



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, July 27, 2021 5:00 PM

–DRAFT MINUTES–

Chair Hanson: Call to order at 5:03 PM.

1. Agenda

Councilor Stromberg moved to approve agenda. Seconded by Councilor Barlow.
All in favor passed unanimously.

2. Minutes of 6/22/2021

Councilor Stromberg moved to approve the minutes from June 22, 2021. Seconded by Councilor Barlow.
All in favor passed unanimously.

3. Public Forum

No one looking to speak. Closes public forum – 5:04PM

4. Sustainable Infrastructure Plan (preparing for proposed November bond vote)

- Martha Keenan, Capital & Special Projects Director
- Information

See Presentation.

MK - Capital Infrastructure improvement plan for the past 5 years is coming to its end, this is the update. Overview of various City initiatives and improvements from the last bond. Presenting next 3 year capital plan. 5 year plan is harder to plan for as changes occur. Balance of 30 million dollars left from the debt policy cap. Looking to go to the voters to get these funds in use.

Mark Hughes (public comment) – looks forward to building awareness around capital priorities and getting a better understanding to better translate. Lack of knowledge is problem, not lack of interest.

Councilor Jane Stromberg – 290 million is debt cap and we are looking for how much?

Martha Keenan – 110 million outstanding from us and 70 million outstanding from school. 30 million left
JS – Video security system details?

MK – ~650k spent in previous bond. Every building had its own security system with one person monitoring each. We created one system from all these and centralized it in the dispatch center in the police dept. They don't always monitor them but have the ability to pull this footage when needed. This allows people responding to better understand what is happening and walk into situations more safely and better equipped.

Councilor Mark Barlow – Time frame and amount of current bond?

MK – Payment over 20 years but spent over the last 5 years. 27.5 million spent. Water is different by creating revenue bonds vs general obligation bonds like this.

MB – Is there anything like penny for parks that the City can use for ongoing capital projects?

MK – Impact fees from development. Each dept. has a different policy how they can spend these funds, written into ordinance. Ex. Street capital tax (2%) (line item on property tax fees). In ordinance the Capital Program gets 2 million annually for capital projects. Schools get 3 million automatic.

MB – Is part of the strategic Capital Improvement Plan to budget reserves so we can build for times when there are big outlays for projects?

MK – Goal to come up with annual amount that will be more sustainable. As we take on debt we are also retiring debt. We will soon retire a lot of debt in 2026 and be able to take on more. We keep a certain level of bonding and always have funding for it now. Would like to move towards only having to go to voters for larger requests on occasion and have a sustainable amount approved for annual needs. 7 million would be sustainable.

MB – School district plans to go to vote for bond in November for additional bonding on top of 70 million they have. Will this cause competition for the rest of the City's debt cap?

MK – Limits set for both general fund and schools. School does not have much more available to them than 70 million. Council would need to vote to provide more money to school and less to general fund. That could happen but hope is to maintain our 30 million. That is why we are educating and showing what our needs are for this money.

MB – larger coordination and discussion with all parties looking for this money

Director Chapin Spencer – there are many competing needs and things being discussed and added so we are trying to balance this.

MB – If we got guidance on how to use state and fed funds in other ways, would it be possible for part of this 30 million to not get used?

MK – We have so much deferred maintenance that we can use this 30 million to catch up. Not many federal and state grants in the past. This is an opportunity to catch up on deferred maintenance.

Norm Baldwin, City Engineer – funding from federal dollars is very limited and specific.

CS – Council engaged before each construction project so they can give input through entire process.

Chair Jack Hanson – Funding needs over 3 years is very helpful. Compare current spending vs what we are looking to spend would be helpful.

MK – Those are all current numbers.

CS – This list of 30 million keeps our funding of some investments similar to past 5 years but does not help get us all the way on some of our one time capital projects that in our years don't have money secured (i.e. railyard enterprise). We are maxed out at what we can ask for based on our debt cap.

MK – we have growing needs as we understand them better. Grants and other funding are important. We are still deferring a lot of work with this request. It doesn't allow funds for consolidated collection or library or railyard enterprise with this.

JH – Facilities, parks, fleet, public safety doesn't show annual need on slide?

MK – Large projects needed in most buildings so this 3 year budget is to use these funds

CS – Estimate over three years averaged as there has been fluctuation.

JH – Still maintaining current spending

MK – Fleet was 3.3 mil now 5.25 in this bond. Parks 10-15 million worth of projects that don't qualify for impact fees or pennies for parks, the barge at the water front is sinking so there is a feasibility study for this and it will cost 1.5 mil and needs to be done soon. North beach has huge master plan. Prioritizing projects based on what brings revenue.

JH – Update slide to clearly lay out current spending vs proposed.

CS – Please reach out with questions or concerns over next few weeks. Action at next monthly meeting.

MK – Presenting at August 9th meeting so please provide information for that if possible.

