



Ward 3 Neighborhood Planning Assembly

Wednesday, February 13, 2025

Sharon Bushor Room, Burlington City Hall

Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome & Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:00 PM by Chris Haessly, Ward 3 NPA Steering Committee member.

2. Attendee Introductions

- **Officials/Steering Committee Members:**

- Mark Barlow, City Councilor, North District
- Marek Broderick, City Councilor, Ward 8
- Joan Shannon, City Councilor, South District (via remote attendance)
- Zachary Cummings, Ward 3 NPA Steering Committee
- Chris Haessly, Ward 3 NPA Steering Committee
- Charlie Messing, Ward 3 NPA Steering Committee (via remote attendance)

- **Staff/Presenters:**

- Zach Nersinger, CEDO
- Stefan Bohdanowycz, JMS Capital Group
- Jack Anderson, JMS Capital Group
- Valerie Lovett, One Lawson Lane
- Steve Donahue, Donahue & Associates

- **Community Members/Public:**

- Nora Aronds, North Union Street
- Susan Forrester, College Street
- Jill Lesh, College Street
- Charlie Giannoni, CCTV

3. Public Forum

- No members of the public came forward to speak.

4. Proposed Development at One Lawson Lane

Presented by: Stefan Bohdanowycz, JMS Capital Group

- **Project Vision & Introduction:**

- JMS Capital Group is a real estate investment firm specializing in multi-family properties, with integrated property and construction management divisions.

- The vision for One Lawson Lane is to convert the existing underutilized office space into a modern residential building while preserving its historic character.
- The project proposes a 44-unit building, consisting of thirty-seven (37) new residential units and retaining seven (7) commercial units.
- **History of the Building:**
 - The property is a historic building dating to the late 19th century, originally part of the Wells Richardson Company, a global manufacturer of medicines, dyes, and food colorings.
 - The presenters shared historical pamphlets, including an advertisement for "Paine's Celery Compound," a popular product made in the building.
 - It was noted that the building has significant historical features, including a tunnel that once connected it to the nearby Bennington Potters' building for moving goods.
- **Project Details & Timeline:**
 - The renovation will preserve historic attributes such as exposed brick walls and original wood beams, while integrating modern finishes and amenities.
 - The residential units will be a mix of one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments. Each unit will include its own washer and dryer.
 - Construction will be phased, starting with the vacant fourth floor, and proceeding to other floors as commercial leases expire.
 - **Projected Timeline:**
 - Construction Start: Q2 2025
 - Project Completion/Full Occupancy: Q2 2027
- **Community Impact & Design:**
 - The project aims to create local construction jobs and permanent operational jobs.
 - It aligns with city goals by increasing the housing supply and promoting urban revitalization.
 - The developers plan to incorporate the building's history into the decor, such as displaying antique "Paine's Celery Compound" bottles found on Etsy.

5. Question & Answer Session

- **Question:** What is the parking plan for residents?
 - **Answer:** The developers are coordinating with the city for access to public parking, are in discussions with the owner of the adjacent lot (currently used by Ben & Jerry's), and have an existing lease on that lot through 2026. They are also developing a transportation management plan that may include car-sharing services.
- **Question:** Will there be shared amenities like a gym or pool?
 - **Answer:** Yes. Each residential floor will feature a small common area, such as a reading nook or a room with a pool table. The basement will house a larger amenity space, including a gym, a sauna, and potentially a cold plunge pool.

- **Question:** How will the floors be numbered, given the building's hillside construction?
 - **Answer:** The main entrance leads to what is considered the first floor, though this level corresponds to the second floor from the Main Street side. The renovation will focus on the second, third, and fourth floors for residential units, while the ground/first floor will remain commercial space.
- **Question:** Will there be bike and tenant storage?
 - **Answer:** Yes, the basement has ample space. A large room, formerly an art gallery, will be converted into bike storage. Another area will be dedicated to general tenant storage lockers.
- **Question:** What is the current occupancy of the building?
 - **Answer:** The fourth floor is vacant. The second and third floors are used as commercial office space and are at approximately 45% occupancy.
- **Question (from Councilor Shannon):** Are there any current residential units, and will this project cause any displacement?
 - **Answer:** There is one existing residential studio unit in the basement. There will be no displacement as a result of this project.
- **Question:** What is the target rent for the apartments?
 - **Answer:** The estimated range for one-bedroom units is **\$1,800 to \$2,200** per month. Two-bedroom units will be slightly higher, around **\$2,300**. Prices will vary based on the unit's specific finishes, appliances, and views.
- **Question:** Is this your first project in a community with an inclusionary zoning ordinance?
 - **Answer:** This is their first direct experience with it. They are undertaking another project at 131 Church Street that will also involve the ordinance, but they have not yet reached that stage of the process.
- **Question:** Can the community see progress updates on the renovation?
 - **Answer:** Yes. The developers take daily photos and are happy to share them. They are considering creating a website to document the building's transformation.
- **Question:** What are the next steps you need from the public or the city?
 - **Answer:** No immediate steps are needed. This NPA meeting was a required checklist item for their zoning permit application. Having addressed other requirements (wastewater, transportation management), they are ready to submit their application.

6. Closing Remarks

- Chris Haessly thanked the development team for their presentation and for investing in Burlington, stating, "We really need the housing."
- Valerie Lovett noted that the 24/7 vibrancy from new residents will bring back the quality of life desired for the downtown core.
- Councilor Shannon thanked the developers for a "beautiful project" that converts commercial space to much-needed housing.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:05 PM.