



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

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Councilor Jack Hanson, Chair, *East District*
Councilor Jane Stromberg, *Ward 8*
Councilor Mark Barlow, *North District*

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Transportation, Energy and Utilities Committee of the City Council

Tuesday, June 22, 2021 5:00 PM

–Minutes–

Introductions 5:02

Chair Hanson: Call to order at 5:05 PM.

1. Agenda

Councilor Stromberg moved to approve agenda. Seconded by Councilor Barlow.

All in favor passed unanimously.

2. Minutes of 4/27/2021

Councilor Stromberg moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by Councilor Barlow.

All in favor passed unanimously.

3. Public Forum

Jason Stuffle – Colchester Ave resident. There has been inadequate information given about Colchester Ave Scoping study. Decision to pass from Public Works Commission seemed rushed. Don't see rush to vote on this immediately. A roundabout is a hard step due to cost but it is right step for vision zero. Don't pass something that doesn't further discussion about roundabout. Consolidated collection should be municipal. Responsible employees and incentive to reduce trash and not just make profit.

Ethan Waxman – St Paul St Resident. In favor of consolidated waste collection system. Could benefit local economy, environment, and surrounding communities. Big haulers are less careful and higher cost. No need to deal with bidding and hiring out if municipal. More chance for community influence if municipal.

Martha Lang – Colchester Ave scoping: page 3 of introduction – what is shared parking, how many people on Colchester Ave will be eligible, when will it begin? Data was from 2014 and is outdated. Figures 8 and 10 – shows if bike lanes were implemented, would have bike lane within 2' of houses. Roundabout – what are dimensions? Don't see many bikes on Colchester Ave.

Tony Redington – Ward 3, St Paul St Resident. Transportation planner and policy maker. Agrees with Jason Stuffle regarding Colchester ave intersection. Transportation racism and environmental injustice need to be considered. Study in Boston Globe looked at early deaths related to automobile pollution - 22 deaths for VT. Those deaths likely occurred in older and low income neighborhoods. East Ave and Colchester is a concerning intersection for this reason. A roundabout would reduce gas used compared to traffic signal.

Sophie Aronson – UVM student living in ward 6. Lives on Colchester Ave during school year. Didn't ride bike during school year because they felt unsafe. Need to provide safe bike infrastructure to low income and students that don't have cars. This reduces emissions in transportation system. In support of consolidating waste collection.

Sarah Scioritino – Colchester Ave resident. Difficult to not afford a car with current system. Bike lanes proposed would improve feeling of safety. Have a responsibility to low income residents and students. Move away from fossil fuels. Raised bike lane supporter.

Liza Cannon – Ward 4 citizen. Went to UVM and prior ONE resident. Supports Colchester Ave bike updates. Benefit to entire City by putting fewer cars on the road.

Serril Flash – East Ave Resident. Need a culture change to focus on courteous safe driving behavior – drivers routinely stopping for pedestrians. Roundabouts are important first step towards safer ped/vehicle interactions. DPW Commissioners voted without significant data available on Colchester Ave Study. The cost differential between the two designs (roundabout vs signal) would at some point balance out when maintenance and human death costs are factored in.

David Sidelle – N Prospect resident, UVM Senior. Full support for Colchester Ave project. Traffic signal at East Ave and raised bike lane. Perception that this City is taking a strong step towards climate change but infrastructure is still car centric. Transitioning to a culture where people can sustainably and safely move to where they need to be is important. Support Consolidated Waste Collection.

George Love – Support for Colchester Ave bike lane.

Deborah Kraft – Support for Colchester Ave bike lane. Prior resident of Chase. Transportation is one of leading causes of carbon emissions in the state. We need to encourage shifting away from cars in the transportation sector. Safer to do this with bike lanes.

Nathan Greenstien – Colchester Ave resident, UVM senior. Supports Colchester Ave redesign as is. Important shift away from vehicle emissions. Supports signalized intersection at East Ave.

4. Colchester Avenue/East Ave Scoping (See Attachment)

- Nicole Losch, DPW
- 30 Minute Durration
- Action

Nicole Losch, Senior Planner – see presentation. Tonight will focus on preferred alternatives

Jason Charest – CCRPC Project manager. Walk through of alternative.

