



**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, September 28, 2021 4:30 PM**

**–DRAFT AGENDA–**

**Call to order 4:34PM by Chair Hanson**

**1. Agenda**

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

**2. Minutes of 8/24/2021**

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

**3. Public Forum**

Closes at 4:36 PM. No one comments.

**4. District Energy**

- Darren Springer, BED
- Michael Ahern, Ever-Green
- Information

Darren Springer, Burlington Electric General Manager - Phase three of the project kicked off earlier this year. Partners with UVM, BED, COB, VGS, Evergreen and others. Involves a steam pipe connecting McNeil to hospital with potential to connect other buildings in vicinity. Update on economics and terms as well as engineering work being done. 5 million dollars towards funding electric boiler potentially coming from appropriations bill going to final fed budget led by Senator Leahy.

Looking at capacity (54 megawatt) of the plant vs 50 megawatt that it currently runs at.

Evergreen would run district energy system as nonprofit. Determining what type of financing evergreen needs to go to bond market for this project.

Approval from council to have McNeil commitment. Sometime in next few months bring this to the council.

Michael Ahern – Multi path effort over the last year to progress this to the point of being financeable system. Talks with UVM, Intervale and others to connect in addition to fundamental customer, UVMMC. We have location and operational buy-in from McNeil and UVMMC operation's team. Have third party engineers ensuring reliable product to UVMMC.

Councilor Mark Barlow – What is distance from McNeil that a customer could be, are there limits?

DS – Each mile of pipe added is biggest cost. Looking to keep the infrastructure costs low. UVMMC and UVM buildings are considered first phase of this effort. Each mile you go would have to add a certain load to make it economical. We are looking at feasibility of this.

MB – Are there other businesses you could add?

DS – Intervale could be connected physically. We are looking to inject thermal energy into VGS system so this could be an option on that bill for any customers.

MB – If you are one of these VGS customers is there a differential rate?

DS – Yes, if shorter term financing, there would be a premium for the first 10 years. In the following 10 years when infrastructure is paid off, we can bring cost down potentially.

Councilor Jane Stromberg – McNeil currently processes residue wood, would we ever risk having too much demand to not have enough residue (sustainable) wood.

DS – We get wood from 60 mile radius. We are looking at an additional 4 megawatts of the 50 megawatts currently produced. There could be price fluctuation but not likely there will be lack of supply because it's not a large increase comparatively.

Chair Jack Hanson – Would this lead to increased use of McNeil?

DS – We would utilize waste heat for a portion of the energy, 10-25% of system energy, but need additional steam to make it viable. The plant would become more efficient but some additional steam would be produced. The plant has always been electric only but designed for heat and electric so this would be using both.

MA – With Leahy's grant/appropriation would reduce cost for system users and make it more efficient.

JH – Would this co generate steam?

DS – Yes

JH – How dependent is the success of this on the \$5 million appropriation?

DS – The \$5 million is a big driver of delivering the project at a cost that is feasible for customers and partners and would help add 10 MW electric boiler acting as backup and a 100% rentable energy source. Would be concerned if \$5 million wasn't available because we would need to find a way to add boiler. There is always multiple paths.

Item closes out at 5:00

## **5. Lakeside Avenue Intermodal Facility Planning**

- Charlie Baker, CCRPC
- Information

See Presentation.

Charlie Baker - Some concerns to note: Zoning at the HULA site is still in discussion. Might end up involving a parcel to the south that the City owns and currently has homeless encampment. Looking into solutions to have this solved through this project

Chair Hanson – Notes Councilor Stromberg left the meeting

Councilor Barlow – would the LIFT facility work if there was no commuter rail?

CB - Yes. LIFT is less challenging than RAIL and could work without it and maybe help RAIL by adding riders.

MB – Rail seems expensive compared to busses. Can you speak to why rail over busses?

CB – busses could be part of what comes out of this. GMT needs to start this effort and see if LINK system riders could be converted to rail. We want the systems to work together and not compete

Director Spencer – Given the transformative nature and its large potential impact, wanted to make sure it was at the committee and consider how we can give these concepts visibility. Housing aspect isn't directly related to this committee but you can work with other councilors on relevant committees. HULA worked with RPC proactively but there hasn't been a lot of community engagement. Would hate to see a process concern limit a visionary proposal. Looking to hear how we can work together to make sure this can launch successfully if it can be funded.

JH – Supportive. Presentation to full council to get more viewership for outreach. Happy to keep brainstorming and start engaging with the council and public about this project.

CB – Don't want to raise expectations before there is grant funding. Will reach out to planning commission to get on their agenda. Want to be as transparent as possible.

