

Transportation, Energy and Utilities Committee of the City Council

Tuesday, January 08, 2019 5:30 PM

Burlington Department of Public Works – Front Conference Room

645 Pine Street – Burlington, VT

–AGENDA–

1. Agenda

Chair Tracy calls to order at 5:34PM

Cnclr Bushor makes motion; Hartnett seconds; Unanimous

2. Minutes of 10/24/2018

Bushor: under B discussion, item # 8. Didn't understand, 8th line down, 'looked at conditions that drove worse to worse ... focused on local nature streets w/ no transpo needs.' Needs clarification what this means.

Norm will circle back w/ PP.

Norm: Greenbelt, occupancy of parking, local vs arterial. I will circle back w/ PP.

Bushor: Important to understand w/ clarification. Moves minutes

Seconded by Hartnett

3. Public Forum

Richard Hillyard: Resident of W1, Active on NPA. We had a pedestrian tragedy over Xmas period on North Ave. One of our NPA members produced FPF posting asking what is W1 NPA doing to support ped safety, etc. Highlights something we have tried to address, that there is a gap between city formally recognizing a safety problem (of whatever sort), not about Chapin or DPW directly, there is a lead time for traffic engineering ... 4 to 5 years -- perfectly understandable. We addressed a problem on East Ave, Traffic calming, 2 years ago. Engaged police to see what traffic enf could take place. Anecdotal evidence, East Ave is a racetrack, little sign of ENF, no traffic calming. In response, BPD officer wrote that the residents of East are correct in assessment. Issued \$1700 in tickets. Two residents went through stop sign, speeding, cyclistts waiting to cross. Highlighted issue in this ward, just as residents of North Ave did. Three of our members went to Police Commission, challenged Chief del Pozo. If a safety issue identified, what do we do as a city to mitigate problems before DPW can do a study, recommend a fix. Brought up at NPA mtg in Sept, this is going to be a problem, we need to address it. We need to address it as a city. Chief said we are reluctant to

dedicate resources to traffic ENF, loathe to expend a lot of resources on traffic details. Speed radar signed installed, quickly failed and hasn't been replaced. We need to mitigate chances of an accident happening. We've done everything we can do as an NPA.

Richard: the other thing, in Oslo - capital of Norway. Just in process of dispensing with last 700 downtown parking spaces. Something to think about, when doing something environmentally rather than building a few stories of car parking.

Bushor: Question as followup from forum. Regarding speed radar sign. I can validate almost everything Richard and police have said, very close to stop sign. I yell at drivers that go through stop sign. Incredibly frustrating, drivers seem oblivious to stop sign. Very visible sign. This is my ward, very familiar with section. I do think that we don't have all the money, but you will talk about prioritization. Pedestrian lights are incredibly effective. Lot of places in city need them.

4. Intersection Scoping Study Recommendations for Colchester Avenue / Riverside Avenue / Barrett Street / Mill Street

- a. Nicole Losch, DPW presenting
- b. 15-minute duration
- c. Action: Action requested.

Nicole: Memo included

Chapin: Introduces Jason, CCRPC

Nicole: RPC partner, Bushor and Richard also on advisory committee.

Just wrapped up intersection scoping, quick intro to process. ::Nicole presents presentation:::

Bushor: Important for other two members to see what tipped scale for Alt 2, show picture. This seemed to create an unsafe intersection, a vulnerability. (Asks Richard and Jason)

Jason: You've hit the sticking point for disliking this alternative. Members on the committee uncomfortable with slip lane across sidewalk and the ped experience having to cross two crosswalks. Liked traditionality of Alt 1. Just one crossing, and completely

signalized. Only other thing is people like the opportunity of green space in Alt 1 and not having right turn lane.

Harnett: What's there now

Nicole: don't have crosswalk across northern Barrett, or bridge on this side of Mill St intersection.

Bushor: It's a nightmare, you really can't cross by the bridge

Harnett: Where was the pedestrian killed.

Jason: Barrett crosswalk

Bushor: I'll move the motion

Tracy: Looks great, thank you for your work

Richard H: I'd like to add a few things, outside scope of presentation. First is Mill St, nice little business incubator, promising businesses. There is no elegant way of dealing with that junction at this stage. My view is that the city to decide what it wants with Mill St, or potentially a safety issue going forward unresolved. Other thing is that part of Barrett onto Colchester junction is constrained a little by the Dominos operation. To me, it is a sacred cow, 18 wheelers, parking there, protected b/c it's a historic building dressed up as pizza parlor.

