

W18 NPA Meeting Minutes from 2021 May 12

Agenda:

6:45 Sign on to Zoom online meeting Waiting Room (See below if you have problems)
7:00 (Formal start to the meeting) Announcements & Introductions
7:05 Speak-out
7:15 City Council Update: Jack Hanson, Zoraya Hightower, Jane Stromberg
7:45 School Commission Updates: Aden Haji & Kathy Olwell
7:55 City Updates, including Police Chief Search – Mayor Miro Weinberger
8:20 The Neighborhood Project Update – Gillian Nanton, CEDO, and possibly Bill Ward, Permitting and Inspections
8:45 Champlain Parkway – Tony Reddington, Steve Goodkind
9:00 Adjourn

Meeting started at 7:00 PM

Attendees:

Angie
Bill C
Caitlin Halpert
Carol Livingston
Caryn Long
David Cawley
Fletcher Pratt
Gillian Nanton
Glenn McRae
Greg Handcock
Hannah King
Ilona Blanchard
Jack Hanson
Jane Stromberg
Jason Stuffle
Jean Hopkins
Jeanne Keller
Joe Spiegle
Jonathan Chapple-Sokol
Jordan Redell
Karen Vastine
Kathy Olwell
Lisa Kingsbury
Lisa Lax
Milo Grant
Patti Wehman
Sandy Wynne
Stephanie Seguino
Steve Goodkind
Tom Derenthal

Tony Redington
Zoraya Hightower

Speakout:

Jonathan Chapple-Sokol

- Would like to move forward with the budget as proposed last month, especially advertising on FPF, CCTV and signs.
- The W18 NPA steering committee is looking for volunteers to join. Contact any steering committee member for more information.

Jeanne Keller

- A petition regarding the city wide appraisal is out for signatures: Complaints include: There is a lack of definitions / basis home grades [fair / average / good]. This is unfortunate as grade appears to be the dominate factor differentiating home values. The City assessor will have a guide available on the City web site later this week. The petition has 300 signatures to date.
- A comment: A guide should be available on the web later this week.
- The City assessors page is here → <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/assessor/reappraisal>

Caryn Long

– The re-appraisal appears inconsistent and/or not accurate. Range of prices on Henry St. don't reflect differences. New assessments are already out of date for recently sold houses.

Erhard Mahnke

- Some data card entries are not accurate [e.g. measurements] and others are wrong [e.g. space type assignments].

Ilna Blanchard

- South BTV is proposing a bike bridge over I89 near exit 14. \$12-14M Federal grant is being applied for. Letters of support are welcome and needed. The application is due in July. More information from via.
- More information follows these minutes [below] or look online here → <https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/transportation/current-projects/scoping/i-89-exit-14-bike-ped-crossing-study/>.

David Cawley

- The Old East End is participating in Kid's Week. On May 15th at Schmanska park, activities will include tree cookies, yoga, Lake Monster Champ, a new story walk, a meteorologist, musical instruments [for kids] and local musical artists. Free cremees will be served.
- Most activities are from 10-1
- More information can be found here → <https://oldeastendbtv.com/>

Erhard Mahnke mentioned some of the Kids week musical acts including Keyboard: Jack Hanson dual, Lola Houston, Brazilian music with Sophie and others.

City Council Update: Jack Hanson, Zoraya Hightower, Jane Stromberg

Zoraya Hightower

- Pedestrian and bike bridge.
- Reappraisal – This is her first. Feels like it didn't go well.
- City Survey: The City is taking a survey on public safety. See the survey here → https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/btv_police_chief_search
- City Survey: The City is taking a survey on the budget. See the survey here → https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/btv_city_budget_survey
- NPA participation: The hope is to increase participation by empowering NPA's with more decision authority

Jane Stromberg

- Councilor compensation Resolution: The charter change committee is investigation what City Council compensation changes are appropriate, including if pay is a barrier to running for office. Other considerations include healthcare and child care
- American Rescue plan – 27.3M to BTV. 880K targeted to restart the City.

Jack Hanson

- An ordinance change for rental weatherization passed. Worst buildings are targeted first. Other buildings to follow.
- Enforcement of the Livable Wage ordinance: City contracts valued at greater than \$15K need to comply.
- The City Budget process for FY2022 has started.

Comments:

Caryn long

- Housing standard enforcement – Why do we allow these rentals to continue to be in business.
- Jack Hanson: Endorsement is a huge issue. Rental weatherization enforcement will be easier [than other standards] as they will be data driven in conjunction with Vermont Gas. Also, working to shrink the [term of the] certificate of compliance.

Erhard Mahnke: The American Rescue Plan includes 151 pages of regulations defining how the money can be spent. An 8 page summary is also included. The ARP fact sheet can be found here →

<https://home.treasury.gov/news/featured-stories/fact-sheet-the-american-rescue-plan-will-deliver-immediate-economic-relief-to-families>

Jack Hanson: The City is waiting to see the direction set by the State. The City will get ~17M in discretionary funds.

School Commission Updates: Aden Haji & Kathy Orwell

Kathy Orwell:

- BSD has a 3.5 year contract to use the Macy's building
- Renovation at BHS has stopped for a number of reasons, including the presence of PCBs. Renovations have consistently exceeded estimates.

