

To the Transportation, Energy & Utilities Committee:

I am here officially, as a member of the Ward 5 NPA Steering Committee, to urge action on the resolution that our NPA passed unanimously on February 16, 2023. That resolution, addressed to the City Council and the Public Works Commission, asks that the new Shelburne St. Roundabout be renamed the “Tony Redington Roundabout” in honor of that intrepid Burlington advocate for roundabouts who died last year.

Unofficially, I am here to tell you that Tony did not care so much for symbolic gestures like this renaming (although it’s still a good idea). And also to let you know that, without a doubt, Tony’s ghost will haunt incessantly all city, state and federal transportation planners as well as local decision makers (like you) if this turns out to be the last roundabout built in Burlington. Though I suspect that your committee mostly hears the complaints, everyone I talk to LOVES the new roundabout in our neighborhood. What they don’t know is that most roundabouts would not entail relocating and rebuilding so many underground utilities and would not require moving so much contaminated soil from old gas stations. They don’t know that most roundabouts would not take three years of disruption to construct.

As a former transportation planner himself, Tony had a deep appreciation for the elegance and efficiency of roundabouts as a tool for moving traffic across the land. He knew, from extensive study, that the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicle drivers is enhanced by using roundabouts in place of traffic signals. However, Tony’s core motivation was a belief in justice and equity. He cared about the safety of communities who are often forgotten or devalued by planners. He knew that these are the people in our city who most often walk, bike and live on the busiest, oldest streets.

So, yes, please move ahead expeditiously with the designation of the “Tony Redington Roundabout,” recommended by the Ward 5 and Wards 2&3 NPAs. But, after that, what will you do to become advocates for Tony’s vision of Burlington? How can you lead to make sure that one, two, many roundabouts sprout up all over our neighborhoods as symbols of prioritizing safety and health for all our residents. What are the roundabouts that are already planned for our streets (North Avenue? Colchester Avenue?) and how can you move them forward? What about Pine St. and Lakeside Avenue, Pine and Maple, Pine and Queen City Park Road??

With all the other demands on you, I hope that implementing this vision can become a priority for the City Council. Let me know how I can support you. Thank you all for your service to our city.

Andy Simon  
54 Locust Street

March 28, 2023

