

Ward 6 NPA Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 6, 2024

Location: 391 Maple Street, Room 112 (NEW BIGGER ROOM IN THE SAME BUILDING!), SD Ireland Family Center at Champlain College*

6:30 Call to Order, Announcements, Public Forum

- Introductions of Steering Committee members, guests, and invitees
 - Dale Azaria, Steering Committee
 - Nancy Harkins, Steering Comm
 - See attendance list
- Last meeting until September, look for agenda in August
- May coordinate a candidate forum for the August 13 primary
- Candidate Forum on Town Meeting TV, July 15, 5:25 pm
- Mayor is scheduling community talks, 3rd Wednesday of the month is at Zero Gravity
- Call for Volunteers for Ward 6 poll workers
- Dale Azaria announced that she is running for House of Representatives from Chittenden-13

6:45 City Council Connection –

- Becca Brown McKnight: two priorities they're working on
 - City Budget – focus on addressing public safety needs, staffing key positions with police Department, public inspections, and fire department
 - Also recognize that budget needs to be affordable, equitable
 - On Encampments: working to provide feedback on Mayor's plans, want to ensure that any city-sanctioned encampments or support are done with an eye to safety for the people living there and nearby. Would prefer that everyone had dignified housing but also recognize that's not a reality right now. Seeking help from the Governor's office. This will be on the agenda at the upcoming meeting (on Monday).
- Joan Shannon:
 - Safety: Police chase and fatal accident in Colchester. The people who were trying to elude the police had been quite active in Burlington. So many neighborhoods are experiencing a variety of crimes. Want to convene a meeting for the South End with the Police Chief. How should we report? What should we expect from the police? Police Chief has agreed; haven't set a date yet. It will be posted on Front Porch Forum.
 - Report on issue with Police Department and High School class. The Police Press Release has additional information beyond what's in Seven Days and social media.
 - Zoning: issues about secondary structures under the Neighborhood Code. Planning Commission is considering this next week. Could be worth asking Andy Montroll to come to our next meeting, in September. Changes will be finalized in October.
 - Condo Conversion: proposed a change in our ordinance to allow apartments to convert to owner-occupied condos. Right now it's very hard to do this in

Burlington. These can be very affordable when they're permitted. Would like to find a source of \$\$ to facilitate tenants purchasing their own units.

- Question: about tax reform and equity
 - Becca Brown McKnight: tax reform will not happen as part of the budget process. There's not sufficient time, esp. with a new mayor. Her idea is that new revenues that have already been approved, esp. public safety tax, 3 cents on property tax) – should it be implemented in full, and if so, how? Also new tax Gross Receipts Tax on restaurants, bars, hotels.
 - Joan Shannon: one thing to note is that property tax is very easy to know what it will yield; with Gross Receipts tax it's much less certain.
- Any update on Memorial Auditorium?
 - Joan Shannon: City Council hasn't had any update on that, yet. Expect that it will come from the Mayor after the budget is in place – that's the

7:00 Ward 6 Traffic and Safety Issues

- Burlington Police Department (Shannon Trammel, Sgt. Mellis)
 - He puts in extra time (days off and long days) to enforce traffic. Shelburne Road has been a problem for a long time. We've also gotten concerns about Prospect Pkwy. Monday morning he went out with the community. Saw a lot of people running stop signs, using cellphones, and he ticketed people and gave warnings for that. We have limited manpower, so it's hard to staff this adequately. He's really the one doing this work. State-funded program, most towns are involved.
 - The warning signs are effective at first, but once they've been in place the impact fades. Seeing an officer has a different effect.
 - If we put problem areas on the list, he'll do his best to address them. Best way to communicate would be through Shannon Trammel. strammell@bpdvt.org
 - Question about traffic cameras – The police department needs to do more research on this, and would need to get community input. Also there are infrastructure issues and costs.
- Burlington Public Works Department (Chapin Spencer)
 - If the Council is interested in pursuing this technology, it would help to have the Council set up a committee to study it, maybe through the TUEC. He thinks it would pay for itself quickly but would have to be accepted by the community.
 - Roundabout at the bottom of Ledge. It's been working well with volume of traffic; he's not sure about speed but can follow up.
 - East Avenue is getting traffic calming this year. They can only afford to do one per year.
 - They'd like to do more "tactical" and "seasonal" interventions.
 - Question about crossing Shelburne Road (as a pedestrian). DPW is studying this. Once the Champlain Parkway opens up, they'll consider reducing Shelburne Road to 3 lanes, as was done on North Ave and Colchester Ave. That would make it much safer and easier to cross.
 - Question about speed bumps on South Prospect Street. They're bigger now. Emergency response has approved them.

- If anyone wants to request a speed radar at a particular location, contact DPW. They can be moved upon request. This also provides data about speeding.
- Burlington Walk-Bike Council (Peter Keating)
 - Group of volunteers to provide advice to the City on walking and biking issues.
 - Looking at Battery Street, bridge that connects Burlington to Winooski,
 - Encourages anyone interested to join us. First Wednesday of the month at DPW
 - The City generally seems receptive to improving walking and biking safety.

7:30 James Patrick Dufour, Development of 253 South Union Street

- They purchased property in 2022. Converted from law firm to 8 energy efficient apartments
- Historic Register property, no changes to the street elevation
- With change to zoning they are able to expand the project, got a permit for an addition, 5 townhouses in the back, 2BR each.
- Now planning an additional 8 units – similar to the 5 units already permitted.
- Question from an adjoining property owner: She's concerned about trees that overhang the property; would like to see them come down. The renderings show parking there. Mr. Dufour confirms that the trees will be taken care of. And will also talk with her about the plantings/treatment of the property border.
- Question about water runoff from the property. The City has concepts about stormwater gardens that are functional and attractive. jdufour@gmail.com

7:40 Burlington History and Culture Project, Melinda Moulton

- Working on a website: <https://www.burlingtonhistoryandculturecenter.com/>
- Want to create a center where we can be proud of our history. Not the history of the big shot developers, but rather about the people who made the city what it is. Masons, quilters, builders, quiet politicians.
- Don't yet have a physical space.
- Meeting with ~35 different groups of all types, creating forums, taking notes.
- In about 12-18 months we'll put together a plan based on what we've learned.
- Have raised \$40k for first phase, to compensate people for participating in forums.
- To get involved: melindamoultonvt@gmail.com

7:50 NPA Business (Votes)

In the absence of a quorum, the Steering Committee will take input and decide.

- Motion to purchase up to \$700 for 2 5-gallon pails of graffiti removal ("World's Best Graffiti Coating")(\$640 for the materials, plus an unknown amount for shipping, if needed), for use by Arts So Wonderful
 - Question about whether there's graffiti in ward 6.
- Motion to contribute up to \$300 towards translation of the NPA outreach comic, sharing the cost with other wards
- Motion to spend \$420 on 800 NPA Stickers to be used for outreach at the city's Juneteenth event and elsewhere
- Request for input about next year's schedule and meeting topics

8:00 Adjourn