Impacts to properties – holds the northern side of the sidewalk constant. Only moves sidewalk by a few feet on the south side with the exception of bulb outs for parking where parking would move up to 5 feet. Intersection preferred alternative – aligns East Ave at 90 degree angle. New crosswalk on western side of intersection. Adds in bike signal for cyclists. Realigns entrance at Trinity Campus. Removes a few parking spaces on East Ave. Advisory Committee feedback - parking was a concern for the bike lanes. For intersection, split between roundabout and signal - safety, aesthetics, multimodal travel and climate was main feedback.

Public comment:

Tony Redington – No info provided on delay on each leg of intersection by mode or queue length. Traffic signal has significantly more queue than roundabout would at Barrett/Colchester intersection. Safety and emissions are also factors. In the US and Canada there are ~9000 roundabouts and not 1 ped killed at a any of these marked crosswalks since 1990. Roundabouts cut serious and fatal crashes by 90%. All injuries decreased by 60%. Federal Highway calls roundabouts a safety counter measure for pedestrians. We have room here to separate peds and bikes and have no delay for either. Cars would yield to bikes and peds. We don't have the data to show performance of signal vs roundabout here.

JB Carter Neubiesser – Support for proposal as approved by advisory committee. Would hope members of the committee would defer to preference of those effected directly and reference public outreach done to residents in this area.

Zoe Kennedy - Ward 1 resident. Support for Colchester Ave as advisory committee approved. Provides vibrant street scape. Protected from automobile traffic. Not in supportive of roundabout here. Copenhagen Denmark widely considered most bike-able city stated feeling of safety is important. They use bike signals and intersections set up to have bikes move forward out of vehicles blind spots. Intersections are raised so cars must drive slowly. Jeff Spec wrote in his book that roundabouts should be used sparingly and not where pedestrians are main concern. Prioritizing ped/cyclists needed in this corridor.

Isabella Decliver – UVM sophomore – Supports raised and separated bike lanes and signalize intersection. Highly populated area. Roundabout slows vehicles but not ped friendly due to sight lines.

Danny Iutanue – Raised and separated bike lanes would encourage them to bike here as well as others. Supports signalized intersection - benefits bikes/peds.

Ryan Thortan – Ward 2 resident. He/him pronouns. Works on Colchester Ave. Early education center there should be considered. Raised and separated bike lanes could help this demographic. Consider efforts to slow vehicles at signal.

Jason Stuffle - Avid biker on this corridor. Signals seem to encourage drivers to speed to get the light or start from a full stop quickly. No physical barriers to slow people with proposed signal intersection. No waiting for anyone walking or biking is important, this happens with roundabouts. Human toll is considerable and injuries have long term effects on community members. Roundabouts are safer based on data and science. Budget limitations should not stop this design.

Solveig Overby - If the TEUC is endorsing the signalized intersection as their preference, then that's their preferences. If the availability of a funding opportunity for a roundabout design would make their decision different, then the funding appears to be the sticking point, not the choice of an intersection design.

Councilor Stromberg – appreciative of public comments. Likes roundabouts as a driver. Great to have input for each side. Helps inform decision.

Councilor Barlow – Thanks for coming. How will we pay for improvements?

Nicole Losch- We don't have identified funding yet. We put together a prioritized five year work plan list and look to fund them. Cost to Burlington – corridor would be City expense. Intersection could be VTrans since it is high crash location. They completed analysis to see benefit of intersection vs roundabout and recommended intersection so they likely would be more inclined to fund this option. Can a roundabout be accomplished later? Yes, various ways. Council could direct or as we are prioritizing projects and looking for funding could move towards this option.

Chair Hanson – Supportive, best bike infrastructure in Burlington on a road. Most of debate is around intersection. Happy that previously there was controversy on removing parking for bike lanes but now there is more support. More supportive of signalized intersection to move towards complete bike system. We need this type of shift to simplify cyclist route, especially with bike signal. Signal provides best user experience for bikes. That is weighed against overall safety of roundabout. Funding lacking– means we will have to wait and live with current conditions. Tough decision but more inclined to go with signalized. Interested in Councilor Barlow's point about looking to future and leaving door open and utilizing funding

when it's available for a roundabout later. Goal to move forward as is and get into the queue with recommendation as is and then look into roundabout as we wait and see what funding changes.