- VT's PCB limits are so low, they're hard to meet.
- Best estimate is as that full remediation will cost \$7-12M [and no budget for this expense].
- There is no budget to rebuild the Burlington Technical Center which is unusable in its current condition.
- For budget reasons, the project scope may need to be cut which will be unacceptable to the community.
- BTV tech center cannot be used. Project scope will have to change and not likely acceptable.
- Should the current project continue, Burlington will have a 60 YO building with PCBs that require ongoing monitoring.
- Big question is: How are we going to move forward? We need a high school and tech center.
- The buildings need to be demolished, but no decision yet whether the foundation is reusable.
- Financing for the new buildings [including the technology center] needs to be determined.
- Public input will be requested.

Comments:

- Carol Livingston: South Burlington has struggled with renovations. What are other cities doing?
Kathy Orwell: Everything is on the plate. We're back to the drawing board. Burlington needs State and Federal support. The State hasn't supported new school buildings for 10-15 years.
- Tom D: Asked for clarification on the building being taken down. Kathy Orwell: Confirmed demolition. Timing for the deconstruction is TBD. Decision on using the current site for a new school is TBD.

City Updates, including Police Chief Search – Mayor Miro Weinberger

- City budget process has started. The deadline end of June. Board of finance is launched. Goal is to engage public on regular budget and American Rescue Plan funds. The City budget process is described here → https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/mayor/FY22_budget_process
- The City is asking for public input via a budget survey. This can be found here → https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/btv_city_budget_survey
- City reinvestment plan – The City embarked on a general reinvestment in City infrastructure, e.g. parks, bike path.... The first 5 year phase is complete. The original plan called for a phase II [which is still needed]. The City can and will use some COVID funds on this, but additional funding is needed.
- COVID forced spending of the City's reserves. Federal monies may be used to restore this rainy day fund.
- The City is trying to avoid a budget increase, especially in light of reappraisal pain.
- Racial inclusion & equity dept. is expanded.
- Some Federal monies will be used to compensate City utilities where customers could not pay due to COVID.
- New police chief – It's time to resume the search.
 - o Will reach out to get community input what the Chief should be capable of doing.
 - o Timeline: Feedback report > new job description > interviews in July.
 - o The hiring committee will include a member of the public. Interested persons can apply online.
 - o Present recommendations to City Council – August.

Comments:

- Glenn McRae – The budget survey design may not yield good feedback. UVM has some experts in this area.

The Neighborhood Project Update

Gillian Nanton, CEDO, Bill Ward, Permitting and Inspections

- Project came from the 2015 BTV housing action plan, with a goal to stabilize neighborhoods.
- CEDO and CDNR devised the implementation plan.
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- Three main goals are: Enhance the quality of life, Convert student units to long term rentals or owner occupied and xxx
- QOL – data tracking xxx
- Bill WARD - Director of xxx
 - o Recycling – many units not in compliance with wheel'd tote rules. We're also seeing larger than historic loads due to increased home delivery during COVID.
 - o Spring move out program – in progress – May 25 and May 31. The focus is on dumpsters and preventing garbage on the greenway.
- Patty
 - o Certificate of compliance strategy is to issue longer COC for units with fewer deficiencies.
 - o COVID had an impact on inspections with the rate dropping from from ~3K to ~1K annually.
- Bill - Complaint updates
 - o Drafting a rule whereby neighbor complains will reduce COC time.
- Jonathon
 - o CDNR spreadsheet available? = Gillina Nanton
 - o When will inspections be caught up? No date, but worst are inspected first.
- Caryn Long
 - o Bring Neighborhood project back
 - o Trash and recycling – totes are not being put away.
- Erhard
 - o Will there be self-certification – yes, but only for trusted persons.
 - o There is a homeless encampment on my property – can the city help clean up? Bill: That would be a police issue. Lacy is the contact. .

Champlain Parkway – Tony Reddington, Steve Goodkind Get a copy of slides

- Tony and Steve presented an argument that the Parkway as planned will reduce traffic from a prosperous white section near Home Avenue and increase traffic in a poor and racial community near Pine and Maple streets.
- See the complete presentation posted on the NPA pages → <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/CEDO/Neighborhood-Services/NPAs/Ward-1-NPA>
 - o File is NPAS5_2021_compressed

Comments:

- Caryn Long – thanks for putting in the work to describe what's going on.

The meeting ended at 9:16 PM

Reference: Email regarding the bicycle bridge [From Ilona]

Thank you for hearing our request for a letter from the NPA to Secretary Buttegieg in support of the City's application for a bicycle pedestrian bridge over I-89 at Exit 14.

Here is a link to the project: <https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/transportation/current-projects/scoping/i-89-exit-14-bike-ped-crossing-study/>. This scoping was conducted in partnership with CCRPC.

One item that I did not mention is that this year the grantors are interested in racial and social equity, so any thoughts, facts or comments you have regarding the impact of this project with respect to this concern are welcome.

The funding that we are submitting for is the RAISE grant. We feel this project checks many boxes.

If we receive this grant, we will also be doing public outreach as part of the design (prior outreach was based on where the bridge would be and whether it would be a bridge or gondola). If funded, this bridge could be in construction by 2024!

We would prefer to gather the letter by the end of June in order incorporate any great points into the application, but can accept it through the first week of July.

I appreciate your consideration of providing a letter – please let me know if you have questions or would like a more formal presentation.

Ilona