

Ward 6 NPA Meeting Agenda

Thursday, March 6, 2025

Location: Department of Public Works, 645 Pine Street

6:30 Call to Order, Introductions, Announcements, Public Forum

- Town Meeting Day Election Report, Greg Epler Wood
 - 42 workers at the polls, not including elected officials
 - We have ~3500 registered voters; 1338 people voted. Almost 1000 voted with a mail-in ballot (or dropped in a ballot box).
 - New venue (Edmunds Elementary School instead of Middle School) for the first time in many years (30?). Tried to get the word out and post information about the new location. There's better parking and it's a better space.
 - Alan Matson, Ward Clerk-Elect. Expressed appreciation for how Greg has improved the process of working at the polls.
- Bruce Wilson, Arts So Wonderful. Appreciation for Ward 6's support in the past. Graffiti problem has gotten worse. In the past if you put a mural up it wouldn't get vandalized, but that's not holding up these days. We're trying to clean it up.
 - Mayor's office may be interested – Bruce is meeting with the Mayor next week.
 - City Council is interested in setting up a clean up for Mem Auditorium.
 - Bill Ward is also working on this.
 - Greg asked for contact info/venmo for making donations.
 - BHS students help, it satisfies their community service requirement. And college age kids work hard and independently.
- Next Thursday, 3/13, 5:30, Mayor's Safety Forum at Fletcher Free Library.
- New chapter of Indivisible is starting in Burlington if anyone is interested.

6:45 City Council Updates, Becca Brown McKnight (in person) and Joan Shannon (online)

- Appreciation for Joan Shannon.
- Buddy Singh will be the new District Representative, will be sworn in in early April
- All ballot initiatives passed.
 - Becca will be keeping in touch with our state reps to ensure that the no-guns-in-bars gets across the finish line.
- Ordinance Committee will be talking about the zoning changes for Champlain College.
 - Also whether or not to allow performing arts centers in the South End Arts District (zoning change). Higher Ground has expressed interest, as has BCA. BCA held outdoor concerts and they were well-attended and well-received.
 - And need to wrap up the cat and dog issues.
 - Vacant Buildings: how we create a disincentive for vacant buildings and how we define vacant buildings.
 - Graffiti ordinance used to contain a private right of action. It was challenged by the ACLU. Would like to shift to an incentive program.
- Two more meetings with the current council membership. Meeting on Monday 3/10:
 - Champlain College bed caps

- Request to state delegation to support Green Mountain Transit (bus system).
- Emergency cold weather shelter at the Miller Center. There's not a clear oversight program for that. Hoping to work this out with the mayor's office instead doing a resolution.
- Question about what happens next with charter changes that we voted for?
 - Legislature has to take them up for them to be implemented, but they don't have to do so on any particular schedule.
 - Our delegation knows how strongly we feel about these.
 - Bram Kleppner, State Rep for Chittenden-13.
 - In addition to the charter change there's a proposed state law to keep guns out of bars. It was co-sponsored by all Burlington reps.
 - They all need to go to the Gov Ops Committee.
 - Joan has heard that there's concern about having different gun laws from town to town.
 - If anyone feels strongly about any of these, let your state reps know!
- Gratitude expressed to Joan Shannon for her service to the ward

7:00 Bill Ward, Director of Permitting and Inspections, and Burlington's Town Health Officer

- Housing Inspections, Building Permits, Zoning Permits
- Challenge of having syringes in our community. Bill first became aware of this as a problem in 2012. At that time it was a handful of reports.
- Last year, 899 reports of discarded syringes.
- 2023: highest year to date, 991 reports
- See Click Fix. Was started around the same time we started seeing these issues.
 - There are ~50 kinds of things you can report, syringes being one, potholes being another.
 - You can describe location, attach photo.
 - There's an app and a desk top version
- There is an option to report to SCF but also pick up and discard of the syringe yourself.
 - Safe procedure described (used gloves, seal in a hard plastic container, write "do not recycle" on the container, and throw it in trash).
- Data is used to identify where needs are, where hot spots are developing.
- Very few reports in Ward 6 so far this year.

7:30 Champlain College, proposed zoning amendment to remove bed cap, Nic Anderson

- Requested a change to zoning last July, City Council will be considering it on Monday, 3/10
- In 2008-2009, Champlain College had a bed cap put in place, limiting the number of dorm rooms on campus. They have a building that is being underutilized (Aiken Hall), would like to make better use of it by converting it to a residence hall. (It actually was a residence hall until 2008.) But this would put them over the existing cap. And, question whether it makes sense to limit how much housing Champlain College has on campus.
 - This would be a first-year residence, and they don't have cars. And in any event, all students are required to park down here off Pine Street.

- This may allow them to sell off a building currently used as a dorm that's farther from the center of campus (net will be saving \$\$).
- Request for more info as the project develops, and so that neighbors know how to deal with any challenges.

8:00 NPA business

- Plans for upcoming meetings (April, May, June)
 - Meetings will be at DPW
 - April meeting will focus on Green Infrastructure, including an update from Water Resources to describe projects that are planned for the south end and other discussion about how to increase green infrastructure in the south end.
 - In May we're hoping to organize a community project, possibly around Green Up Day or the Graffiti project. Let us know if you have ideas!
 - Also trying to organize a rain garden tour at Champlain College, in May or June.
 - Also may join Ward 5 for a community picnic.
- Community Dinner next month!

8:15 Adjourn

What is the NPA?

Neighborhood Planning Assemblies (NPAs) are grassroots, neighborhood organizations that were established in each of Burlington's wards to encourage resident participation in City government. Working as neighborhood advocacy groups, Neighborhood Planning Assemblies help improve communication between the residents of Burlington and City government through regular meetings scheduled in each Ward. For more information, click [here](#).