Councilor Barlow – Agrees door being open to a roundabout while moving project forward is preferred.

Councilor Stromberg – Agrees. High crash location. Lived there previously and it is not a friendly corridor. A lot of people walking to campus and hospital. More inclined to push project forward as is. Want to implement this to see data to then be able to implement in other locations as applicable if successful.

Chair Hanson – Can we get this in queue as recommended but still maintain flexibility to consider a roundabout in the future?

Director Chapin Spencer – That direction is acceptable. To advance with this understanding gives us enough to move forward and seek funding. There is a list far beyond our capacity to fund to meet future Capital needs.

Nicole Losch – Agrees. We are open to amending this to leave some flexibility to work on either design. We can work language however you like to consider future options with funding as available.

Councilor Stromberg – Motions to accept the Colchester Avenue Bikeways, Parking and East Ave Intersection Safety Scoping Study; To endorse the Advisory Committee's recommendation as the preferred alternative to advance for funding and construction: raised and separated bike lanes on Colchester Avenue west of East Avenue; raised and separated bike lanes with short-term parking in targeted locations east of East Avenue; and an upgraded, realigned signalized intersection at East Avenue; and To recommend that the City Council accept and endorse the same through Resolution; and to indicate that we want to further explore the potential to peruse the development of a roundabout for this intersection.

Mark Barlow – Seconds motion.

Director Spencer – To clarify, as DPW seeks funds, if funding presents itself to secure the extra funds, then the Council could authorize approval to move forward with this design process for roundabout. This could come from federal grants etc. The resolution gives us clear guidance to move ahead but look for additional opportunities.

Martha Keenan – State has funding and has not yet allocated or made these funds available. We can look in this area as one potential opportunity in July/August.

Councilor Stromberg– Is timeline important to mention in amended bullet?

Director Spencer – Funding is available whenever it comes up. Don't think there is an end date to your amendment so we will continue to look until we can't when construction is critical and we will need to make a decision on intersection.

Chair Hanson – That's why I support the signal - don't want to miss the opportunity if we can make corridor changes happen soon. Would we be applying for both corridor and intersection?

Nicole – Not knowing what the grant program would be it is hard to answer. If it is a large project and big grant application then we would apply for both. Since it is high crash location, we could work with VTrans just for the intersection improvements.

Jason Charest – Cost was not the only factor at play in this decision. Even if cost is solved there will still be people on both sides of intersection options.

Unanimously passed – 6:48

Nicole – Will work on resolution and the language to make sure this is accurate and send to Chair Hanson.

5. FY22 Proposed Fleet Replacement (See Attachment)

- Lee Perry, DPW
- 20 Minute Duration
- Action

Lee Perry – See memo. Chart showing types of cars to be replaced.

Paying a premium for F150 but this is opportunity to see what operational issues we could have going forward. Need to see cost effective replacements. F150 is downsize and electric option for its replacement for DPW. Replacement of vehicles across departments.

Martha Keenan– This is the first time we are increasing overall fleet vehicles but we are adding electric vehicles for additions. New replacements across depts.. meet needs of depts.. and are electric/hybrid where possible. Chargers needed are tier 3 but we are getting tier 2. We need infrastructure ahead of vehicles so they can be used. Meeting with BED to see where we can easily and most effectively put chargers and options for best location to get cost offset from public users. Looking at other funding opportunities to get these. Electric and hybrid vehicles have higher cost. We are looking at other ways such as capital bonding to make this work. We need to balance that and move towards electrification and shorten lease cycle and get infrastructure in. Leases that we are holding expire in 2024 and then we will have more money from this expired leases.

Councilor Stromberg– Chargers proposed all the same?

Martha Keenan– Yes, all tier 2, \$75,000 total.

Councilor Stromberg – Are we on a waitlist for F150?

Lee Perry – Not available yet, we are constantly checking.

Councilor Barlow – Cost differential between chargers?

Martha - 20k vs 80k for Tier 2 vs 3. Will need tier 3 chargers, fenced in parking to secure them and electrical changes for building in certain locations. Chargers increase electrical usage so that is to be considered.

Councilor Barlow – Electric bucket truck for BED and tier 3 charger just purchased. Is there plans to share this throughout the city?

