move to St Albans. Very big cost with taking this train to Essex or St Albans. Extra cost of updating rail is big and timeline is unknown.

JH: Closes item

## **6. CSWD 195-201 Flynn Avenue MOU Extension**

- a. Chapin Spencer, DPW and Lee Perry, DPW presenting
- b. 15-minute duration
- c. No action requested, informational only.

CS: 16 years ago CSWD purchased this parcel of land with the understanding this would be the long-term drop off center for Burlington. Deficient and not well designed. Modern safer drop-off center is needed. A lot of change in the south end. 3 years ago councilors recommended this. District has recognized that this is an anomaly. They want the COB to acquire this property and lease it back at a dollar a year.

Asking for review and general support. To continue approved 3 year plan for another 2 years to allow for Champlain Parkway to get underway. This would allow users of this facility to enter and exit from the parkway without crossing any residential properties. Currently requires trucks going through many residential neighborhoods.

\$17,000 payment annually for the next two years.

LP: 339 pine is little more than half an acre. Would be 2 acres to develop new facility. Safety is a big issue. Good opportunity for the City to own it and lease it back. There is a property on the front parcel with 4 units that is rented out. We could use this for storage if it ever becomes vacant.

FP: Who currently owns it?

CS: CSWD

CS: should we chose to purchase it, it would be a 20 year 0 interest loan until half a million purchase price is met. Prior payments may count towards this.

FP: Why haven't we chosen to purchase it before?

CS: does the city want to dedicate .5 mill \$ of tax payers money? If parkway doesn't come through councilors are concerned. Trucks in and out of residential neighborhoods. Until there is greater understanding of traffic patterns the neighborhood wants to hold off to better understand pros and cons.

JH: if CP goes well then motivation would be higher.

CS: less traffic through residential neighborhoods. This is welcomed by the neighborhood.

CS: not being used for anything but the rental property right now. 2 acers that we would redevelop are largely unused currently.

CS: needs to be approved by the councilors. 339 site continues to serve Burlington needs adequately although it is suboptimal. 339 site is more central. This site without parkway is not worth it unless parkway comes.

FP: overall plan of drop off site? What are goals for a drop off site?

CS: we want to get 2 years because we are undertaking consolidated collection program study. If there is tax payers paying for their own trash pickup, will there be a need for a drop off center in every municipality? People seek lower cost option for trash. Climate change and disruption. 2 years to put off makes sense to make a decision.

JH: Paying people to not expand into this site?

CS: Preserving a two year option to make a decision with many unknowns. CSWD wants to sell this.

JH: if we don't buy they will sell?

CS: if consolidation collection happens they may not need this site. For now Burlington likes the option to give residents drop off centers. For 2 acers half a million dollars is rare and not near people in Burlington. We would like to keep this option for 2 17K payments.

FP: seems good for city to buy the property.

CS: if the parkway happens this is a smart investment. If no CP we have options to purchase from CSWD.

CS: BOF then Council in August. Agreement must get executed by the end of this month or their board will move towards selling.

FP: keeping this is strongly recommended

CS: Enter lease purchase agreement now with CSWD but they wanted commitments it would be a drop off center so we want an extension.

Public comment: design for dust and noise and 2 acre site should be considerate.

CS: no action but hearing general acceptance of pushing this for two years?

JH: not speaking as a council without MT but he is in support.

NB: great site for managing soils, etc.

Public comment: they would sell it at fair market value?

CS: they want to look into prices to be fair.

JH: closes item seeing no more comments.

## 7. Climate Change Resolution

- a. Committee discussion
- b. 15-minute duration
- c. No action requested, informational only.

FP: supports here as clauses. Whereas clauses have concerns. Don't dictate what a city department can and can't do but just make climate change a priority, this is important. Don't want this to hinder progress making this more a priority than other considerations such as public input.

JH: concern of it taking precedence over other considerations – this should be the top priority. We are in an emergency with climate change. This resolution doesn't say this is top priority but it says you will take this into consideration among others.