Bushor: historic commercial

Richard H: Does not help that the business there obviates against a more elegant junction. Don't know how long the city wants to tolerate that.

Harnett: Most cars parked there are delivery cars

RH: 18 wheeler delivery trucks. Not good all the way further up Barrett. Two things I'd say the city needs to figure out. Elegant gateway into city is wonderful, with bridge replacement will be great. Couple things hanging out.

Harnett: Have we run this by Winooski Public Works or City Council?

Bushor: No, not part of Winooski, they were offered an opportunity

Harnett: will impact residents

Jason: if they decide they want to

Bushor: Odd b/c on Winooski side, right on top of water/bridge/road they planned this hotel

Jason: that has moved, not going to be planned in that location

Harnett: do we work well w/ Winooski

Norm: partnered on bridge repair

Nicole: great working relationship, and talked with their staff today on some of these recommendations. Gave them an idea to look at pavement markings going into Winooski side.

Harnett: probably one of the most dangerous intersections in the city in years, from bikes to walkers, even now.

Bushor: Move to accept intersection scoping study and do you want me to read whole thing. Move to accept intersection scoping study.... (reads language)

Harnett: Second

::Passes Unanimous::

5. FY 2020 Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission's Unified Planning Work Program Projects

- a. Nicole Losch, DPW presenting
- b. 15-minute duration
- c. Action: Action requested.

Nicole: we work through RPC UPWP, due every January. Transportation link. Work w/ other city dep'ts on projects we should apply for for upcoming year. Requires public forum and community. Updates since memo went out.

Nicole: The one project we know we're including Winooski Ave Transpo Study, continuing to list that. Will be partnering w/ S Burl on Queen City Park Rd and Bridge - to improve ped safety and bridge. App will be submitted by S Burl, we will support. Not requiring local match as it is regional. We also include several small requests on inspections and counts: pavement inspections (1/3 of system every year), parks facilities being added into pavement inspection, we always submit list of traffic counts, ped and bike counts, will continue including. Under tech assistance category, may require match depending on hours estimated for project: landfill led by CEDO and PZ - will likely not pursue. Some work has been done on Accessory dwelling units.

:::notes not take:::

Nicole: As we submit, we prioritize. We do have suggested motion at beginning of memo. Relates to supporting the process and local match allocation.

Bushor: There are two, my personal favorites. Sidewalk gap analysis, responsive to residents who talk about sidewalks all the time. I oversee a lot of things in the blood bank, what we come to know, sometimes you can't see your own shortcomings. When you say 'in-house' it's most appropriate, other times good to get someone else to look at it. I would like to see improvement in approach on sidewalk repair. Hoped this would begin that foundation. Based on what you said, you said new and not existing sidewalks. It's not that I don't care about new, I just want focus on repairing existing sidewalks. Should be considered as an item on this list.

Chapin: We discussed that

Nicole: We know we need to redo our sidewalk assessments, every few years, coming up. RPC does have asset inventory, and we are planning on that for next year to look at prioritizing system and which sidewalks to replace.

Bushor: Colchester PBL. Ever since you did work towards Barrett and narrowed the lane, the bicycles .. now two lanes of traffic can't go down the hill and bikes have nowhere to go so they ride in the middle because they are sharing the road. Creates anger, frustration, as I see a dangerous situation. Contemplate that as you look at it. Urgency to look at what can be done. Does get dark early and a lot of bicyclists don't have adequate lighting and wear dark clothing. Just pointing this all out, a real safety issue. What's the interim solution before you look at this globally.

Hartnett: Is this federal dollars?

Chapin: Much is federal, yes.

Jason: Match of federal, state and local. You pay dues.

Hartnett: When we talk about crosswalks w/ lights, are those projects part of it?

Chapin: these are planning dollars, through planning design, but not engineering.

Jason: Our monies can't be used to go past conceptual design. No construction, engineering or equipment

Nicole: Important program if we will be using state grant, as they require projects go through scoping, we need that level of detail in order for FHWA.

Hartnett: So where does that funding source come from, with protected crosswalks and lights?

Nicole: One funding source is through state's bike/ped program, 3 grant categories in annual program (1-construction of large projects using fed money; 2- scoping process, higher match than rpc and after 2015 3- small construction funding using only state money - lower dollar amounts, very competitive around state and they expect the projects to be constructed much quicker as there are less reviews than fed process. That program is only grant opportunity for those types of improvements.)