Item done at 5:18

## **6. Main Street Great Streets Overview**

- Laura Wheelock, Senior Public Works Engineer
- Olivia Darisse, Public Works Engineer
- Information

Director Spencer: This has been a planning effort from 2016 after we worked with community and councilors. Part of same effort that encompassed St Paul St and City Hall Park. We have reached out to Senator Leahy and will continue to look for funding for this.

Laura Wheelock – Here to refresh every one of where we left off and how we got to that point. See presentation.

Councilor Mark Barlow – Parking change anticipated, what is loss of parking?

LW – 43 spaces lost throughout 6 blocks, 73% of parking retained.

MB – TIF authorization logistics?

LW – When we applied and created Downtown TIF district, we proposed 4 blocks and have this approved by the State. We now need to go back for the last 2 blocks. We need to ask to use the funding we are currently collecting towards the two blocks. We need council approval to ask for permission at the State level. For March ballot, voters need to approve the ability to incur debt and authorize this as a known use. State needs to approve the project and voters need to approve debt.

MB – Is this part of General Fund bond?

CS – Envisioned as part of capital plan. The benefit of TIF is that it is paid off by additional economic growth along corridor.

LW – City has been collecting this money since 2015. We have to use it or lose it by the end of district.

Norm Baldwin, City Engineer – TIF borrowing is separate from GF borrowing and debt load.

MB – Clarifies debt service will be paid through tax increment not through additional increases to property taxes.

Chair Hanson – Why was this chosen for ballot in March and not sooner?

LW – Substantial work going to VEPC for approval. Not losing much waiting. With VEBC approval we can start working on first 4 blocks. Would have more opportunity to go back to voters in 2022 if needed.

Closes at 5:41PM

## **7. 195-201 Flynn Avenue**

- Chapin Spencer, Director of Public Works
- Lee Perry, Maintenance Division Director
- Action

See memo.

Director Spencer – This item has lingered for decades, CSWD wants to help us get to a decision. Based on progress with Champlain Parkway and south end redevelopment, now is the time to commit with CSWD to enter a lease. MOU expires on Nov 1 with CSWD. Plan to go to council on Oct 18<sup>th</sup> for extension on the MOU for 2-3 months to give us time to negotiate.

Councilor Barlow – What are risks with negotiating with this property?

CS – CSWD is seeking to develop a drop off center, if Parkway does not advance as anticipated, the neighborhood would be concerned about traffic flow to the center. Financially we have already put \$83k down so doing nothing would mean losing this money. Fewer risks with doing this. 0% loan over 20 years. Low chance of getting another extension so the time is now to exercise this option. Terms in MOU spell out parameters of lease purchase agreement terms. If drop off center is not able to be permitted, they can choose to terminate lease purchase agreement and sell the property. We wouldn't own the property for 20 years. If we support them with getting a drop off center and allowing it to operate for 20 years and

make our payments, we will get property for under market value for 0% interest and use of 1 acre immediately.

JH –Supportive of staff recommendation. Localized impacts would defer to south end councilors at full council if they want to dig deeper into that.

CS – action at council would be 2-3 month extension on MOU to negotiate and then come back to council

**Councilor Barlow – Motions to recommend the Administration enter into negotiations on a lease purchase agreement with Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD) for the 195-201 Flynn Avenue parcel as a potential location of a future CSWD drop-off center.**

**Chair Hanson seconds.**

**Unanimous Aye.**

**Item passes.**

Closes at 5:53PM

### **8. Director's Report**

Director Spencer: Moving ahead with REP consultant selection and planning to get contract to council October 18<sup>th</sup>. Capital work we are doing is above historic baseline and we need additional financial management support. Only one staff member focused on capital budget currently. Internal discussions to reorganization and/or supplement resource to give us the ability to better financial manage significant capital work.

Engineer Baldwin – Scale of Water Resource reinvestment is significant and there is a large volume of work upon us to have one person manage these millions of dollars. Assuming Parkway advances, we will need to be staffed to deal with pay requisitions to deal with that multimillion dollar project in a very condensed time.

CS – We are sensitive to the position of the GF and we are seeking to have WR or Parking and Traffic participate heavily in funding this position so there would be limited to no impact on general fund.

NB – CT office is significant player in this process. Currently engaging consultant to see how they are configured as a team to see how it can be most efficient and integrated.

### **9. Councilors' Update**

No updates.

### **10. Next Meeting 10/26/2021**

### **11. Adjourn**

Councilor Barlow moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Chair Hanson. All in favor passed unanimously. Adjourned at 5:58PM.