



# Neighborhood Planning Assembly Draft Minutes

NPA:  
(choose one)

<b>Wards 1 &amp; 8</b>	Wards 2 & 3	Wards 4 & 7	Ward 5	Ward 6
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Date of Assembly : 2/13 /2019 Start Time: (Commence): 7:04pm

Location: McClure Conference Room Finish Time: (Adjourn): 9:20pm

Note taker: Hannah Carpino Please forward these official minutes to: \_\_\_\_\_

Steering Committee Members in Attendance:

Richard Hillyard, Cindy Cook

**Discussion Topics**

- *These can be copied from agenda items*
- *Content of discussion not required*

**Actions Taken / Decisions Made**

- *Immediately following Agenda Item*
- *Generally includes: electing a new steering committee member, voting as a body to send a formal communication to the City, decisions to spend money.*

## Agenda Items and Actions:

*Please Remember to Enter Adjournment Time!*

### Speak Out:

- Maria McLellan: Sharon Bushor retired on Feb. 8th after 50 years at UVM Medical Center!
- Physicians for a National Health Plan: Summer internships for medical students! Looking for housing for international student interns.
- Mark Hughes: Vermont Racial Justice Alliance is hosting an event on Feb. 24th, 3 PM, 38 S. Winooski (First Congregational Church) called “What Does Equity Look Like”. Event will feature legislative work and legislators that are putting that work forward.
- Karen Long: Concerned about ballot item #4, “Downtown Improvement District” item. Jane Knodell has also publicly raised concerns. Website is noon4btv.com
- No On 4: Trying to spread the word on ballot item #4, which was introduced too quickly for citizens to make an informed decision in March. Worried about studies on other cities who have used Downtown Improvement Districts- raising rents, privatized management, and privatized security.
- Richard Hillyard: UVMCMC has offered a tour of new wing of medical center, Wednesday May 8<sup>th</sup>. Dave Kelly, Director of Facilities, will lead tour.
- “No more than 4” planning rule was upheld for property on Weston Street. This item will go on the agenda for next month’s NPA.

### City Council Update

-Adam Roof

- Public Safety Committee has been looking at an encampment removal policy. Policy examines under which circumstances city can remove sites. There will be 5 total hearings on the topic.
- Police Commission’s role in oversight when citizens make complaints about officers will be discussed.
- ELI (Early Learning Initiative)- intended for families below 60% median income, provides grants for those families to enroll their 0-3 year old kids into early education programs.
- DID- Website for DID info: [burlingtonvt.gov/2019/DID](http://burlingtonvt.gov/2019/DID)

-Sharon Bushor

-Board of Finance: Lots of time was spent on DID. Councilor Roof did a lot of work on it, and brought it forward. Residents have weighed in, said they are not well-informed enough. Overall, item does not feel ready for the ballot. Concept is solid, but more time is needed and citizens have raised a lot of concerns about rent.

-Richard Deane

-Last week was second annual Burlington Wildways Summit. Organization focuses on conserving and connecting natural and wild lands in Burlington. The city is almost 50% open and natural lands. Website is [burlingtonwildways.org](http://burlingtonwildways.org). Site offers trail maps of Burlington's wild areas.

-Resolution came to City Council which recognized the posting of anti-gay, anti-semitic, racist sentiments around the city in three different locations.

#### City Council East District Debate- Jack Hanson, Richard Deane

-Richard Deane Opening Statement:

-Has been serving city for almost 2 years, has lived in Burlington since age 2.

-The main challenges that face the city are affordability, jobs, and housing.

-Important to give young families and young professionals the opportunity to stay in Burlington.

-\$70 mil renewal of BHS was an important project, will bring new families and new life to the city

-Jack Hanson Opening Statement:

-Moved to Burlington to attend UVM, was able to stay after graduation

-Works at Green Mountain Power, helps companies reduce their use of fossil fuels

-Priorities are affordability and climate change. Need to examine UVM's role in housing prices, percentage of students living off campus. Landlord accountability is also important

**Question:** Since you have similar values, why is one of you better suited to serve Wards 1 + 8?

-Jack: Focusing on robust engagement with community, engaging people with the policy process as early and often as possible.

-Richard: Has spent a lifetime living in Burlington, running a business in Burlington. Understands the city experience.

**Question:** What exactly are you planning on doing in terms of affordability?

-Richard: City is already moving in the right direction on affordability. CityPlace will provide 270 units of housing, 700 more units being built between Old and New North End. Puts pressure on landlords to make apartments more livable, more affordable. Better zoning is a priority as well.

-Jack: UVM charges more than \$1000/month to share dorm rooms, which forces students to move off campus into downtown, crowds the housing market. Utilities are very high for many families, mostly due to age/condition of housing stock. Basic efficiency standards should be put in place, which put burden on landlords to improve efficiency of apartments, otherwise must pay.

**Question:** Will either campaign commit to not accepting corporate money?

-Jack: Corporate donations are a huge issue in our democracy. One of the tenets of Progressive party is to not accept any corporate campaign contributions. Very difficult to do, but very important.

