

Neighborhood Planning Assembly  
Ward 6  
December 3, 2015  
Aiken Hall, Champlain College

Clare welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. Champlain college update- Sandy Yusen, Kit Hansen:

Sandy Yusen introduced herself, she is the new director of external communications at Champlain. Champlain was recently named #1 Most Innovative School of the North. She updated us about the college's work toward racial equality on campus and noted the letter from all presidents of the colleges around Burlington condemning racial inequality. She also talked about RAVE, the emergency alert system used on campus, they are now able to offer neighbors the ability to also be on these alerts. CCM building is open and running, they have hosted many outside groups for meetings and events. Kit Hansen talked about events on campus; the healthy aging seminar, on Wed Dec 16, Graphic design capstone project presentation from Dec 14-Jan 1st in the CCM building. Education majors will be hosting a community reading event and child fair on Dec 5 at 9:30-11 am in the IDX building. Students will be leaving on Dec 19 and classes end on the 11th before finals week. School will be closed the Dec. 24th to Jan. 3rd.

Q: Walking from South Union to Summit, are you worried about the street lighting on/around campus.

A: Not sure, will check.

Q: Will you be posting to all front porch forums

A: Yes we have access to all 5

2. Burlington Electric, Integrated Resource Plan- Meredith Birkett

Meredith Birkett is a resource planner at BED. BED will be starting an Integrated Resource Plan. BED overview: Largest municipal owned electric utility, provides all power for Burlington, about 95% of power in 2014 was renewable. IRP is a plan to find the lowest cost to meet the public's need for energy usage, and serves as BEDs business plan. The plan is required by law every 3 years. The IRP uses scenario planning to evaluate a range of potential resource, equipment and program options. 2016 IRP changes since 2012 include: smart meter implementation, Winooski One purchase, act 99 passage, act 56 passage and 2016 comprehensive energy plans. 2016 proposed topics include renewable energy credit sales, dynamic rates, BED capacity needs, Impact of new technologies (electric vehicles, battery/storage options, and cold climate heat pumps.) Timeline/Process include IRP committee, public input, Burlington electric commission, Burlington City Council and the DPS and PSB Review.

You can connect Meredith by email at [mbirkett@burlingtonelectric.com](mailto:mbirkett@burlingtonelectric.com) and check get the PowerPoint presentation from tonight and upcoming meeting at [www.burlingtonelectric.com](http://www.burlingtonelectric.com)

Q: What is Renewable energy credit sales?

A: Non energy attributes from renewable energy, the credits can be sold.

Q: Who owns the other 50% of the McNeil plant?

A: Green Mountain Power and VPPSA

Q: Are there 48 individual solar panels on homes in Burlington?

A: Not sure will check

Q: Is BED getting solar energy from anywhere else in Vermont?

A: We receive energy from Sheffield and Green Mountain Coop.

Q: Can residents of Burlington buy a share in an energy field elsewhere in Vermont?

A: Not sure, will check.

3. Approval of November 5th minutes:

Clare looked for approved of the November 5 minutes, Julie made a motion to approve the minutes.

4. South Forty Solar Project- Frank Von Turkovich (developer) John Leshner (Neighbor)

Frank Von Turkovich: developer

40 acres of land in the parcel in the North End off of Star Farm road. He is hoping to be use the area for photovoltaic panels and produce energy to be used by the city. The group filed a permit application for a Certificate of Public Good and assuming that goes through they will move forward with building a project which is approx. 17 acres of land and would house the PV panels.

Q: Are they fixed panels or have you thought about tracking panels?

A: Yes they are fixed

Q: Have you been working with BED about battery storage?

A: Hasn't yet been proposed as a feature for this project

Q: What is the service life of a photovoltaic panel?

A: The project would last for about 25 years unless BED and other want to continue, the panels lose .5% of its capacity each year?

Q: If after 25 years you don't want to continue, what would happen?

A: All of the systems can be taken out

Q: Has BED already contracted with you?

A: Yes

Q: Have you looked into the reflection into abutting houses?

A: The panels mostly absorb the sunlight and do not reflect. The panel is also buffered by woods and will provide fencing for the abutting road.

Q: How does the wetland designation affect the project?

A: Required us to work further with the Army Corp of Engineers and the State.

Q: Do the panels require water to run?

A: No they do not require any outside sources.

John Lester, neighbor of the project.

There are 60-70 foot pine trees that would be cleared for the project. There is a large carbon cost for the project including the loss of the trees and the shipment of the panels from China. He stated that the PSB is supposed to consider Greenhouse gas impacts. He stated that BED is buying the solar power at the project for 19 cents a kilowatt hr. which is 3-4x the market rate but solar is a better REC and will offset the possibility of a carbon tax. The project will help BED and ratepayers financially but will not have an overall environmental benefit. John does not believe this will help the greater good.

Rebuttal by Frank: He believes there will be a net benefit and this project is environmentally helpful and is the better option for energy without greenhouse gas emissions.

#### 5. First Night Burlington- Sarah Stickle

Overview of this year's festivities.

Many new groups coming to perform this year in many genres. There are also many favorites returning this year. Hoping to again create another New Year's Eve of fun, safe and responsible entertainment.

Legislative Review- Rep. Rachelson and Sen. Sirotkin:  
Senator Michael Sirotkin and Representative Barbara Rachelson

Senator Sirotkin talked about the situation in the senate regarding Senator Mcallister and the alleged sexual crimes and want to know what the public feels the senate should do regarding his expulsion or letting him remain in his position.

C: Check with his constituency and see what they think

Q: What if the offense had been shoplifting?

A: If he had admitted to the crime we may be able to take steps other than expulsion but in his case the senate is not sure if they can expel him. Sen. Mcallister has already admitted to sexual harassment.

Q: Legislatures should be focusing on the business of the senate

A: Sen. Sirotkin agreed and hope the senate can move forward

Sen. Sirotkin talked about energy opportunities and bills that will be coming to the legislature this session.

He also discussed the legalization of marijuana, he believes there is a push back from many communities, he is in favor of the legalization but there will likely be baby steps this session. Another issue is earned sick days which will hopefully move forward in the senate this session. The budget will also be a big deal this year. Education funding and the caps on the amount towns can spend will be an issue this session as well. Towns are finding it difficult to stay at these caps and maintain the quality of education. Sen. Sirotkin also talked about a meeting he attended in Richmond regarding opiate addiction and the need to create a plan to deal with this issue.

Q: Has there been any studies about increasing automobile rates in states that have legalized marijuana?

A: Have not looked into this.

Rep. Rachelson talked about the budget and its priority this session and looking into many options on the revenue and spending sides. She also discussed how the minimum wage will help lower the rate of poverty. Rep. Rachelson serves on the judiciary committee, she talked about the amount of spending on incarceration and recidivism. She also talked about bringing back the prisoners out of state. Another issue is the carbon tax. One issue that faces ward 6 is the fraternity and sororities at UVM are having to pay property taxes, this also brings up the issue of student debt and the cost of a college education. Rep. Rachelson also talked about auto renewals and the effect of this on consumers.

Q: Is it a city or state rule that higher education does not need to pay taxes?

A: Believes it is a city and state charter.

#### 6. City Council Update- Karen Paul

Councilor Paul talked about the 10 year capital plan and aiming to finished the bike path. She also talked about the flasher beacons at the rotary which will be installed in the next few weeks. Another exciting issue is the new app to pay for parking on your phone at every meter in Burlington. There will be a coffee with the mayor in January and would love everyone to attend.