Item closed at 5:59PM

5. CarShare – TDM Ordinance, EVs

– Annie Bourdon, CarShare Executive Director

Annie Bourdon – Here to talk about before and after TDM ordinance went into effect.

Background: CarShare around since 2008. Works closely with developers to provide and improve mobility. Prior to TDM ordinance, developers would reach out to CarShare and we would work through how we could have vehicles onsite, nearby, or just do outreach. The lack of formality project to project would be confusing and different obligations needed to be met with each. Sometime CarShare wasn't aware until after DRB and couldn't negotiate terms and it wasn't always favorable. Since TDM requirements, there is better permitting and development process. Over the last 6 months since the TDM ordinance passed, we had a hand full of developers reach out to better understand requirements for

CarShare. Some Developers don't understand their obligations and how things work. We have recently been transitioning fleet to electric (40%). Only one of 5 plug in vehicles has a charger currently. Lack of infrastructure makes this transition hard. CarShare VT has funded this infrastructure install with no grants. To be more effective at locating CarShare VT at properties and achieve net zero, these sites need to be EV ready. Access to this technology is part of our vision for CarShare and all vehicles. TDM requirement enhanced to address process with developers and how this ties into CarShare, cost sharing and logistics.

JS – Thank you for the update. Is disconnect with developers ongoing? What is projected biggest hurdle for the next year with getting people involved and how can we help?

AB – Lack of consistency and further clarification of DRB criteria. Requirements in place but there is still confusion on developer's part on obligations. Need active outreach about how and why they should meet requirements. Consistent process and requirements so they're met meaningfully and successfully.

MB – Thank you for info. I am largely unfamiliar with TDM ordinance but will research. How many members are in CarShare VT and is there growth or pressure from Uber and Lyft?

AB – 1,000 members. Lost ~50% during start of covid with many members needing to put membership on hold for financial reasons. Steadily rebuilding membership and fleet after downsizing fleet by 25% a year ago. Now largest fleet in history with added and replaced vehicles. Nonprofit so we aren't making profit but reinvesting and growing business and making it more accessible. Discounted and free memberships to meet social equity goals. Lowering barriers to access. Most active membership throughout pandemic were members who we offer free memberships to.

MB – If you have CarShare spot do you have charger there for EVs?

Annie – We pair vehicle with dedicated charger. We monitor vehicles range remotely so we can account for that between users. It is difficult to install chargers. We have worked with the City to install shared charger on Main and St Paul corner.

JH – Are there any ongoing talks with City about EV infrastructure going forward?

AB – Recently worked with peers in NY, MA, CT on a grant to convert fleet to EVs. Biggest hurdle is getting this without infrastructure in place. These states are larger and have access to more funds. Some spaces aren't suitable for chargers so 100% EV fleet is not feasible here. Would love to work with the City and get grants to move towards installing more chargers.

JH – Ordinance could require new developers to have infrastructure in place for charging stations.

AB – would be beneficial for non CarShare users as well at developer's properties. Dual charger stations would be great for one CarShare and one public charger.

JB – More so on the ordinance committee to do this. Interest in further amending and expanding that ordinance. Could bring this into that conversation.

AB – Happy to be part of process for how City manages holding developers accountable for adhering to this ordinance.

JH – Talking with Planning and Zoning currently to make sure the ordinance is properly done

6. South End Infrastructure Project Coordination

- Norm Baldwin, City Engineer
- Chapin Spencer, DPW Director
- Information

See Burlington south end project schedule

CS –Have looked at projects and discussed with community and councilors and want to help long term while minimizing short term impacts, i.e. construction fatigue. Bringing historic level reinvestment to the City while reducing impacts. Cover schedule and coordination plan tonight. Note, railroad projects, includes work to bring Amtrak to the city, home and Flynn crossing as well. Impacts intersections and waterfront. Parkway split into two contracts. Construction starts next year on sections of new roadway, less impacts.

NB – First Parkway contract would substantially improve stormwater by treating runoff before discharging.

CS –Second Parkway contract minimizes construction impacts by working with other projects. Splitting them brings benefits early, new street in South End, multimodal transportation, improved stormwater and sewer infrastructure. Still achieving the interstate connection when the council and community is ready.

Ability to have receiving facilities ready when this decision is made. This plan came from the last several months of input. This coordination schedule is not a NEPA requirement. It came from environmental justice review and input on impacts and was expanded for all projects in the South End. By having the Parkway constructed in two contracts, council could approve them one at a time and work with the community for each step. VTrans and FHWA have given support of this plan but have pointed out payment agreement. We have \$15 million incurred since 1998. If we went ahead with the 1st Parkway contract, that would be an additional estimated 17 million incurred. Repayment provision could be even larger at that stage. Staff is committed to resourcing the project accordingly with your support. Very real progress and commitments have been made. 10 legal victories/settlements to date. The Pine St Coalition is being mitigated. There is a viable path for 2022 construction. Input tonight to ultimately get to August 9th meeting.

MB – Parkway on Pine St, is there potential for this to be rerouted?

