Ward 1 Neighborhood Planning Assembly (NPA)
Wednesday, November 13, 2024 6:30 - 8:30 PM
In-person at the Friends Meeting House, 173 North Prospect Street
And Zoom online https://zoom.us/j/96245939050
Webinar ID: 962 4593 9050 Or by phone: +1 929 205 6099 ID= 962 4593 9050

Facilitator: Tom Derenthal Minutes: Carol Livingston

6:15 - Welcome and Food from Selene
Wall Survey: attendees write answer to framed questions

6:30 - Formal Start - review agenda
Introductions: name, street
Announcements: share events, meetings, activities of interest to Ward 1 community

Sarah H-Timm - BPD public info and community engagement officer. BPD hosting Community Academy starting in new year: Wednesdays 1/8 - 2/12 6-9 pm at the BPD - deadline is 12/13.
BPD open to hearing from each ward about how officers can engage with our neighborhood - reach out to Sarah or Steering Comm.

Brett Bowden - Neighbors are meeting to discuss the possibility of establishing a neighborhood watch. After an initial meeting, people will post details on FPF.

Dave Cawley - project on Winooski Bridge & COBARI intersection (design changes since what we saw in fall presentation) - 10/30 watch youtube presentation – bridge design, new info. (TEUIC committee mtg)
Putting project out to bid - features that are “prescriptive” or “flexible”
Project team holding open house at Mainstreet Landing 12/11 4:30-6:30 - Will be in-person and online and recorded.
5th year of Winterlude in February - Schmanska barn 3-5 this Sunday 11/17 if interested in helping the Old East End planning.

Richard Hilyard wrote article about roundabout in England - might be considered for COBARI

Selene - working with group of people doing volunteer effort to clean up syringe litter, spend time on 12/1 at 10 am - contact Selene

Carol Livingston - CDBG (Comm Devt Block Grant) representative needed - Rob Gutman has volunteered to fill this position
Next Ward 1 NPA meeting on 12/11 our state delegation will be coming to Update and listen - PLEASE SEND QUESTIONS TO THE SC.

Sharon Bushor - recommend residents go to City website - monthly calendar on CiviClerk to find where committee discussions occur - where much is discussed before getting to the City Council. For example, the Planning Commission meeting - Neighborhood Code passed. Now discussing development of larger tracts of land & cottage courts. This is the time when decisions are often made & your voice matters the most. Urged people to attend the meetings - Zoom is possible.

Tom Derenthal - state legislators are working now and any ideas you have for the upcoming session now would be the time to register your concerns.

Gary Golden - Burlington school board commissioner - posted on FPF last week. School Bd finance committee still meeting. Much in flux - trying to "level services" what district is offering next year; health insurance up 12%; pay increases up 5%; negotiating all new contracts this year. Last year the "weighted student money" (students in poverty, English language learners, IEP students) kept Burl school expenses lower - received 2-3x funding as previously from state legislature. State legislature may change. Nationally Republicans may undo the Dept of Ed. affecting special ed funding, Titles 1, 9, 2 - funding for language, civil rights may be undone. Arizona's template is family receiving federal money rather than portioned. Us: "level servicing" - we ask a lot of our taxpayers - concerned about budget passage - high school bond weighs heavily; appraisal adjustment - mid-teens tax increase; state budget votes failed last year - 40%.
GG needs to hear from residents about their concerns for school budget. School bd needs also to anticipate losing federal support as well as focusing on "level service" (20% of Burl budget comes from federal support)

6:40 - Speakout - an opportunity to raise concerns & appreciations about Ward 1

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School commission positions are open for Ward 1.

7:00 - City Councilor Update - Tim Doherty, Carter Neubieser

Tim: Charter Change Committee Redistricting proposal (3/2025 ballot)

Tim - upcoming presentation about infrastructure project is very important
City needs to look at these needs collectively as we plan ahead,
Tim serves on Charter Change committee (Gene Bergman, Sarah Carpenter, Tim) - item upcoming: considering change that affects redistricting of city council seats apportionment. Recent redistricting process = controversial. In Burl. our ward & district boundaries are defined in the city charter - which is unusual. (eg. Montpelier does not)
Next redistricting update is in 8 yrs and we need to rewrite the charter before then to guide that future process.
Charter Change Comm believes that the state doesn’t need to determine how we redistrict our own city. Proposal is to remove definitions from the charter and replace into ordinance so when we come to next redistricting process in 8 years, we would not need the processes that involve the state. The goal is a change in procedure not in the districting design we have now necessarily. Normally, ordinance changes occur within the City Council; charter changes require the community vote.

Selene - right now when CC redistricts, city people vote. Tim believes that the public will still vote, it’s a procedural change to shift from charter to ordinance.

Sharon - concern that the resolution clearly state the process to ensure the decision comes to the voters, and not just be decided by CC.

Tim - Charter Change Committee never discussed excluding the public vote.
Needs to be on March, 2025 ballot since it is a charter change - has to be finalized soon. 2 public hearings on this before CC votes.

Carter - December 9 is the date for CC finalizing the ballot.

Tim: impression of water resources bond - he wasn’t aware of how large the project is and how urgent the needs. Rate increases were astounding - need to think about all the needs of the city arising. Tax burden across the board to Burl residents is high - we need to determine what the priorities are.

Tim: Concern about acrimony when discussions are more heated about challenges ahead.
Faith in our community, incredibly worried about financial burdens on residents.
Need to think about what we have control over and what we don't - Tim suggests: growing our grand list, increase housing, increasing gross receipts taxes - thriving downtown to make bigger "pie." Residents are property taxed out

Carter - Mayor has been talking about long-term financial planning; setting legislative priorities for our state delegation coming from CC; talking with gov'nor about money ($8 million) spent by Burl city on emergency shelter; recent work by 2 unions on hospital costs - organize state delegation to work on this.
Update: info on city website, and Carter will share via FPF
Leg've delegation meetings with CC & Mayor about future legislation - prioritizing the list for upcoming session.
If you have input, email Carter. Operational efficiency study/document was somewhat helpful. Expenses are far outweighing money we have - need to look at needs. City unions included in discussions. Mayor memo - in the past, the governor has not responded to city or interested in meeting with city staff; this has shifted; solid commitment to maintaining a better relationship.

7:55 - Burlington Water Resources Capital Bond proposal (3/2025 ballot) - Megan Moir, Martin Lee, DPW
See slideshow: https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/885/2025-Bonds
Bond vote is the first step - continually return to CC to get approval for borrowing money.
In past, we have not invested in water infrastructure as we should have and this led to 2018 failures. Our planning now is to fix the system currently in use. And we also need to build for the future.
8:45 - Adjourn

December meeting presenters = our state legislators giving updates, wanting input

OUR NEXT NPA MEETING IS DEC. 11, 2024 AT THE FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE

Ward 1 NPA Steering Committee
Tom Derenthal tomd.npa@gmail.com
Carol Livingston carol.livingston1951@gmail.com
Jonathan Chapple-Sokol chapplesokol.npasc@gmail.com
Selene Colburn selene.colburn@gmail.com

Attendees:

Carol Livingston
Selene Colburn
Tom Derenthal
Sarah Hernandez-Timm
Richard Hillyard
Catherine Bock
Breck Bowden
Didi Macron
Martin Lee
Charlie Giannoni
Ana-Maria Robu
Lisa Lax
Erhard Mahnke
Gary Golden
Tim Doherty
Sharyl Green
Peter Lackowski
Dave Cawley
Sharon Bushor
Sophie Quest
Carter Neubieser