

Burlington Walk Bike Council (BWBC)

February 5th, 2024 Meeting Notes

The monthly meeting took place 5:30- 7:00 pm via Zoom and at the DPW Conference Room.

In-Person Attendees: Phillip Peterson (DPW), Erik Brotz*, Bob Leidy, Josh Minot (SB Bike/Ped Committee), Gordon Dragoon*, Jonathon Weber (Local Motion)*, Andy Tracy, Jak Tiano*, Jack Evans (Local Motion), Liza Boyle, Kelly Farrel, Eben Pendleton

Online Attendees: Serrill Flash, Grey Johnson, Jason Stuffle*, Gabe Nelson

* BWBC Coordinating Committee members

1. Announcements & Updates

Josh is from South Burlington's Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee; they are looking to reach out to surrounding walk/bike committees, in particular about connections to the coming bike/ped bridge over I-89. Goal of being able to bike from SB City Hall to BTV City Hall in protected facilities.

- Erik said that the BWBC has been wanting to connect on this topic also
- We discussed having a joint meeting in the near future.
- We also discussed connecting with other local groups, such as Winooski and Shelburne

Bob: NNE residents talking about wanting the 127 Path to follow 127 to connect with Park Street instead of round about way through old dump to Manhattan Drive. With new Battery Street path and Railroad enterprise project it would be a nice full length path.

- Jack Evans is on the advisory committee for this, they are currently accepting comments
- The scope of the project does not include that connection, but does include discussion of a connection to North Ave.
- Jack said the connection to Manhattan Dr and Park St has come up many times already so maybe it will be considered

These points were brought up in agenda item 2 but not directly related to it. Adding here:

Serrill - Issue with icing up at top of College at South Prospect on UVM Green is a persistent issue. Peter: 2021 University Place improvements to fix up water main. Serrill notes it is still icing up. Test ice to see it has chlorine?

Serrill notes the poor asphalt condition on College Street that is severely degraded. Might need subsurface redone to prevent repeated issues. Downhill slope adds to issue due to speed of run off.

2. DPW's Mission and Metrics For Transportation

Phillip presented. A copy of the presentation is here:

<https://burlingtonvt.portal.civicclerk.com/event/7777/files/agenda/13117>

They don't necessarily have a mandate currently, but they roughly follow the 2011 Transportation Plan. The aspects of this that they adhere to can be found on the provided slide.

- Ensure safe, accessible, efficient, and sustainable transportation infrastructure.
- Support all users: pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and drivers.
- Maintain and improve streets, sidewalks, traffic control systems, and mobility.
- Align with Burlington's goals for safety, equity, and sustainability

There's an internal sentiment that it's a bit vague.

Their mission related to transportation is similar, though a bit more defined.

- Ensuring Safe Mobility: Reduce crashes, improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle safety.
- Supporting Multimodal Transportation: Expand infrastructure for walking, biking, and transit.
- Maintaining Infrastructure: Keep roads, sidewalks, and signals in good condition.
- Advancing Climate & Equity Goals: Reduce emissions, improve accessibility for all.

45K new units are trying to be added to Chittenden, and there's an internal sentiment that Burlington could shoulder 30K of these. Transportation infrastructure needs to support that, and we need to decide what that will look like.

They judge their effectiveness based on road & sidewalk condition, safety data, traffic flow, the metadata around project completion, and public feedback.

He covered the policies that they try to adhere to. PlanBTV (and the downtown speed limit reduction), the complete streets policy, ada compliance, traffic calming S & P, effective street design for speed reduction, and City of Burlington Engineering Standards.

There's an internal sentiment that the existing federal conditions could cause certain funding sources to be in question. They are naturally going to press on regardless. Other public services are "enterprise funds" (self-funded, like BED and water/sewer), which isn't the case for DPW.

To overcome the challenges present with municipal work, they have a few strategies (some extra aren't covered here apparently as they aren't ready, but we should check next month). Phase the projects, swapping to quick-build approaches, and a lot of coordinating between the community and government groups as early as possible.

See the presentation slides for more content that was provided on challenges, strategies, and accomplishments.

