

Ward 5 NPA Notes June 18, 2015

Location: St. John's Club, 9 Central Avenue, Burlington
Meeting start: 7:15 PM
Meeting end: 9:22 PM

**(1) Fair Housing Project in Champlain Valley
Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO)
Ted Wimpey, Program Director
Tim Johnson, Education and Outreach Coordinator**



(L-R) Tim Johnson; Ted Wimpey; Mary Sullivan, State Representative, Vermont House, Chittenden 6-5

Ted: Burlington's an entitlement community: We receive block grant & home money.

Ted: The Fair Housing Project promotes opportunities for more affordable housing to be built and makes sure the zoning and permitting processing for affordable housing's moving in a forward direction

Ted: A brief history of fair housing: African-American people were disadvantaged historically, and up until 1968 it was legal to discriminate against people of color. In

the wake of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1968, discrimination re housing became illegal. In Vermont, we've added classes, e.g., gender identity.

Ted: You can't discriminate re planning, permitting, or zoning, based on income of people who'll be living in a house.

Ted: Burlington has *inclusionary zoning*: Requires that developers to have a certain percentage of a housing project be affordable.

Tim: (Has literature re fair housing project.) The Fair Housing Act bans discrimination against protected housing.

Tim: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is about to spell out what "affirmatively furthering fair housing" is. It'll be big news.

Q: You're working on the retail level? Do you also work with the City re, e.g., the action plan?

Ted: We tend to weigh in to the extent we're invited. We *are* interested in that kind of thing. We try to attend meetings. We also give training to officials and regulators.

Kesha Ram (Community Engagement Specialist, Burlington Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO)); also State Representative, Vermont House, Chittenden 3-4): I get a lot of calls from New Americans. How might someone get help for someone they know?

Ted: We have a hotline, but we're not a law office. There's also the Human Rights Commission. We'll take calls and do screening. It's often more an issue for Vermont Tenants. Sometimes we'll refer to Vermont Legal Aid or Human Rights Commission. A lot of times it's just a matter of approaching a landlord. Landlords can't say "no" to an assistance animal (AKA service animal).

Ted: Sometimes Vermont will do business practices audits, e.g., for rental housing. One person will fit one profile, and another has an identical profile but is of a minority ethnic background.

Ted: We try to educate groups about WHEN they might be getting discriminated against.

Tim: Vermont Legal Aid's testing shows a much higher level of discrimination than people actually report. The thinking is that it's due to people not KNOWING that they've been discriminated against!

(2) Megan Moir, Stormwater Program Manager, Department of Public Works



(Note: "Moir" pronounced like "more".)

It's not a stormwater problem; it's an IMPERVIOUS problem. We've covered up the "sponge" of the ground with pavement. Also, anything that falls on an impervious surface goes to the watershed quickly.

We've removed trees. Trees soak up rainwater.

We design to get rid of water quickly, e.g., putting a house's downspout to a driveway vs. on the lawn.

Combined Sewer Issues: combined sewer overflows & wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) impacts are a common issue in older cities like Burlington. The pipe that handles your house's wastewater ALSO handles stormwater. It works well for steady rain & tiny storms, taking it to wastewater treatment plant.

But in a big storm, we have a combined sewer overflow, and it ends up blowing out into the environment. We're working to reduce these combined sewer overflows (CSO). There are four remaining untreated CSOs in Burlington.

Burlington has constant monitoring of our CSOs and we report them immediately to the state!

Combined sewer issues: Basement backups.

We're required to do flow-restoration plans to do retrofits. We're looking for ways to do retrofits to Englesby Brook. Estimate is most of \$9M to do (i.e., paid by Burlington).

Our pipes were designed for a pre-climate change era, i.e., dealing with less water.

Infrastructure issues: Aging pipes & outfalls. There are a lot of stormwater issues. Our metal pipes are being rotted by all the wintertime salt. We have 53 kilometers of corrugated-metal pipes, much of which is developing issues.

Lake Champlain Phosphorus Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL): We need wastewater treatment plant upgrades. The estimated cost is \$38 million for three plants. We also need to upgrade existing impervious surface.

We're one of five communities selected for an EPA grant for stormwater management.

Integrated planning in Burlington: In the past it's all been about performance per dollar.

There's a webcast of a similar presentation.

For more info, see "Integrated Water Quality Planning: Municipal Stormwater and Wastewater" (<https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/DPW/Stormwater/IMSWP>)

Kesha: We often don't quantify the cost of inaction!

Megan: Dirt & gravel roads, usually, are impervious! Gravel gets compacted. There's such a thing as pervious asphalt, but it's expensive and needs "vacuuming".

(3) Mary Sullivan, State Representative, Vermont House, Chittenden 06-05



Mary Sullivan (Background, L-R: Megan Moir; Kesha Ram)

(Brief wrap-up of year)

H 40: Renewable energy. We're transitioning into a renewable portfolio standard.

H.35: Water Quality Bill: Came through. More regulation on small farms. (My husband is a water quality specialist who encounters manure breaches in streams frequently.)

Education reform: Not as much of an impact on Burlington. I think it's a good idea to combine districts; provides more opportunities for the kids.

Introduced a bill to tax carbon used at , e.g., fuel pumps. Nothing's happened with that.

2-cent/oz sugar tax: Was in favor of it. Compares it to a tobacco tax. Goal's to reduce use. It's a trigger that has been shown to actually work to reduce purchase and consumption.

Kesha: We did make some progress this year re tax reform.

(4) Joan Shannon, Councilor, Ward 5



Joan Shannon

Joan discusses what she's been hearing re PlanBTV.

Artists say, "We don't want housing." Bruce Seifer is adamant that he doesn't want housing. He also has a history of being against things that people like, e.g., cafes, business. But our success is driving up rents.

One of this district's main goals is jobs.

I urge people to think about the discussion about what's driving up rent. The way they've proposed housing is very conservative with a whole lot of "if"s attached, e.g., only "if" it's affordable.

Three places they're proposing housing:

1. Flynn Ave., at St. Anthony's site ("I'm not sure their neighbors think it's a good idea").
2. St. Paul St., in area of Duncan's Auto/Kerry's Kwik Stop
3. Lakeside Ave., in the area near St. John's Club, where there's the big parking lot. It's prime land for industrial/commercial. I'd be hard-pressed to give it up to mixed-use/residential!

NOTE: The general consensus at the end of the meeting was to empower the Ward 5 NPA steering committee to continue discussing whether or not to urge that the final input for PlanBTV not be finalized until **after** summer.



Attendees at NPA meeting

<END. Notes & photos: Nate Orshan>