Hartnett: 6 or 7 on Pine and 1 on Shelburne Rd

Chapin: 2 on Shelburne

Hartnett: Any other protected, lighted crosswalks?

Chapin/Nicole/Norm/Rob: confirm locations, etc.

Hartnett: frustrating that we live in the district with most kids, most schools, most seniors and we can't get RRFBs.

Chapin: you're getting them

Hartnett: somewhere along the line we lost our way. I think everybody that lives in BTW has seen the benefit of these lights. They are life-savers, it's what it boils down to.

Programs you automatically, looking for them to come on, huge benefit. Forget

state/federal dollars, I want them, it's time we incorporate that expense into city budget. Can't understand why it's not.

Norm: In this process, this corridor came from state \$, unique, econ dev b/c of Dealer.com. For awhile FHWA banned rrfbs, but has lightened up. Caused hiccup in advancing project.

Hartnett: Message from me here is we could talk about different dollars, at the end of the day, we need to incorporate in city budget

Norm: Trying to navigate that

Bushor: Placing of them is mysterious. My residents petitioned on East Ave, but all of a sudden it came up on Colchester Ave.

Chapin: Wasn't all of a sudden, process involved

Bushor: Feels like things drop from the sky, we have a communication issue when we don't understand timelines and how things happen.

Hartnett: General public doesn't understand it. To tell somebody that Colchester was involved in state/federal project, people don't care about that. Should be priority in our city, given these lights, people want them.

Bushor: good for committee to know the cost for purchase and installation. # of requests for these.

Tracy: My feedback is Winooski Corridor is imperative, pretty much many things we hope to accomplish. Creates network. Already started. We really need to do a good job of keeping it out there. Support that. I second Bushor's sidewalk gap analysis. Quite a few areas where access can be improved like on Archibald to cemetery. I do also agree w/ Bushor on Colchester bike lane issue, have heard from different folks.

Hartnett: particularly in NNE, have had that conversation about new sidewalks, fixing what we have. Have more sidewalks in NNE. Quite a few that don't have sidewalks.

Bushor: we have to have motion. ::reads motion::

Hartnett: seconds

Unanimous vote.

6. DPW Pedestrian Safety Efforts

- a. Nicole Losch, DPW presenting
- b. 15-minute duration
- c. Action: Informative, no action needed.

Chapin: Thanks Bushor, helpful for us to get thoughts together.

::Chapin presents::

::Norm presents Ped Safety in 2019, going forward::

Norm: to give important history that isn't in this presentation. How people use the streets. For instance, years ago changed ordinance to lower speed limit; 30 to 25 is

important safety measure. Some streets, like North and Shelburne, didn't get the speed limit reduction. Communicated w/ Transportation Board.

:::Norm goes back to presentation:::

Bushor: We all get emails from Tony, re: roundabouts. I'd respectfully ask if there is anybody who was in a city that had a roundabout that allowed the safe passage of pedestrians w/ high volume of cars. I don't understand it, but keep hearing it about roundabouts. A lot of us are ignorant about roundabouts in an urban center.

Norm: Biggest benefit is it eliminates T-bone accidents, no angle. But they are difficult to fit in urban environment. Can it perform with that lifecycle? Considerable amount of effort, resources, displacement of utilities.

Bushor: So, other thing. I grew up in MA, with some roundabouts. Never saw a bike or pedestrian ever. Want to dispel or collaborate on this. Learn if there are places where this works.

Chapin: We will share our roundabout briefing. Difference in modern roundabouts and larger rotaries.

Chapin: Fundamentally, how we prioritize intersection upgrades come through corridor or planning studies. Comes through private development, public or City Council directing us to look at problematic intersection. As you saw earlier, through UPWP we prioritize requests which starts project development process.

Bushor: On behalf of Jared Wood, someone who now needs assistance as he moves around, he feels much more keenly aware of limitations and challenges. He questions the allocation of money to pedestrian safety versus vehicular and bike safety. He wants to understand that. Feels like pedestrians get short end of stick. I have no way to respond. He wants us to make sure that is a priority.

Norm: Last 3 years of sidewalk investment answers that questions. Bike investments pale.

Tracy: I'd appreciate a funding briefing to understand the capital planning we've done: bike, walk, drive. Don't need a lot of detail.

Chapin: yes, happy to put together.

