

Ward 1 Neighborhood Planning Assembly (NPA)
Wednesday, September 10, 2025
In-person at the Friends Meeting House, 173 North Prospect Street
And Zoom online:
<https://zoom.us/j/96245939050>
Webinar ID: 962 4593 9050
Or by phone: +1 929 205 6099 ID = 962 4593 9050

Minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rvy8idCPOqc&t=2851s>

**Please note – Any charts for the meeting, beyond those you
LI find following the minutes, can be found here:
<https://burlingtonvt.portal.civicclerk.com/event/8467/files>.**

6:15 - Welcome and Food (Namaste Kitchen Express)

6:30 - Formal Start - project & review agenda
Introductions: name, street

Rob Gutman

Carol Livingston

Angie Chapple-Sokol

Jonathan Chapple-Sokol

Mark Demers

Allie Schachter

Carter Neubieser

Katherine Verman

Peter Lackowski

Matt Price

Troy Hendrick

Gretchen Platt

Sophie Quest

Cindy Cook

Doug Boyden

Julie Springer

Marion Price

Erick Barbic

Ana Maria Robu

Sharon Bushor

Tom Derenthal

John Heronumos

Catherine Bock

Announcements: share events, meetings, activities of interest to Ward 1 community.

*Sharon Bushor: On Tuesday Sept 23 planning commission taking up an item that
is technical revisions to neighborhood code. One item being removed is the "4 unrelated"*

(number of unrelated people living in one dwelling), read it and look and understand if it makes us more vulnerable. What about parking in one residence? No minimum but there is a maximum. Each unit can get up to 3 parking passes no matter what off street parking exists.

Allie Schachter: Flynn events for public: Playing Fields at Edmunds, AND acrobats Saturday and Sunday at state house.

Tom Derenthal: Thank you to Dave Cawley and Marcie Gallagher for putting on potlucks at Schmanska park over the summer.

Ward 1 Steering Committee present Participation Guidelines—Rob Gutman presented Suggestion was to add tone setting at the beginning of document that welcomes public, neighbors input. (amended, see below)

Steering committee brought info from VJ Comai about why city is removing the ash trees. Will continue this fall. New diversified variety of trees will be planted based on what the city can find is available. (See Below)

And Winooski bridge and south intersections around the bridge, construction anticipated to begin 2027. (See Below)

6:40 - Speakout - an opportunity to raise concerns & appreciations about Ward 1 community

(1) Melo Grant: news is showing maybe have VT State Police in the city and this is not official, WCAX inferred that. Would need to be a robust conversation for this to happen.

6:55 - School Commission update - Matt Price

Matt Price – Start of school year: great capital expenses used including EES, EMS, IAA, and HVAC work at other schools. High school still on track for opening Fall 2026. Cell phone ban statewide coming on line, is already in place in EMS and HUNT. Protected populations in state language. Statewide number of school districts. Aiming for 18-25 (not the proposed 5), serve 4000-8000 students. Encourage us to read and watch for this info. 3 proposals to be brought from committee to legislature with expected 2028-2029 school year launch. Hard for school board to plan given not knowing where things will end up. Question about district's procedure for cyber bullying.

7:05 City Council update - Carter Neubieser & Allie Schacter

Summer meet every 3 weeks (instead of 2 weeks rest of year)

Allie brought forward resolution to meet with UVM President Tromp for housing MOU and student housing; this was a bipartisan resolution. Councilors met with President Tromp; she was welcoming to working on this issue.

Passed a new program called City Circle with City Attorney and conflict resolution. If a person goes against ordinances they meet right away to try to resolve, then they would proceed through court system next if needed. Also stretching public services, and targeting resources in specific areas of the city. Increased police foot traffic up significantly in target areas.

Last meeting brought a resolution to use some funding to pick up trash, needles, etc in downtown core, used Councilor Initiative Funds for supporting these efforts.

Carter introducing resolution in October to ask financial office to have all candidates disclose their financials as a means to strengthen local democracy. Mimic what state reps and senators are required to release in their financial disclosure. Coming up to focus more on housing as well. Enforcement office for rentals is overwhelmed.

2 more about signage at fueling stations and public vs private parking.

Angie grateful that our 2 councilors are modeling bipartisan positivity.

Carol: Troy met with Dr. Tromp, we have invited her to come to our NPA meeting and she wants to come, just trying to coordinate. And she is interested, along with mayor, to look at housing MOU again. Troy is optimistic about Tromp and Emma making MOU move along.

