

Wards 4&7 NPA Meeting February 25 2026
Minutes taken by Annie Lawson

6:30: Introductions

6:43: Open Forum

- Linda from NNE Food Pantry. Thanks for donations of clothes and food on the last Sunday of the month. Also a food drive and bake sale at Elks Lodge on Town Meeting Day. They especially need diapers and new underwear and socks, especially men's.
- Mark Peterson, Ward 4: wonders why trees were cut down. A resident says because they were ash trees, carrying invasive insects.
- Monika Ivancik: urges folks to vote Yes on Ballot questions 1 and 4 on TMD.
- Nikhil Goyal: running for Chittenden Central in August primary. Pitches his program.
- Alex: Presents on Odd Fellows Lodge, names events, kids' events, public open events, music events, etc. Many events include free community dinner as well. Deep history: 1800s and are a mutual aid organization. Apolitical, non-sectarian. 3 principles: friendship, love, truth. A big partner of the North End Food Pantry.
- Amy Bielawski-Branch: SC and ward 4 Election Clerk: urges folks to vote on TMD on Tuesday. If you haven't put your ballot in the mail yet, it's too late, so put it in a drop box or bring it to your polling place (ward 4 is Elks Lodge, ward 7 is at Miller Center). You can still vote if you forget to bring your ballot with you. We are one of the few places where resident non-citizen voting is allowed. Although there have been no reports of ICE concerns coming to polling places, election workers are aware of this: so, there is Community Voting Night on Feb 27, 4:00-7:00 at ONE Center. Also, Vermont League of Women Voters has created initiative and training for election observers. Sign-up sheet is passed around.
- FaRied from Ward 5: On behalf of Proposition Zero: gathering support via signature to change the charter so that voters can get ballot questions onto the ballot. This exists in all other towns and cities except Burlington. If you want to sign the petition to help get it onto the ballot to change the charter so propositions and regular ballot questions can get onto the ballot in future elections, you can sign on.

First Presenter: Barbara Shaw-Dorso from Community Justice Center:

Conflict Assistance Program, which is part of the CJC. Many programs within this program: Court diversion, referrals pre-charge, restorative justice. CJC is moving from Burlington Telecom building over to where the VFW used to be. Some consolidation between CJs in Chittenden County. Barbara started the Conflict Assistance program in 2019 after receiving a Justice Assistance Grant. Focuses on education, prevention, and conflict assistance. CAP services/goals: Respond to requests from people in the community if they would like help engaging or navigating a conflict. Barbara has formal education as a mediator and can be a coach, as well as conducting restorative dialogue. This service is free.

CAP also presents workshops in the community talking about our relationship with conflict and how we might get more comfortable addressing conflict in our lives. People share examples of how they relate to conflict and situations that may be appropriate for CAP program. It is a

conflict engagement program, and it may not lead to a resolution. More information about workshops.

Monika Ivancik shares that Burlington School District uses restorative justice practices, and students are engaged and involved in this, from conflict resolution to consequences that do not involve punitive responses for the sake of punishment, but rather involves more insight about the impacts of actions. There is a Restorative Code of Conduct within BSD.

Next Presenter: Jack Evans from Local Motion, to present on feedback gathered from recent protected bike lane pilot.

- The policy states that this was based on a pilot program within DPW, which would be a working document that is revised with feedback. It had never been used before even though it had existed for ten years within DPW's hoops. So people found that this project guide was too much work for everyday residents to create and implement a program. Once BWBC applied and was approved by DPW, they had less than two weeks to build the program up. Jack reports that there were communication break-downs between approval and start of pilot program. Jack notes that there were valid reasons for the communication breakdown, and that the breakdown did exist. Jack notes that the total weight of the supplies (142 cones and 142 18-lb rubber bases) is close to the weight of a small car. So the actual work of building the project was due completely to volunteers stepping in.

Visual evidence from photos taken show that there is improved safety, with cars moving over toward the center line. Data also taken during school and morning commute hours. On one Tuesday morning, 7:30 until 8:00, 32 bikes were counted on Woodbury Rd and North Ave intersection; most were children on their way to school.

Cone maintenance and damage: volunteers responded to damaged cones 3 times a day. 30% of cones were lost overnight, each night, by people removing them or running them over. Neighbors reported other neighbors picking up the cones and moving them farther away from their yards. There was a lot of feedback at the NPA meeting in October. After the meeting discussing this, someone drove over 8 cones and pushed the bases out into traffic, across the lanes, into the sidewalk. Someone could have been injured and luckily no one was.

Survey feedback: 20-30% of respondents reported that they bike several times a week. Roughly a greater proportion than this indicated that they walk several times a week. Driver responded: Way less safe: 29.3%, Way more safe: 21.6%, less safe: 19.2%, safer 10%, and 19.7% was no change. Jack notes that the survey should not have measured how safe people felt, but rather how much they like or dislike the project, because imperial data that has been gathered forever shows that these kinds of projects do improve safety. As far as comment feedback: the greatest source of concern that respondents noted was that emergency vehicles would not be able to get through easily, as well as suggesting that the bike lane was not needed due to the parallel greenway nearby.

Next steps: continue to engage with transportation in your neighborhood! 7.5% of all NNE residents completed the survey: about 700 people! That's huge! Share your input with PlanBTV:NNE process and give feedback.

If you are interested in leading the demonstration project such as this, now there has been one: so it should be easier. HOW DO YOU DO THIS? could be pedestrian bump-outs, and neighborhood street activation. Jack also thinks that we do a walk audit! Get outside and see what feels unsafe from an infrastructure point of view, and consider ways to easily make it feel safer for everyone.

BWBC Takeaways: protection is important and they do not recommend “shoulder” protected bike lanes. They do recommend that the City explore concepts for a 2-way protected lane this would increase the total vehicle travel width, and is best practice for constrained “truck” lanes. * “Shoulder” means the side of the road where the travel lane ends, and the curve begins. How to do a community project: come to the NPA, announce your intention, state your situation that’s unsafe, gather neighbors and then come to the Walk-Bike Council and reach out to Local Motion, and they can give guidance to navigate long documents to make a demonstration project become a reality. For contacting Jack, you can email jack@localmotion.org