



Neighborhood Planning Assembly Minutes

NPA:

Ward
5

Date of Assembly : 2/19/26 Start Time: *(Commence)*: 7:02pm

Location: 645 Pine Street Finish Time: *(Adjourn)*: 8:31pm

Note taker: Jak Tiano Please forward these official minutes to: BT

Steering Committee Members in Attendance:	
Jason Van Dreische, Jak Tiano, FaRied Munarsyah, Lena Greenberg, Cathy Foley, Prim VanWolvelear (Zoom)	
Discussion Topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NPA priorities in 2026 ● School Budget and other school updates ● Discussion of Proposition Zero 	Actions Taken / Decisions Made <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Drafted our 2026 NPA Priorities for City Council

Agenda Items and Actions:

- Commence: **7:02pm**
 - Lena opens the meeting with an overview of the agenda
- Public forum
 - Jason Van Dreische gives an update on the parks path in Calahan
 - Lucia Campriello asks for support in running for the school board
 - Sarah (Ward 6) asks if running unopposed matters for a vote
 - Lucia says that you don't need to vote for them and others say that it does matter because you know how
 - Jak Tiano asks people to get in touch with their legislators to support transit funding
 - David Foss supports Jak's comments and says that transportation is important, especially to the airport
 - Scott Lowe asks if it's only related to Burlington or if it's the whole state, and Jak clarifies that it's transit in Vermont overall
 - Lena reminds people that March 3rd is Town Meeting Day, and that our April meeting will be our NPA Steering Committee election
- NPA priorities in 2026
 - Lena explains the NPA resolution that passed last year, and why we're talking about NPA priorities
 - Scott Lowe says a priority for him is the uncertainty around property taxes and how they may shift; specifically asking for why shifting the tax burden would be more beneficial to residents
 - Jason says we should tax more the things we don't want, and tax the things we want less; i.e. tax surface parking more, cannabis shops more
 - David says Burlington needs to develop a better transportation plan, it's hard for many residents to access health care, airport, etc. Needs to be easier for people to

come into town for work. SSTA for many seniors is becoming more expensive and hard to access.

- Resident says that housing for unhoused people, expansion of voucher program should be prioritized.
- Jak says this should be an opportunity for thinking about how we manage growth with intention.
- Jamie Contois is thinking a lot about what are some of the ways we can support communication around the needs of working families (health care, child care, housing). Also wondering about the seemingly unneeded division between partisan politics in the city.
- School Budget and other school updates
 - Lucia Campriello and Jeff Wick introduce themselves as school board commissioners
 - Lucia gives an overview of what the budget covers, and the value it provides
 - She also mentions that a major part of the budget increase is health care, and the primary component of the budget is teachers
 - BTV is seeing a decrease in enrollment
 - \$6M increase in budget, with a 4.7% increase to property tax payer
 - Jeff says we have a clean audit, and even had a tax decrease last year
 - He also says that if we hadn't had to build the new high school, education taxes probably would have gone down again this year.
 - He thanks the public for their support over the years, and key school district staff.
 - Andy Simon asks about how "the state level stuff" impacts our local school issues. Lucia explains the way pupil weightings changed in recent years, and how important that was to equitable funding of Burlington schools.
 - Jason asks what percentage of \$140.8M is health insurance? Jeff isn't sure off the top of his head.
 - Jason also asks about any known plans for Burlington district consolidation, but presenters aren't sure where things stand at the moment but would be against it.
 - Jamie asks where the coalition is for health care reform given its existential risk to many organizations around the state, and what does our school district do in that larger conversation.
 - Victor Prussack is the Director of Engagement, is here to talk about "proactive ICE preparedness" procedure
 - The district is hoping to be prepared ahead of time if we were to see the same thing that happened in Portland ME or Minneapolis MN
 - There is a draft plan now at the district level for the procedure, hoping to have it public by the end of the first week of march
 - Goal is to keep attention away from our schools
 - Victor outlines the major buckets of the procedure, and details will be out in a few weeks.

- Andy asks “what triggers this plan”? Victor said that they’re still working out the details, but in a “Green, Orange, Red” scenario, we’re already in Orange.
 - Jamie asks how we can start dispelling the mythology around what can happen here, to offer a reality check for people about what it means to be taken by ICE in Vermont. Jason agrees. Jamie clarifies that she does want to see some action on this in the PTOs, and Victor says that leadership will need to come from families in the community.
 - Rebecca (online, Ward 3) adds that a couple things we can start doing now is to get to know your neighbors, go to events, and build community before things get worse. We can know our rights now.
- Discussion of Proposition Zero
 - FaRied opens the discussion about how town meeting works in other small towns in Vermont, and how prop zero is aiming to be a charter amendment in the November election
 - It includes three mechanisms of direct democracy:
 - The ability of voters to solicit 5% of voters on a petition on:
 - advisory question
 - a voters initiative
 - a popular referendum
 - Daniel says that the point of Proposition Zero is to fix an error in Burlington’s charter to restore some aspect of direct democracy
 - The goal is to update the charter to give the three new powers listed above to the people, allowing people to have some lament of direct democracy
 - Andy asks: 1) who makes the determination that an ordinance is legal? (The city attorney) 2) if we get enough signatures, the city must put it on the ballot because it’s a charter change, right? (Yes)
- Meeting adjourns at 8:31pm