7:30 Steering Committee budget and calendar

- *NPA's are on a trial basis being "housed" in the Department of Finance and Administration instead of CEDO*
- *NPA budget is \$3000 per year- past spent on "room and board," Namaste Kitchen, about \$100-150 a month, rest is not allocated. OK what we are spending the money on? And how to spend the left over money after room and board. Suggestion: block parties were supported in the past, more community gardens, welcome bags to new students, neighbors and how to find them, canvassing neighborhoods annually*
- *Calendar:*
- *Future topics: UVMMC come and speak to their development plans. Charles Dillard, neighborhood planning session.*

7:45 Chief Burke, Chapin Spencer and Laura Wheelock

High points: traffic safety is very important to them within upcoming projects, and build a more multimodal transportation system. We have not maintained our assets over time and we are going through a generational reinvestment. THANK YOU! Champlain Parkway done, Great Streets/Main Streets coming along, Rotary on Route 7, University Place. Burlington walk/bike council, BPD, and other partners. Pavement and street reconstruction and sidewalks.

What is coming: city wide kicking off a new transportation plan, Winooski River bridge, Pearl and Prospect streets intersection, Main Street grant for bike way to Intervale, buy Kismayo building to prevent slide and make green space.

Shawn Burke: *Interim Chief: Number of challenges, building relationships, traffic enforcement has cooled, DelPoso was not focusing on traffic, but more on officers on foot and getting to know people and form relationships. City Hall Park and marketplace challenges. Only police officers can conduct traffic stops. His focus is on downtown and city hall park. All in on City Hall Park with available officers (5 on day shift, 5-6 on night shift) spending their discretionary time making relationships, focusing on causes of behaviors. Mental health crises, open drug use, people who just like to be disorderly and this is tricky with our bail laws in VT. Violent assault they can be held without bail. City has no control over bail law. Now with City Circle we have another way to approach those who are not following our ordinances. And Situation Table weekly: a case or 2 is presented and reviewed and an intervention team goes out to help the person in the case. Very focused on recruitment and retention of officers, recently made a deal to improve benefits to officers. And working with Police Commission to prepare foundation for new leadership. BPD has an excellent record in making more police leaders.*

Question from Sharon about use/relationship with UVM police. Chief Burke does have relationships with the 2 heads of the UVM police.

Safe walking to school: they meet with schools regularly, what about motorized vehicles on sidewalks, scooters, etc. work is being done around this. Main street project has a bike lane behind a curb and including motorized vehicles, scooters, etc. Connect with UPTO for parent input, traffic lights at College and Willard, etc. What about connecting to Drive Well Vermont. Possibly use other sources, cameras, etc. for traffic control. What about AI as far as signaling with pedestrians, bikes, and cars. State law says cannot collect license plate data so can't use cameras for traffic control. What about soft deterrents like lights flash your speed limits, etc. Unfortunately people get desensitized to them and then stop seeing them. These do get moved around city to combat this.

Carter and Angie both shared their gratitude for the leadership in both the BPD and city engineers.

8:30 - Adjourn

Ward 1 NPA Steering Committee

Carol Livingston carol.livingston1951@gmail.com,

Jonathan Chapple-Sokol chapplesokol.npasc@gmail.com,

Selene Colburn selene.colburn@gmail.com,

Sam Doherty samcharlesdoherty@gmail.com

Gretchen Platt gshuman7005@yahoo.com

Participation Guidelines:

The Ward 1 NPA is sustained by community involvement and encourages engagement at our monthly meetings per the following guidelines:

We are collectively responsible for following the NPA Meeting Agenda as closely as possible regarding both presentation/discussion topics and time.

Participants at the NPA will act in a positive, courteous manner that respects all of those present (both participants and presenters/guests) and their differing opinions, experiences and perspectives.

Any attendee requesting to speak who has not yet spoken at a meeting will be called on before others who have already had a chance to speak. Priority is given to Ward 1 residents.

Whenever speaking, please be sure to project your voice and use the provided microphone if provided.

If the facilitator feels the need to "redirect" activity in the room based on these guidelines, the facilitator will do so per point number 1 above.

Why are Ash trees being cut down in Burlington?

The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), a destructive, invasive wood-boring beetle, has arrived in Burlington! The City of Burlington had held off from any preemptive cutting until the arrival of the EAB could be confirmed. Now that it's here, the city must remove these trees before they become sick and die. Dead trees, especially on green belts, are hazardous to houses, power lines, and cars. The Parks and Recreation department maintains an in house tree cutting crew which for a project like this has saved the city hundreds of thousands of dollars.



Emerald Ash Borer

Impact on Ward 1

As many have noticed, there have been quite a few trees cut down here in Ward 1. Mansfield Ave was the most affected, with half a dozen trees removed. There have also been tree removals on North St and upper Loomis St. This fall, Ash tree removal will continue in the ward. There are still Ash trees left on East Ave, Grove St, and in Schmanska Park.