Questions

- 1) Question on the public engagement. Is there a way to combine public engagement for a lot of these projects? Home Ave as an example used input from 189 groups, the Shelburne study, and independent groups. It makes it difficult to determine concerns and issues from disparate engagement sessions.
 - a) There's a sentiment that maybe the disparate groups are a good thing. It allows a variety of people to engage. I may have botched the notes on this one.
 - b) Some of the conversations feel both overly specific ("We aren't talking about things outside this scope here") or happening somewhere else. In this case it seems that because Erik was able to bring up the Home Ave concerns on the infrastructure study for Shelburne, things were able to happen.
 - c) Basically the sentiment is that we have some good engineers that do listen to the concerns from the people.
 - d) Phillip shared that it is difficult for engineers to spend all their time sharing what is happening. With their staffing they sometimes have to choose between doing the work and communicating the work that is getting done.
- 2) Bob Leidy had a comment on holes in the current plan. Highlighting regional connections as a big deficiency as of right now.
 - a) There's a sentiment that the solutions to this problem are not easy or cheap, though they are working on it best they can right now. Just wanted to highlight that it is a strong internal concern.
- 3) Bob: Bus stops tend to be midblock with no nearby crosswalks (think across from A New Place on Shelburne). Something about bus stops and crosswalks. Erik asked how much the city has to do with determining where GMTs bus stops are.
- 4) Questioned if Shelburne road could potentially be narrowed/moved to one lane. It's certainly possible, but politics. Will not happen until after Champlain Parkway is complete and new traffic patterns can be observed.
- 5) Question on funding. Could we do something that is more sustainable akin to enterprise funds? Potentially "impact fees" that can solely go to new construction. So that's used for things outside of repairs for existing infrastructure (like sidewalk maintenance).
 - a) Jonathon says we have impact fees now. There is discussion on how they can be allocated.
 - b) Phillip said all construction can affect the network and so impact fees can be used for projects in different locations
- 6) Andy had a question on the best ways to engage.
 - a) The sentiment is that those that are for things don't need an explanation, but those that don't believe will never accept any explanation.
 - b) So engage best you can in all aspects to convince political leaders not to kill stuff I guess
 - c) Best way to have an impact? Attend public meetings, attend BWBC, well written emails are really good way to get across a point.
- 7) Question about how the city adheres to complete streets?
 - a) City has to meet the CCRPC Complete Streets questionnaire (based on State CS policy). Usually go above and beyond what the state requires. Clarification of

“Great Streets” vs “Complete Streets”. Great Streets standard only applies to area around city center.

Phillip wanted to share that he likes this monthly group.

3. BWBC's Mission

The current mission statement is as follows:

The BWBC is a city advisory board that advocates for walking and bicycling conditions and facilities in Burlington that are attractive, safe, convenient and popular. The BWBC advises city departments, organizations and agencies on policies, programs, projects and plans related to bicycling and walking, promotes walking and bicycling through outreach and events, and encourages citizen participation and input on bicycle and pedestrian issues.

Expansion idea: Someone shared that it could be expanded to include the network, which is somewhat implicit in the current definition but it could be more explicit.

Expansion idea: Transit

Expansion idea: “Calm streets” as an explicit ask

Expansion idea: Rolling

Expansion idea: Health/Equity

Opposite of expansion idea: Shorten the statement a bit

Question on why this conversation came about. Basically it can be a good preamble to determining some proactive goals

Goal list

- Protected connections between SB and B city hall
- Pedestrian only College Street

Jonathon and Phillip discussed how we can do outreach. **Jonathon suggested that we send a meeting recap to people** (whether that include our mailing list, councilors, DPW director, NPAs or whomever)

Jason asked how we can be a bit more accessible. Evening on a Wednesday can be difficult for folks.

- Instead of people coming to us, we go to them. Perhaps more public events, tabling, etc. that are outside of once a month Wednesday evening meeting.

How to engage with people building new housing and people who move into the new housing. BWBC info session at NPAs - 15 minute intro on what we do.

Question: Who are members of the BWBC?

- BWBC is anyone who shows up at a meeting. There is a coordinating committee to set agenda.

Phillip thinks we should collectively figure out what the future projects are going to be and assign internal project managers to each of these to advocate for active transit.