Wasn't intended to rank it above or below other criteria. Just make it a formal criteria.

FP: Could this be more of an ordinance? Every department not just DPW. Similar to Livable wage ordinance? Mandate this as a city.

JH: in favor of that as well. Need to move quickly on the issue. Ultimately, we need a comprehensive strategy. 2020 Net Zero is coming. Regardless, we need to insure this is considered by the most relevant department to the issue. Transportation is the biggest issue - DPW has control of this. Winooski Ave scoping study brought this on. It listed 10 criteria and GHG emissions wasn't in it. DPW Staff prioritizes it and cares but this will formalize it. Colchester Ave – climate change was rarely entering into the discussion. DPW should have to address emissions when presenting alternatives. Both in constructability and concepts.

CS: We are aligned with general approach. Staff makes steps to be environmentally conscious. Climate adaptation needs to be key concept. Staff has electric and hybrid vehicles. Feels we have a lot of burden and documentation with this. Is there a less process/documentation way to have this delivered? NetZero roadmap is a great tool. How can this be City wide and not administratively burdensome? Understand various groups DPW answers to. How do we reflect progress? Overall conceptual support. Would like to take more time to work with NetZero Effort to understand how we can do this in a non-administratively burdensome way.

JH: NetZero progress?

CS: staff review now. BED product so we don't want to speak to it.

JH: in terms of documentation piece - Looking for accountability rather than rigger. We don't need an exact estimate, instead could be narrative and simple.

NB: things aren't decided by DPW staff but by different members of council who have different interests. DPW wanted alternative modes but members of councils come with differing agendas. Getting opposing messages. Ultimately, not all these decisions are ours to make. Accountability is on us but we have little control of decision. We have influence as a department. Takes money and support from council and public to make these changes. Water and BED are actively looking into ways to be climate change proactive. Not all things we do are within our control. Council should hold themselves accountable and be in agreement. We as staff will then have a better chance to do what you are asking for if council agrees. Hard currently to see clear direction and be accountable.

FP: everyone agrees but then it comes to the numbers. And expenses.

JH: This would have to pass the full council. This is intended to mitigate the push back staff receives and allow it to be part of the conversation.

Gene - Councilor: This gives DPW an opportunity to teach the public how we are implementing climate change efforts. Needs to be documenting of this process and an education to the world for how we are thinking about it so we can change. DPW should not be the only department who is subject to this. This should be expanded to other departments.

CS: understand where NetZero is and what their role out is. See how JH interests can overlay with this overall plan. We need to do a better job of teaching.

FP: DPW could better communicate current projects climate change efforts. Ensure staff will be more open to coming to council with such changes driven by climate change.

JH: Example of Rob Goulding speaking to connection of freeze/thaw cycles and climate change and its impact on climate change. This is a way of cementing that in so it's always part of the discussion.

FP: incorporate this into NetZero.

JH: when road map comes out it will spark conversations. We should do things ahead of that. Include climate in the conversation when presenting by DPW.

FP: encourage DPW by talking about this by saying it is welcome.

JH: this would give DPW the backing to say we must talk about climate change.

NB: Similar to great streets standards. This can be a similar idea.

Gene - Councilor: Clarify what exactly the consideration would be to provide to council.

CS: if we can have time to consider what we want to evaluate and discuss with staff

Gene - Councilor: This will make it easier to do more for climate change.

JH: wanted to do well ahead of NetZero and not burdensome. Non-controversial. How can we do things now?

CS: requests 10 days to have internal discussion then have updated resolution.

JH: further thoughts and questions? – appreciates feedback.

Close item

## **8. Set Future TEUC Meeting date**

22<sup>nd</sup> or potentially 29<sup>th</sup> (close to Labor Day)

## **9. Councilor Updates**

No updates

## **10. Adjourn**

7:31

FP: motion to adjourn

JH: seconds