-Richard: Majority of campaign donations are small donations, but some are from Burlington's business community- Skirack, OGE, Speeder and Earl's.

**Question:** Burlington has homelessness problem- can we prevent people from being evicted and becoming homeless? Can we encourage people to become homeowners and not renters?

-Richard: Encouraging home ownership is an initiative that's being followed. As we build more housing, through housing trust fund, we could convert houses back into single family homes or duplexes that would be affordable for young professionals/young families. As far as homelessness, Burlington has a history of supporting initiatives to help homeless individuals find housing.

-Jack: The bigger obstacle to home ownership in Burlington is the economics. The job opportunities and wages to support home ownerships are hard to come by. Eviction issues tie back to landlord accountability, we also have to provide housing for individuals facing chronic homelessness.

**Question:** Political climate in Burlington is very divisive. Seems to be pattern of City Council and administration to dismiss citizen concerns as “vocal minorities”, issues get swept away (i.e City Hall Park).

-Jack: The City Hall Park issue seemed to be opposed by a lot of citizens. However, whether it was supported or opposed, it should have gone on the March 5<sup>th</sup> ballot to truly gauge public opinion. Disappointing that it was voted down by City Council. Passionate citizen groups often get ignored.

-Richard: Two democratic processes happened- proposal to put item on ballot, and 6 year long process that led to park design. If the language had been more fair, I would have voted for the question to appear on ballot. City has to provide more direction for citizen groups who want to create advisory questions.

**Question:** Three issues to differentiate yourselves: F-35, Burlington Telecom, and transportation infrastructure.

-Richard: Regarding Burlington Telecom, the city was in dangerous position. It is a success story that we were able to keep resources within our community. Local ownership was unrealistic in comparison to commercial ventures

-Jack: Supported the local ownership option. Burlington Telecom deserved greater time investment and creativity to come up with a solution. Unequivocally opposed to F-35. Utilizes Burlington’s public transit, and walks a lot. Critical that city provides transportation that is safe and accessible to all citizens.

**Question:** Wards 1 and 8 are often viewed as disparate in age and interests. What do we have in common? What kind of connection can we foster?

-Jack: Most fun part of this campaign is diversity of the East District- long term residents, students, etc. Climate change and affordability resonate across both communities, as well as landlord accountability. There are many similarities within goals Wards 1 & 8 want to accomplish.

-Richard: One evening in Ward 8, we had a discussion about single family home ownership, threats to neighborhood, influx of students. Need to find stability for families and young professionals. Need to make student neighbors more responsible parts of community.

**Question:** Do you support moving to 100% renewable energy in the next 5-10 years (not just electricity, but heat and transportation?)

-Richard: Yes. Looking at district energy system, which relies on waste heat. 2030 would be good, would like to get there sooner.

-Jack: Burlington Electric is currently working on a plan to get city to net zero by 2030. Consulting firm will give us a report this summer about 5 different ways to achieve that goal. Would like to open that decision up to citizens for large city-wide discussion.

Jack Hanson Closing Statement:

-Has enjoyed the process, and mutual respect between campaigns

-Opportunity to meet so many neighbors and communities, find commonalities and shared goals for the city

-Excited to put in the work and work together with community members

Richard Deane Closing Statement:

-First opportunity for both candidates to talk together with citizens

-Working as City Councilor has been a great privilege, has engaged lived experience as Burlington resident and business owner to inform decision-making

-Burlington Wildways initiative is opportunity to make small but important steps towards climate change

### East District School Commissioner Update- Kathy Olwell

- Has served for 2 years, has worked on many issues such as bonds, curriculum, and personnel committees
- Wants to get city engaged in new educational shift towards personal learning plans (PLPs)
- Thankful to city for passing bond to improve BHS
- Pre-K task force is looking at pre-K education, finding out what parents want, trying to decide where to locate pre-K center

### School Budget Presentation

- Annual report and FAQs are located on Burlington school district site
- 4.36% increase in budget
- Money per pupil has not changed significantly
- English language learners have increased by 3%
- Special education students have increased by 5%
- Significantly higher number of children in Burlington score “not ready” for kindergarten
- Full-time social workers will be added in schools. Before, elementary schools has several part-time social workers

### Mayor Miro Weinberger

- Ballot Question #1- will be voting yes, supporting it.
- Question #2- Maintaining city services.
- Question #3- Multi-year effort to reforming land use permitting system. Focusing in on creating “one stop shop” for permitting needs, taking land use functions (which is broken into three departments) and making one Permitting and Inspections Department. Planning Department will be headed by mayoral appointee.
- Question #4- Downtown Improvement District seeks to strengthen downtown, expand active management to the entire downtown past Church St. Finds concerns about gentrification, rent increases misplaced.
- Question #5- Phasing out business personal property tax, which is investments businesses make in Burlington that get taxed as real estate. Many other cities have phased this tax out, and Burlington will over the course of the next eight years.