Martha Keenan– Yes but BED has fenced-in lot which we don't have access to, although maybe during the day, but it wouldn't be available 24/7. We have talked about putting tier 3 in each part of the City so there are three locations that are central for different parts of the City and available to the public. BED working on matrix of best locations. Through the state there is funding and we will work with BED to try to get take advantage of the funding opportunity..

Chair Hanson – What about unspent ARPA funding? I know it's limiting but my understanding is we could displace funds from that.

Martha Keenan– This doesn't qualify. We received 9.4 million in June. I believe this has been allocated so moving it around for this purpose I don't think is possible.

Chair Hanson – Improvement since last year is amazing. Dedication is clear. Market enables us to be more aggressive with this effort. Is lease related to expected life span?

Lee Perry – Last few years we shortened leases in anticipation of advancements in electric vehicle tech.

Chair Hanson – With deadlines for net zero it is important to get off fossil fuels.

Lee Perry - Collaboration amongst depts.. in the effort. BED is influential and provides insight.

Councilor Barlow – For fossil fuel leases, could you sell in middle of lease?

Lee Perry - That is the plan moving forward. The value of the vehicle is greater in shorter lease.

Martha Keenan – We own vehicles upon purchase and have one master lease. We intentionally shortened lease so it would be possible to replace when electric is available. We are now coming up on leases ending and electric vehicles being available as replacements

Councilor Barlow – Motions to approve and recommend that the /board of Finance, and City Council authorize the Director of Public Works to purchase 35 pieces of equipment for a total value of \$2,620,314 with lease financing determined by the Clerk/Treasurer's Office at a rate not to exceed 4% for terms 5 or 7 years, subject to review and approval by the City Attorney.

Councilor Stromberg – Seconds.

No discussion, passes unanimously.

6. Consolidated Collection (See Attachment)

- Lee Perry, DPW
- 60 Minute Duration
- Action

See presentation

Director Spencer – Happy there is Council and community support. We want to find a solution to meet all needs.

Gene Bergman – Municipal model is most cost effective. DPW doesn't want single hauler to do whole system but that may not be possible. Problem with franchise option is monopoly. Matrix undervalues public model. If the voters reject it then there is no harm and another option can be explored. Benefit to having municipal is very high after initial period. Don't think that upfront capital costs should be rated as high risk. If we want to go with charter change to create enterprise fund then that is reasonable and low risk. We do not need to have charter change to create municipal collection system. Municipal and franchise very close scoring. Benefits will accrue greatly with municipal option.

Solveig Overby - If the City wants to "Reduce, Reuse and Recycle" its waste streams, why would it choose a franchise model that disincentivizes reduction of waste? Private haulers don't benefit from

reducing waste. Franchising reduces the options for innovation in the way Burlington handles its waste. Waste is not going away. Does the City want to take responsibility or just push it off to a private franchise system where Burlington residents must accept whatever waste options are most profitable for private haulers to offer?

Councilor Stromberg – Heavier lift to begin with to do municipal but long term benefits. More union jobs. Hybrid version is not successful compromise based on my initial thoughts.

Councilor Barlow – Presentation said we could cap opt out – How?

Director Spencer – Somewhere around 15% of residents are opting out, as we evaluated, currently. Could have been 15-25% self hauling. If we wanted to set the floor at 15% and more wanted to opt out then we would need to do something like a lottery or first come first serve. We aren't required to cap but we could explore this option. If we wanted to, we would start with high level of opt out and then could dial it in to see true interest and then make sure we have sustainable model.

Lee Perry – Opt out would be for self haul only, not private hauler.

Councilor Barlow – 2/3 reduction of emission seems to be less probable under franchise model, especially one where you maintain equity with routes by having different haulers and trucks on the same street.

Lee Perry – We wouldn't have multiple haulers on the same street at the same time. We could have split body trucks to pick up two waste streams at once.

Director Spencer – Under any model, there are three streams that need to be picked up. We don't have enough information on logistics to see how this would work operationally. Fundamentally, the entire NNE under either of these options, could be picked up by one hauler instead of many. Either option is better than today.

Councilor Stromberg – Could see how there could be more long haul trips out to Williston facility but weighing against low emissions throughout the city. One is not better than the other with emissions.

Chair Hanson – With hybrid option – it would still be one hauler doing both waste and organics.