NB – Sequenced this way due to community concerns of signalization through this neighborhood. There could be a reduction in traffic from this project which we will evaluate how this could change things.

CS – Small portion of project is in South Burlington. We have secured all property rights and permits to build this. How the community constructs the project is their decision but it needs to be built entirely and continue progression. We went to FHWA with what we showed tonight and they were accepting of that proposal.

NB – FHWA discussed 10 year completion provision before they begin to challenge us on payment.

MB – Some of Parkway done sooner to get used to traffic flow is great. Risk inherent with dividing project seems to have been considered.

JS – Note seems like a lot of construction overlap next year. No big concerns.

JH – Main concern around Parkway has been around traffic impacts in King Maple neighborhood given the demographics. With this new timeline and the initial portion being built, is it expected that would lead to increased traffic in that neighborhood?

CS – Without interstate connection made we won't be introducing new vehicles to this area of the city based on conversations with our consultants. This fits sequentially with other projects and won't introduce a new access point into the South End which could feed additional traffic into that neighborhood.

JH – Appreciates work done by DPW. Exciting potential path forward. Are partners still saying there can't be substantial changes to Parkway Design?

CS – This project has gotten to final plans and substantial investment so design is somewhat set. VTrans provided flexibility memo saying VTrans and FHWA will work with us to meet changing needs.

Mark Hughes – Partners and community – who is engaged? First time I've heard of it is today. To what extent has community been looped in on this plan? Did you conduct a study to address potential impacts of this sequence? To what extent does the 1.25 million dollars passed out of the House impact this project? Has there ever been a payback to the State? Is the ROD eminent? Seems the plans indicate a new road across Flynn connecting to lakeside?

CS – Partners include funding sources from FHWA (95%) and VTrans (3%) then City (2%). Tonight is the first night of community engagement regarding this. No action tonight but seeking input on this concept. It took us until recently to get full buy in from partners and we are still working through permitting with these projects but wanted to start conversations. 2.25 million from Congressman Welch House Bill hasn't been approved through Senate. Should that come to pass that will help expedite design phase for Railyard Enterprise project. State signed 10 million cooperative agreement for the project but only allocated 500k of design and permitting work for this year. Payback example – personally don't know of one but know they exist, can work with FHWA to get example. Timeline for Record of Decision – may or may not have decision in early fall, Sept/October. Alignment of project would remain the same as has been previously described and is on the website. Consultant looking at a traffic impact study on proposed sequence currently. While traffic may change which streets they are on within the South End, they do not see significant volume change without interstate connection. Looking to get this in writing for public review.

NB – Localized benefit from first Parkway contract vs larger community circulation benefit.

Mark Hughes – Does this mean that the Railyard enterprise will be complete before the Champlain Parkway?

NB – Goal is to advance as quickly as possible with expert team

CS – This is the first time that we have been able to show the public a sequencing schedule that shows the Parkway interstate connection at the same time the Railyard Enterprise is done. The council has authority to control contract approval. This allows council to vote on Parkway twice and give community higher level of comfort and control.

Mark Hughes - Thank you for your transparency and due diligence. It is our hope that your bid process will clear obstacles for access to Black and Brown owned construction businesses. Thank you!

CS – Intent is to have REP before or at the same time as Parkway connection. Minimizing all south end project impacts on the community

NB – only two north south roads so these construction projects will have considerable impacts.

JH – If we were looking out at 2025 and REP is 6 months behind the Parkway then the council would have ability to try to align this at that point which is meaningful.

JH closes item at 7:07

7. Director's Report

Shelburne Street Roundabout under construction. Parkway coming to construction. Sidewalk work happening, raised intersection at Washington Berry finishing up. When we put out paving bids we had late bid after waiting on drainage report for North Ave. Received one bid far above engineers estimate. Approach for this year is to do robust patching this fall, do much of drainage work on North Ave this year in preparation for paving. Looking to put out larger paving bid this fall for CY22. One challenge we heard from bidders was the substantial portion of non-paving work with drainage, curb and ADA work. We will retool what we put out to bid this fall. We think this is the best path given where bids came in.

Corey Mims, Senior PW Engineer – Pavement preservation contract out to bid currently for crack sealing, primary focus to extend the lifespan of pavement efforts.

Norm – Applied to streets that had work done in the last 5-7 years to extend their life and not have to do milling or major work sooner. Also identified a handful of streets in need of significant patches. We think the network (major thoroughfares) are in adequate shape. Challenging to award a contract that was 60% more than market rate. Know these contractors got more lucrative work from the State early in the year on roads with no structural adjustments or utilities. We came too late in bid process to get competitive prices. Goal was to get North Ave done which held things up. Let us know if there are concerns or issues with this approach

8. Councilors' Update

Jack – Email me or Maddy with potential items for next month.

9. Next Meeting 8/24/2021

10. Adjourn

Councilor Stromberg motions to adjourn. Councilor Barlow seconds.

Unanimously passes. Adjourns 7:15PM.