

Ward 6 NPA Meeting Agenda

Thursday, March 5, 2026

Location: Department of Public Works, 645 Pine Street

Or on zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/81027856568>

- 6:00 Community Dinner – join us for great (free!) food and a chance to connect with your neighbors
- 6:30 Call to Order,
- Introductions
 - Announcements: From Alan Matson, appreciation for poll workers
 - Public Forum
- 6:45 City Council Reports, Becca Brown McKnight and Buddy Singh, online
- Appreciation for poll workers
 - Council passed a bi-partisan resolution to look into how to use Neighborhood Code Better, how to create as much infill as possible. Also how to streamline the permitting process, whether for renovation or new building. We hear that some contractors find Burlington permitting process too cumbersome. Also to support landlords in creating more units.
 - Also passed a resolution about a tax fairness ad hoc committee, to foster public input on how to make our property tax system more equitable, taking into account ability to pay, value of home, etc. We want to make tax relief more targeted for those who need it, while still maintaining revenue.
 - Both City items passed. 5 cent increase in public safety tax. The increase won't happen automatically – still to be worked out in the budget process. We want to keep tax increases as low as they can be.
 - REIB Charter Change. Racial Equity Inclusion and Belonging. This Dept is a valuable resource for promoting equity in the City. As a Charter Change this needs to be approved by the Legislature. For context, the REIB Dept is less than 1% of our City Budget.
 - Next Monday the City will be considering the recycling program.
 - Rep. Bram Kleppner provided context on the legislature considering (or not considering) charter changes. He has tried to change this, but the legislature is not willing to give up its control.
- 7:00 Report out on Community Survey about overdose prevention center, Theresa Vezina,
- They're here to listen. About ¾ of the way through the service assessment, which included the survey.
 - Received over 1500 responses to survey. 75% live in Burlington, 45% work in Burlington, 2% are business owners. 8% are using illicit substances.
 - Also 49 in person interviews with people with lived experience using illicit substances. 84% of these people do not have a stable place to live, 80% are unsheltered, 43% typically use drugs alone
 - Asked where they use drugs

- Of the 49%, 92% said they would use an OPC and 73% said they would use it always or most of the time.
- They would like to see medical services, place to shower, connection to services, as well as the overdose reversal medication.
- Both survey and interview participants preferred a downtown location, but ONE and Riverside/Intervale were also popular.
- Anticipate having a draft report by mid March final report by the end of April.
- From the beginning we knew that siting would be a very difficult process. Working with a real estate consultant. We've learned that we will not be able to lease a building for this, so we're looking at properties we own.
- Media coverage about a potential site that fell through. We had not actually chosen a site, but there was one under consideration, and it was eliminated from the list.
- If and when we have a viable location we'll begin a public process, including public meetings and consultation with City Council, zoning, etc.

7:30 How to reduce fossil fuel use in your home, Jacob Flanigan

- Passion project, to address the climate crisis we need to stop burning fossil fuels
- The Key (and most important takeaway) is to make a plan for the various things in your house. There are lots of choices but they're hard to think through in an emergency, like when your appliance breaks down. Being prepared allows you to switch out and not replace fossil fueled equipment when it fails.
- Heat pump, moves heat from one place to another. Refers to taking heat from the outdoors or the ground to heat your home. This is a long-standing technology but recently it's become much more efficient and used in many more contexts.
- Dryer: easy to switch out gas for electric. Need an electrician to install a 240 volt outlet.
 - Clothesline (can be indoors, at least in winter)
 - Heat pump dryer. Don't require a 240 Volt outlet. Don't require a vent. Can get a combined washer/dryer. They are more expensive but BED has rebates.
- Stove. Easy to swap out gas for electric. Need an electrician to install a 240 volt outlet.
 - Induction Stove. Cooks faster, more evenly, doesn't get hot. They are more expensive.
 - Easier and cheaper option is to just get an induction hot plate. Inexpensive and portable. Good choice for renters.
- Hot Water Heater
 - Resistive (cheap and easy to install, but not efficient).
 - Heat Pump Hot water heater. More expensive to buy, cheaper to operate.
 - There's also a hybrid
 - How to pay for it: opportunities to lease or buy, on-bill financing, etc.
- Space heating
 - Resistive (cheap to buy, expensive to operate). Baseboard (has mostly been banned in Vermont). Space heaters can be good to heat a single room or small space.
 - Heatpumps. There are a lot of different kinds. In the past these didn't work well in cold weather. Now, cold climate heat pumps work down to -15F. Make sure that what you get is labelled for cold climate as not all are!

- Forms: window units (these are new; make sure they're "cold climate"). Mini Split (wall mounted, ceiling installation, multiples units are possible off one exterior pump). Centrally ducted (for forced air system). Boiler Replacement (not many contractors in VT know how to do this yet; likely need to change out radiators too).
- Sign the Fossil Fuel Free Pledge

8:00 Future NPA topics -- what issues do you think we should be addressing? Let us know and we'll make it happen!

- What's the best thing that the City has done recently?
 - Build a new high school
- What should the City do more of?
 - Education about city ordinances (e.g. for putting out trash and recycling, not having fires, cats) and enforcement – but education is the way to start
 - Get cellphones out of schools. According to Bram Kleppner, BHS has already done this and there's a state-wide bell-to-bell rule coming into effect in September.
- What's a concern that should be addressed?

8:15 Adjourn