Director Spencer – That would be proposal but contractors could propose to sub out organics.

Councilor Barlow – Could goals be achieved differently? Couldn't we require in licensing that haulers use more effective routes or time/area restrictions? Could more educational efforts help consumers? Could we incentivize haulers to electrify fleets? Were these explored?

Director Spencer – We had conversations with haulers. There are some goals that could be achieved through regulation of subscription service. We could require haulers to pick up on certain days/areas. That may add to inefficiency of system based on low volume of some small haulers. Don't think we can reduce emissions with these requirements. Same miles driven with lower emissions if electric but same impact on wearing down infrastructure. Consolidation creates efficiency

Chair Hanson – If it's a 7 year contract, is there opportunity to go with that and then use those 7 years to set up municipal option and then take over at that point?

Director Spencer – These are two different models. Some communities have shifted from bidding period to bidding period how they operate. Phoenix did this and have recently selected municipal option. Key is to have initial period to be substantial enough so that you get competitive bids so bidders can adequately depreciate investments made. Do we go into 7 year bid with idea that we will be getting out of this bid or do we wait for 4 years to see environmental impacts and community input. Would prefer to go into it with idea that we would see how it goes not with idea that we will totally switch model and redo efforts.

Martha Keenan– We need to consider funding. Echoes what Chapin said that you need to look at how it goes in 4 years and look to then go to voters to ask to borrow funding if needed. Our Capital funding will be very stressed this year with high school and infrastructure needs.

Chair Hanson – Supports municipal option. Didn't realize it was as common as it is across country. Ultimately best option, hearing concerns of financials and see if we can defer municipalization for a cycle.

Councilor Stromberg – Needs to be consolidated. Hybrid option should be the fall back but ultimately we should bring municipal option to voters to see what community really wants. Does hear concerns.

Councilor Barlow – Not on board with consolidated collection. Private haulers are business owners and providing good level of service that people appreciate. We have a system that self regulates by giving people opportunity to go to new hauler if a hauler is not working. There needs to be more outreach. There are emission savings to be had with consolidated though don't think they are as great as stated here. Concerns with small haulers ability to survive with franchise model.

Councilor Stromberg – Motion to advance implementation of a fully consolidated collection system for at least 1 to 4 unit residential properties in Burlington; and propose implementation of a municipal consolidated collection system where organics, trash and recycling will be collected by the City; and Requests City staff initiate a resident engagement process to determine the specific service levels and options that will be initially offered, and return to the City Council by March 2022 with the service level recommendations and an updated timeline.

Chair Hanson – Seconds. Supports municipalization but interested in option of franchise to municipal later option. This will be first opportunity to gauge broader Council thoughts. Would still support hybrid over what we do today if there is not Council support.

Councilor Stromberg – Recommendation is thoughtful. Hybrid model is good but wants to be as bold as possible with climate timeline. Thank you for DPWs work.

Chair Hanson – climate benefits are slightly better with municipal but either option is better than what we do now. More opportunity to accelerate electrification and further consolidate for the climate with the City but the main advantage over the hybrid is the labor and community control. Hears financial concerns and wants to address that.

Councilor Barlow – When there is a private industry it shouldn't be the role of government to replace this industry. That is concern.

Councilor Stromberg/Chair Hanson – Aye

Councilor Barlow – No

Passes 2/1 8:20 PM

7. Director's Report

Director Spencer- Water resources rate restructuring for affordability in progress. Paving bid issues. Delayed getting out to bid due to design work on North Ave. received one bid, not competitive, higher than engineer's estimate. Working on advised plan. Paving work occurring on North Ave, near police station, leftover from last year's contract. Some Water Resource related paving this season. Looking at fall paving bid for CY22. Shelburne St Roundabout moving forward with construction. Amtrak work moving forward with construction near waterfront. Washington/Berry intersection work is underway.

8. Councilors' Update

Chair Hanson – Followed up today about rooftop solar with Permitting and Inspection and Fire Dept to see if they are willing to explore greater flexibility on requirements and regulations on installation.

9. Next Meeting

Tuesday July 27th 5:00 – to be confirmed.

10. Adjourn

Councilor Stromberg motions to adjourn. Councilor Barlow seconds.

Unanimously passes. Adjourns 8:25PM.