

Burlington Walk Bike Council (BWBC)

March 12th, 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), Julia Ursaki (DPW), Erik Brotz*, Gordon Dragoon*, Jonathon Weber (Local Motion)*, Jack Evans (Local Motion), Liza Boyle, Andy Tracy, Nolan Rogers

Online Attendees: Jason Stuffle*, Clayton Dykstra, Jason Segelman

* BWBC Coordinating Committee members

1. Announcements & Updates

Nothing to report

2. Project Updates

Presentations can be viewed here:

<https://burlingtonvt.portal.civicclerk.com/event/7980/files/agenda/13407>

Battery Street Scoping Study - Julia Ursaki

- Started with an overview on the differences between the alternatives
- Covered the difficulties with either alternative, and revealed there was a desire for a 3rd
- Vehicular Travel Times - Fastest now, alternative 1 slowest overall
- Question: Will walk/bike time change be tracked?
 - Julia: Not in plan, hard to quantify with different walking/biking speeds for uphill vs downhill - bike/ped data is hard to track. Pedestrian wait times at intersections were considered.
- Refined alternative 2 mostly, since many of the public and advisory committee's concerns could be addressed with minimal changes
 - Alternative 2 was recommended because they felt it best met the need and purpose
- Got recommendation from TEUC, presenting to Public Work Commission later this month, hope to present to City Council on April 14th
- Will work with CCRPC to do a signal analysis and see what is possible/necessary for signaling for interim solution
- Haven't identified source of funding yet, ideally want to start Summer 2026 for interim plan

- Current estimate is \$1M for the interim solution, paint/signals/and such, including road diet
- Open to adjustments on the interim implementation/solutions
- probably 10 years until full project is funded with moving curb, etc (\$30 million range)
- Question: Heard of potential plans to build at Cherry and Battery (on the Church property) - is this being taken into account? Could enhance the need for North/South bike lane on the east side.
 - Julia: Had not heard of that potential development; may be able to modify plan if circumstances change before it is built
- Comment: Signal timing prioritizes vehicles; would like more equal treatment for walking and biking
- Question: Will intersections require the pressing of a button for walk/bike.
 - If there a dedicated bike facility new technology allows for easy detection of bike usage

Sidewalk Scoping Study - Phillip Peterson

- Recently did a study in the NNE looking at roads in NNE without sidewalks (Stanbury, Cottage Grove, Green Acres, Loaldo) - scoping studies to add sidewalks to those streets
- Key Findings
 - Stanbury Road/Dale Road (continuous street) - Adding sidewalk on east side of Stanbury to connect to Dale Road sidewalk. Pilot project was done removing parking and adding a temporary lane in summer 2024, with the travel lane being shared by cars in each direction in a "yield street condition." Seemed to work but drivers complained about "having to slow down."
 - Green Acres - interested in yield street option so will do a demo on the South/West side of the road, go on a road diet and parking would be removed, add a sidepath/sidewalks. Adding a sidewalk off the road has more impact on people's yards here
 - Cottage Grove/Loaldo are no go for now as neighborhood opinions were too split

Other updates/discussion

- Ethan Allen Parkway and Archibald St. will get some traffic calming along with repaving work

3. Bond Priorities

\$20M bond was approved. If the bond was not passed they the transportation budget was only going to get \$100K/yr; because it passed they will get \$200K/yr. Local match is possible on that money.

Phillip and Juliamaking a list of current and planned projects. Currently 59 major projects are identified (with smaller projects being within them)

- There is a sentiment that they need to take things as opportunities present themselves
 - Piggy-back on paving and other projects to reduce cost

- Difficult to determine exactly what will be done, but they do have internal priorities
 - Shelburne Road road diet being a highlighted one. Can apply for grant money for Shelburne St but without scoping study the bid is not as competitive - need to do the study first
- What can we do as a body to help the process on things that we approve of
 - The main thing that Phillip highlighted was that we should fight in here, but be a united front out there
 - Lobby where paving should be done so things could be piggy-backed onto it
 - **Should probably think of more**
- Comment: Upper College Street getting repaved this year - any opportunities?
- Comment: Ponding on sidewalks is an issue
 - often due to build up of greenbelt area being much higher than the sidewalk
 - Crews try to improve whenever replacing sidewalks, but it's difficult to just raise the tread of the sidewalk and meet driveways, etc
 - Sometimes shave down greenbelt to allow drainage
 - Comment: sees flooding on the sidewalk, no flooding on the street
 - Others: ponding on streets too
 - Jason talked about shaving down parts of the greenbelt in front of his house and it helped reduce ponding
 - Can DPW do this? somewhat impractical to do city wide with city employees
 - Greenbelt is responsibility of land owner
 - Is it legal for volunteers to do this? Not sure - worth looking into
- Comment: would like more raised intersections for visibility of pedestrians
 - Erik: have not found raised intersections to be effective at slowing traffic
 - Phillip: agrees; also expensive
 - Opportunity cost of those improvements vs other projects.
 - Raised crosswalks might be better than raising entire intersections.
 - Need to consider changes to curb cuts when raising crosswalks - need to keep it ADA accessible
 - Jason noted East Ave Rapid Flashing Beacon and raised crosswalk is working well
- Comment: would like to see "continuous sidewalk"
 - instead of crosswalk the sidewalk goes across the street, communicates it is a space for pedestrians that cars can enter vs a car space that pedestrians enter
 - it is a lot more expensive since road contractors don't like to work with concrete, vertical space needs to be considered to utilities, etc.
- Drainage is an issue with raised crosswalks/intersection/continuous sidewalk and need to have proper drains
- New sidewalks are not popular with some homeowners because it reduces their driveway space since you can't block sidewalks
- Note on Church Street using brick for crosswalks (also on University Place)

4. Local Complete Streets Policy

Jonathon Weber

Presentation can be viewed here (after the DPW slides):

<https://burlingtonvt.portal.civicclerk.com/event/7980/files/agenda/13407>

Complete Streets Policy

- Streets Designed and maintained to serve the needs of everyone
- Intended to facilitate and set requirements for implementing these priorities, usually through ordinances/laws/resolutions

State's Complete Streets Policy

- "Requires" that municipal transportation projects (as applicable) incorporate CS principles
 - Really high level stuff
- It provides exceptions if
 - The use of the facility by vulnerable users is prohibited
 - Cost goes up in such a way that is disproportionate to the rest of the project
 - Implementing the policies is outside of the project scope
- Basically it's really easy to get out of in a real sense
- Gaps - Does not ensure quality, apply to private development, allow for review/denial of determinations (for adhering to the CS principles), does not guide project managers in trade-offs, does not establish performance measures, basically has no teeth

Potential Burlington Complete Streets Policy for advancing BWBC mission

- Establish city commitment and vision for how streets will be designed/maintained
- Adopt design guidelines (NACTO, Great Streets)
- Require compliance for private developers
- Set policy for evaluating trade-offs in street design
 - Howard County, MD - "One user's convenience or mobility should not be prioritized over another user's safety."
- Ensure quality
 - Use level of traffic stress
- Establish performance measures, require evaluation and reporting on process
- Question: have we considered alternative materials and overall lifetime per year cost vs upfront costs
- Jason posted into chat a video on using alternative road materials to asphalt - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cq1kV6V_jvI
- Comment: seems like potholes get fixed in a day but walk/bike fixes often take years.
 - Concrete work is harder and more expensive, and can only be done in warm season; try to do longer/bigger stretches
- Non asphalt roads can have pervious surfaces and help with runoff water