

Ward 1 Neighborhood Planning Assembly (NPA)

MINUTES

Wednesday, March 13, 2024 7:00 - 9:00 PM

In-person at the Friends Meeting House, 173 North Prospect Street

And Zoom online

<https://zoom.us/j/96245939050>

Note - due to technical difficulties, the Zoom component of the meeting was disrupted.

6:45 - Welcome and Food

7:00 - Recognition of Zoraya Hightower's service to Ward 1

In a tribute to retiring City Councilor Zoraya Hightower, Sharyl Green, Angie Chapple-Sokol, Mags Conant and Kathy Olwell spoke of Zoraya's significant contributions to the Ward and the City and thanked her for work to make Burlington a better place for everyone. There was cake.

7:15 - Introductions: name, street (item moved prior to Recognition)

Announcements: share events, meetings, activities of interest to Ward 1 community

More than 30 folks identified themselves

Joel Kolata announced he was enrolled in Green Mountain Transit's Ride Together program (<https://ridegmt.com/ride-together-by-gmt/>) as a Travel Advisor. He is eager to provide support and education to folks who are interested in learning about riding the bus lines

Sara Hernandez Timm (BPD) encourages residents to sign up for BPD press releases (<https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/Police/Press>) and notifications

Jonathan Chapple-Sokol moved to spend less than \$200- on 'sustainable water' - thermopots or some other way to replace the plastic disposables currently offered at the NPA. Seconded by Carol Livingston, Approved unanimously.

Caryn Long showed a graphic of a lot in the South End indicating how much open land might be covered by residential units in a Medium Density area under the Neighborhood Code.

The Richard Kemp Center is raising money to send kids to visit the National Museum of African American History and Culture in DC

(https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=JZBM5S2YKS7KE

7:25 - Steering Committee election - Nominations and vote

A Steering Committee slate consisting of Carol Livingston, Tom Derenthal, Samantha Ayotte, Ruby Kliman, and Jonathan Chapple-Sokol was unanimously approved. Since bylaws allow up to 7 Steering Committee members, there is still opportunity for folks who want to join.

7:35 - Speakout - an opportunity to raise concerns & appreciations about Ward 1

Sharon Bushor spoke about the Neighborhood Code, and reported that the Planning Commission supported the amendments Zoraya and Tim have proposed, but not the Bergman/Grant amendment upzoning the entire city to RM. She also thought the ordinance should have been returned to the Planning Commission after public review..

Richard Hillyard thanked Sharon and the Longs for their focus on community impact of the Neighborhood Code.

7:55 - School Commissioner update and introduction of Ward 1 Commissioner - Rida Kori, Gary Golden

Gary enthusiastically thanked the community for supporting a challenging school budget and assured us he and the School Committee understand the impact and tax burden.

Tim Doherty asked if there was problem solving going on about school administrator retention. Gary said there have been limited applicants for positions, and often the hires are 'first principals' - in their first job as principal.

Rida did not attend.

8:05 - City Councilor update and introduction of Ward 1 City Councilor - Zoraya Hightower, Tim Doherty, JF Carter Neubieser

Councilor update focused on the Neighborhood Code (<https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/cityplanning/NeighborhoodCode/ProposedChanges>). Zoraya reviewed the 7 amendments (<https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/DPI/CDO/Amendments>) and took a straw poll to gauge support for them or for tabling the zoning change altogether.

Doug Viehmann commented on the inaccuracy of the lot coverage assessment and the risks of moving forward with the change.

Scott Tobias expressed concern that multi-unit development would raise his property assessment should he make even minor upgrades to his house

Kathryn Verman asked how aggressive the revision is - how fast will change happen

Several other attendees expressed opinions on the change.

8:30 - Resolution relating to the relationship between city officials and the NPAs - vote - Jonathan Chapple-Sokol

After brief discussion, the Resolution (<https://burlingtonvt.portal.civicclerk.com/event/6972/files/agenda/10120>)

Was moved, seconded and passed unanimously with one abstention.

8:40 - Update on trees in Burlington in Ward 1- VJ Comai, City Arborist

Burlington's canopy is growing! As is the Arborist's office. New techniques, bare-root trees,...have made it possible to substantially increase planting rate (from 120-140/year to 400/year) Focus on wards with lowest canopy coverage (2,3,8). In downtown areas, use of soil cells under the pavement makes it possible for trees to flourish in places previously inaccessible.

9:00 – Adjourn

OUR NEXT NPA MEETING IS APRIL 10 2024 AT THE FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE.