

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
645 PINE STREET
BURLINGTON, VERMONT 05401
COMMISSION MEETING DECEMBER 18, 2024
DRAFT MINUTES

For video of the meeting, please visit Town Meeting TV's YouTube Channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k0r9VW6DgXY&t=978s>

Commissioners Present: Commissioner Barr, Vice Chair Fox, Chair Damiani, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Munteanu, Commissioner O'Neill-Vivanco Commissioner Sears

Commissioners Absent: Commissioner Munteanu, Commissioner Sears

ITEM 1 – CALL TO ORDER

Chair Damiani called the meeting to order at 6:29 p.m.

ITEM 2 – AGENDA

Commissioner Barr made a motion to approve the agenda
Commissioner Davis seconded

ITEM 3 – PUBLIC FORUM

Max Melina, Bob Laidy, Robert Effe, Jack Evans, Jay Tiano and Jason Van Driesche all made positive comments for the Home Avenue bike lanes and parking removal. Jason Van Driesche and Evan Gould also made a comment about not having the stop signs coming off the side streets onto Locust Street stating the stop bars are working and there has never been stop signs there previously.

Sharon Bushor called to thank Assistant Director Megan Moir and her team for all their hard work to put in a reduced bond for the water/storm water projects that are in need of repair. Public appreciate the work but the resulting bond is still too high. There was also an inquiry about the traffic calming on East Avenue and wanted to know where the speed was measured before or after Bilodeau Court. Ms. Bushor was also inquiring about the reduced parking rate in the downtown parking garage, why is it for new businesses only and why only six months. She is concerned about losing downtown businesses.

ITEM 4 – CONSENT AGENDDA

- 4.1 Approval of Draft Minutes 11-20-24
- 4.2 Franklin Square ADA Parking
- 4.3 Stop Signs Locust Street

4.4 Stop Signs Birchcliff Parkway

4.5 Lake Street Loading Zone

Commissioner O'Neill-Vivanco made a motion to approve the consent agenda with the changes made in the minutes

Commissioner Davis seconded

Commissioner Davis inquired about the ADA spaces stating it seems the spaces are added more frequently for people in need. There was also an inquiry about the stop signs at the intersections and the loading zone stating it is unoccupied at night there is more congestion with the trucks parked there.

Senior Planner Philip Peterson stated that accessible permits could be gotten from the ticket division. He stated they are unsure why there are no stop signs on the side streets but there is a stop bar. Lake Street trucks are blocking the street want the roadway in front of entrance open for accessibility.

Unanimous approval

ITEM 5 – HOME AVENUE BIKE LANES & PARKING REMOVAL

City Engineer Julia Ursaki stated that they would like to remove parking on the both sides of Home Avenue to add bike lanes. The need for this is to connect the regional bike network from the South Burlington recreation path on Farrell Street to the bike lanes on Pine Street. This will also make crossing Shelburne Street safety. This is a minor project. We cannot go to the Champlain Parkway at this time as changes to the parkway cannot be made until the project is finished.

Commissioner O'Neill-Vivanco asked if there was a plan to connect with the Parkway.

Engineer Ursaki stated that this is our hope; we are looking at parallel route.

Director Spencer stated we are in the very early preliminary states of discussion for this.

Commissioner Damiani asked about not having a bike box at Home and Shelburne Street.

City Engineer Ursaki stated if you look at the concept plan once we get to the intersection of Shelburne Street there is a westbound bike lane so the receiving end of Home Avenue has a bike lane. The approach has a sharrow that transitions into the through lane not the right lane and there is the ramp onto the sidewalk for people who do not feel comfortable.

Commissioner Damiani pointed out that both in the receiving lane heading westbound on Home Avenue just with the alignment of the curbing the little area where it's hashed out for where the curb lane changes that could be a potential safety conflict point.

Commissioner Davis asked if there was going to be signage associated with the lane delineation as well as, meaning like an actual sign and not pavement markings,

City Engineer Ursaki stated that yes there will be signs and not just road marking.

Commissioner Damiani stated there was a draft motion in the memo.
Commissioner Barr motion to approve
Commissioner Davis seconded
Unanimous approval

ITEM 6 – TRAFFIC CALMING PROGRAM UPDATES

Senior Transportation Engineer Philip Peterson is giving updates to the Commission on the status of Burlington's Traffic Calming program. It highlights the launch of the new Traffic Calming Map, project prioritization methods, key project updates and recent data collected on completed traffic calming efforts. A quick review of the prioritization, approach to traffic calming needs, the online traffic calming map and inventory, the key projects that are being reviewed as well as traffic data on some of the previous installs. Have done some quick solve solutions, want more traditional construction so it lasts longer. Future funding is a concern to us. The Town Meeting Day vote for the twenty million dollar bond is going to be helpful to us.

Commissioner O'Neill-Vivanco on the funding to maintain any infrastructure changes. How is this calculated and what are those how are costs factored in to potential line items for operations and maintenance.

Senior Planner Peterson stated there is money budgeted specifically for that which is a pretty hefty amount. If the bond vote does not pass then everything is going to go down in terms of projects. Maintaining some of this infrastructure can be a blind spot for us. This is why we are looking at more low cost solutions; the parking chicanes have proven to be successful.

Commissioner O'Neill-Vivanco thinking about the parking chicanes and the bike lanes having the floating car park lane be the protection between the bike lane and vehicular traffic as something that requires just paint on the street as opposed to bollards. What are applications for that thinking about a protected bike lane?

Senior Planner Peterson stated he would be a little concerned about how people park. Commissioner O'Neill-Vivanco stated this is something that is used in other cities it is something to at least consider for the low cost.

Director Spencer stated we looked at this and installed a pilot on North Winooski Avenue as part of Plan BTV Walk/Bike and the challenge ultimately is our narrow right of way. When parking is brought out far into the street turning radius really gets compromised.

Commissioner O'Neill-Vivanco stated thinking about the low cost, sort of the quick builds I think about the speed along Pine Street and just as my experience as walker/biker.. The speed tables are fantastic. It's easier to maintain a steady speed limit on Pine Street and I'm going to compare it to Prospect, which has the very aggressive speed bumps on Prospect Street. Thinking about the temporary builds and how to use them as a test case and look at the applications in what will really slow down traffic and how do we get to those applications.

Senior Planner Peterson stated that we know that the rubber speed bumps that we used last summer, we know that those reduced speeds. It's a delicate balancing act, we know that this worked but let's try something else. We will use those rubber speed bumps again but won't use them on arterials or main thoroughfares.

Commissioner Davis data for the how many cars per day during what time period is that data collected? Senior Planner Peterson stated that they are there for 24 hours a day for sometimes a week, sometimes five days. We try to pick somewhere in the fall, somewhere in the spring in general. Commissioner Davis inquired if it was measured the week before and the week after for instance. City Engineer Ursaki stated we use seasonal adjustment factors which are published by a day and month by VTRANS they take all the information statement and basically give you a factor to adjust your volume on a specific day and month to _____ that is reasonable to compare. This helps us do counts at different times and feel like we are comparing apples to apples. My other question is I've heard of other jurisdictions that did not plan on anything to their maintenance of bike lanes and that sort of thing so I was curious if there was a budget process like 10% of the budget of making the thing is retained or factored in to be maintenance in the future. Senior Planner Peterson stated that for transportation we are not like street capital, we know how much money we're going to get every year. City Engineer Ursaki stated that a lot of our funding sources for capital projects don't allow you to use any of the money for maintenance so grants for example, our transportation capital bond but it's an issue we think about a lot.

Commissioner Barr stated the calming measures have been great am a fan of the rubber speed bumps.

Commissioner Fox was wondering when something is in see click fix and request is closed is there communication with the user. Senior Planner Peterson stated that the traffic calming projects are pretty long term so there is not a lot of updates on see click fix. The traffic calming map is actually linked to a spreadsheet that we have it's not linked to see click fix. Senior Engineer Ursaki stated that see click fix is more for reporting the issue it's the intake. Director Spencer stated that if the traffic calming request is not meeting the threshold then there is communication it is not just evaporating.

Commissioner Damiani stated he likes the maps and would like to point out existing infrastructure description of what happened there. If it's possible a description of what happened there. So people see the department is going through all of these requests that would be great. I know we talked about equity of projects around the city and not have in one particular neighborhood. If you could just address that how the department talks about that and decides that going from yes it's met the criteria and getting the funding and going to funding and now we are going to do it. City Engineer Ursaki stated that she thinks that the map is a huge step in us being able to make those choices. We picked one that has a high need and the speed shows its necessary, the

crash history, and the pedestrian activity we very intentionally picked on in the new north end. Commissioner Damiani stated the last piece is I would love to ensure that there is early engagement on any of these projects before going underway that the neighbors are engaged early. City Engineer Ursaki stated that there is a lot of neighborhood engagement before we start the projects.

Bob W relative to maintenance we have Local Motion to do maintenance work and a lot of this work. He is also on Branch Out board like the planters that were put in for traffic calming got graffiti and we painted them.

ITEM 7 – PARKING GARAGE RATE

Director Spencer stated that this is another example of listening to stakeholders and our partners in how our parking facilities can be an agent for change. Activity in our facilities has decreased since COVID and we are struggling to get back to pre-COVID utilizations.

Assistant Director Jackie Esperti stating we would charge half price for brand new businesses. The goal is to attract new business to downtown while creating better utilization in the downtown garage. The offer to provide reduced rate for parking to new businesses for six months. There is no restriction on the number of permits.

Director Spencer stated we did hear earlier in the meeting about the concept of changing the promotion. Therefore, while the public forum concept asked about a more substantial discount we recommend trying this. IF we need to change it in the future, we can.

Commissioner O'Neill-Vivanco stated she loves the downtown garage when she parks downtown. This is great. I do not know why that there aren't more folks parking down there. Does it need more lighting? I think this is a great idea. Is there a target number of ow many permits you would get out of this campaign? AD Esperti stated they went to the Church Street Commission with this idea there are no target numbers.

Commissioner O'Neill-Vivanco asked if there were new businesses in the pipeline. Director Spencer stated that Jackie is working with one existing who would not qualify for this but it is good for a good chunk of spaces.

Commissioner Davis if the goal overall is to have more activity downtown why targeting only new businesses? AD Esperti stated that many of the businesses that are already downtown are utilizing that and receiving free parking for their employees. This is a new strategy to help get some new businesses downtown. Commissioner Davis asked if there was information available on the vacancy rate of the downtown garage at? AD different times of day? AD Esperti stated that this incentive is only for the downtown garage. There is a large vacancy especially when the high school is not there. Commissioner Davis stated his initial concern was is this going to crowd out customers.

Curious about the differential between the six-day and the five-day permit. AD Esperti five days is Monday through Friday, and Monday through Saturday option is have a service job working Tuesday through Saturday.

Commissioner Davis have a sense of how this is split? AD Esperti 65% five day and remainder six days.

Commissioner Barr anytime we have a chance to incentives folks to use the garage go for it.

Commissioner Fox this is a creative solution for parking.

Commissioner Damiani a longer time period I wonder if it could be status after the six months and after a year full price. The department looked at employee parking program any thought around designating certain floors for this program. Folks paying full rate finding the access closer to street level. The hotel has certain spots? AD Esperti we just paid off the garage so now we can look to maybe _____ or designate to different permits. Just something that we are looking into at this point.

Clayton Dykstra this is a great idea. Lived in Boston previous and went over a review that was done in Boston on the parking issues.

Sharon Bushor asked why only six months versus a year permit. I was looking to attract and keep business employee parking in the garage and stated at the end of the time if there was an ability to negotiate discount so they remain. She stated that she no longer goes into the garage because of the odor, and the lighting. She has a concern about safety when in the parking garages.

Commissioner O'Neill-Vivanco made a motion to approve
Commissioner Barr seconded
Unanimous approval

ITEM 8 - DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Spencer stated they are working on the Capital bond requests for the March ballot

201 Flynn Avenue acquisition nears we are going to CSWD to see a 30 days extension on the current purchase and sale to give us time to finalize financing.

GMT Funding and Burlington FY 26 Assessment – GMT is projecting a \$1.2M budget gap after factoring in the service reductions already implemented and after proposing at 18.2% assessment increase for Burlington.

Winooski Bridge & Colchester/Barrett/Riverside intersection we are working with the City of Winooski and VTrans to advance a \$80M collaborative to rebuild the Winooski Bridge.

Holiday parking promotions

DPW Holiday Schedule

Information Officer Goulding stated that recycling will not be picked up December 25th
Recycling will be picked up January 1st.

January 6th will be the Christmas Tree pick up and town hall on bonds

Commissioner Fox stated there were 3 separate items for people to vote on

Commissioner Davis stated it was possible to bread bonds down, agree number rejected.

ITEM 9 – COMMISSIONER ITEMS

Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco stated there could be major consequence.

Riggs by City Market on Flynn car park for Howard Center seems to bring waiting line for cars

Director Spencer stated there is another driveway further west by the railroad tracks

Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco thank the staff for the no turn on red at the Union and Main Street intersection.

Commissioner Fox again asked why there could not be any stop signs at the lower levels of North Street – Peru, Blodgett area

Commissioner Davis parking in between bike lane and travel lane on one ways streets.

Director Spencer stated and Director Spencer stated there is not a lot of grid connectivity,

Commissioner Davis asked about traffic patterns, only information has been about lanes itself, if space occupied can’t see marking. Director Spencer stated we are matching signs with lane markings

Commissioner Davis asked about no right turn on red at Home and Shelburne Road a safety and speed when green right arrow is on. Director Spencer stated we have scoping study in progress.

Commissioner Davis asked about a bond discussion true improvement to water were identified.

ITEM 10 – ADJOURNMENT & NEXT MEETING

Commissioner Barr made a motion to adjourn

Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco seconded

Unanimous approval

Meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.