What is being replanted?

There are three main factors the city considers when replanting trees.

1. **Diversification of species:** to prevent so many trees from getting cut down in the future, the city is replanting with a wide variety of trees.
2. **Availability of trees:** The city gets their trees from two sources, the city's own tree nursery - where trees are maintained by the volunteer organization Branch out Burlington, and a tree farm in upstate New York. What trees are planted depends of course on what's available
3. **Resident Requests:** When a tree is cut down in front of someone's house, the city will ask what kind of tree they would like in its place. As long as it aligns with the first two factors, the request is accommodated.

This has happened before (and will happen again)

In historical photos of Burlington, Elm trees line the green belts of our city. However, Dutch Elm Sickness resulted in the removal of the Elms and the planting of the Ash trees. With a diverse set of trees being replanted, hopefully any future cuttings won't be as severe.

More info

VJ Comai (City Arborist)
Email: vcomai@burlingtonvt.gov
Phone: (802)-735-3055

branchoutburlington.org

Greetings Ward 1 Neighborhood Planning Assembly,

On behalf of the **Burlington-Winooski Bridge Replacement and Intersection Improvement Project Team**, we are reaching out to share information about the ongoing Project.

The overall project will include replacing the bridge and improving the intersection immediately south of the bridge in Burlington, involving Riverside Avenue, Colchester Avenue, Mill Street, and Barrett Street. The intersection improvements will generally consist of roadway reconstruction and traffic signal modifications to improve safety and mobility for all users. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2027.

We encourage you to visit the [Project Website](#) for more detailed information and updates. Community outreach to date has included:

- Public Information Meetings were held on September 19, 2023, January 23, 2024, and on December 11, 2024, the project team hosted a Public Open House.
- The Project Team has presented at multiple city council meetings in Winooski and Burlington, receiving approvals in both cities on the Base Technical Concept for the new bridge.
- Additional coordination has included meetings with transit providers, emergency services, and other key stakeholders.
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To continue our efforts of community outreach, we're excited to announce an opening for a Community Liaison to help support and engage the local business community during construction. This part-time role will be key in the implementation of business-focused communication and outreach strategies. If you would like to learn more about the role, see the attached flyer and job description, or visit our project website.

We invite you to:

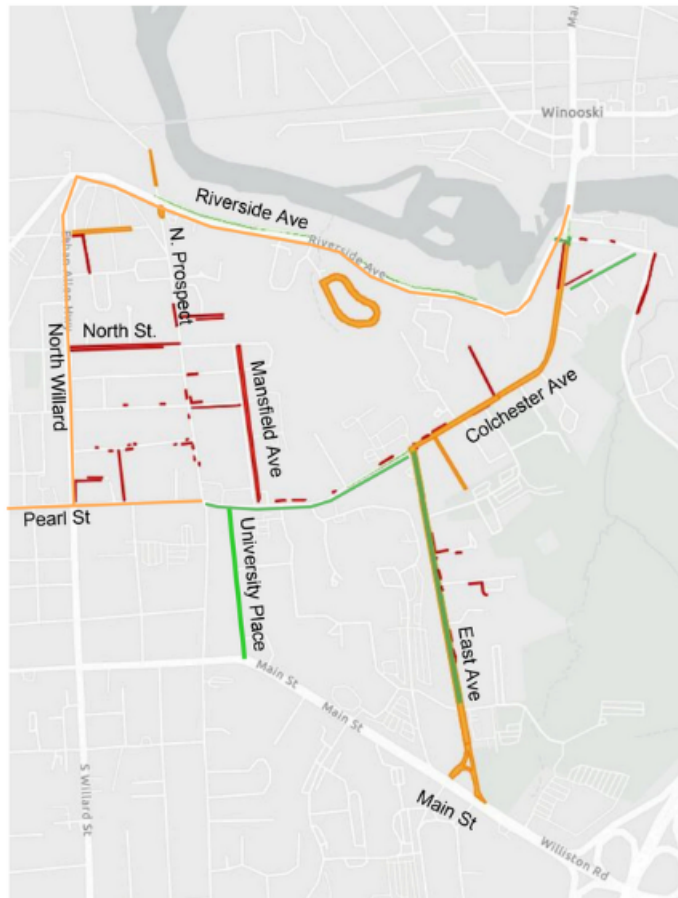
- Share this opportunity with your networks and constituents.
- Participate in upcoming engagement sessions—more opportunities are being planned for 2025 and will be announced soon.
- Sign up to receive project updates ([link](#)).
- Reach out with any questions or feedback!

Best,
Claire

Claire Schenck
Public Outreach Coordinator
Burlington-Winooski Bridge Project
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