Tracy: Thank you for this, very helpful. Very appreciative Vision Zero is included. Haven't systematized yet. When I see the answers to these questions, I see that coming together. We do make planning, engineering, staff resource choices. There seems to be/is a necessary lag time between crashes and change. Who is seeing this info and when? Councilor Dieng interested in moving a resolution forward on bike safety, and only bike safety. I've asked him to be broadly inclusive and respectful of VZ. They all interact all the time, hard to look at only one at a time. ENF isn't necessarily the answer. Infrastructure changes, like beacons or bumpouts, are needed. My question is: how do we systematize the VZ stuff - that uses data, makes the data accessible, how do we bring a regular review. I say that with respect to the ComStat effort, as every time they bring up people who have passed away from overdoses. Grounding this at human level and have data. Injuries should be included - shakes people up. How possible is this - do we work with BPD to get more info? Do we have that referred to TEUC or Commission and do we review quarterly or at the end of our meetings? BPD gets data around crashes, tells us what happened. Gets passed to Committee or DPW to look at infrastructure changes. Then comes to Committee for conversation. Is this reasonable?

Norm: I think we are doing that largely now. We do corridor analysis, what are the situations causing accidents, how do you balance the safety improvements against operational expectations of public and how do you accommodate those modes in corridor. How do you work through the public process. North Ave, for instance, if you go 3 or 4 lane config - it brings significantly different design. We are already worried, and need to know which techniques to apply. All of these conscious decisions are driven by economics and timing. Sometimes takes a long public process. Heart-broken on North Ave tragedy.

Chapin: You are aligned with where we want to go. We can have this conversation at a policy level. Look at data, how we knock down crashes. Councilor Dieng can reframe his resolution. If Council wants us to develop material for future consideration, we are open.

Nicole: data collection and evaluation has room for improvement. VZ would move us to more proactivity, rather than just reactive. Resource allocation to prevent crashes. That is part of the conversation. If we were envisioning broad VZ policy, but larger team necessary.

Bushor: this is a really good idea, as it addresses one aspect that's important - the residents. Answers the question "what's being done?" Begins process of resolution, prioritizes something we've analyzed. Adds accountability. This is what people want to hold us to. Great suggestion by Max.

Tracy: What I'm looking for is holistic approach. May miss things not falling under scope of corridor study, want to see continued focus & accountability. This keeps coming up from public, and consistently have a check in. Wake up call for me serving on this committee. We could be doing more on this committee. Want to ask staff to work with this committee. Be strategic and not reactive.

Hartnett: Do we know how many pedestrians have been killed in BTV - last 25 years? Any progress from when we went from 30mp to 25mph.

Chapin: Very few deaths, fortunately, but certainly property damage.

Norm: In my career, I can think of a handful. In my history of doing this work, I follow up with Police to understand contributing factors.

Hartnett: I chose not to speak publicly about this. If you look at the fog, dark, rain, driver following law .. just a tragic accident. Crossing lights may not have changed anything. Two other issues, re: safety to address as city moving forward. Street lighting is not great, even on regular basis. Want to understand how we light our streets, what we use. Even before accident, we need to look at that. Streets are pretty dark, particularly on North Ave. Another area, waiting for something bad, we need to address design or with resolution. Someone soon is going to get hit coming off a bus. These drivers just going around the bus. Either need a law in BTV where you can go around a pulled over bus OR we need to add a cut-in for bus to pull in. Totally dangerous on North Ave - moreso from 4 to 3 lanes.

Chapin: crosswalks going in. BED comment on lighting is a good one. BED has clear lighting standards and has been reviewing corridors. Good conversation to have with fellow departments. LED lighting is good for downward and adjusted.

Bushor: For next time, thank you. Want to say that at one of our next meetings, need an update on ReUse zones -- any activity? By April 1, want to know experience on Narrow Streets. One of the things I feel is we don't evaluate post-implementation enough. Want to hear from you and residents.

Norm: Engineering team has for many years been short staffed. Within next few weeks, we will be fully staffed and can answer these questions and do more follow up. Thank you to Council for that.

Bushor: When will they come forward?

Norm: Olivia (PWE) and Matty (APWE). We've created a team for ladder of opportunity for growth.

Jason: Matty is former RPC intern.

Tracy: Today was windy, twitter discussion on toters. Want to have conversation on agenda. We are near end of phase-in period. Not seeing a lot of rental properties covered with this. Add this to agenda.

Chapin: Adding to agenda. Budgeting to get more of these out there. We're not as far as we want to be, but will bring those #'s.

Tracy: Thank you. Let's set our next meeting.

Hartnett: Back to safety presentation -- would be a great NPA agenda item.

5:30PM on 2/5 set as next meeting.

Bushor motion to adjourn

Unanimous.