



Regular City Council Meeting - Monday, December 5, 2022, 5:30 pm, Contois Auditorium OR REMOTELY via ZOOM 12/5/2022

BURLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

CITY HALL, CONTOIS AUDITORIUM *OR*

REMOTE MEETING WITH CALL-IN

BURLINGTON, VERMONT

MINUTES OF MEETING

December 5, 2022

DRAFT

MEMBERS PRESENT: Karen Paul

Joan Shannon (via Zoom)

Ali Dieng

Sarah E Carpenter

Perri Freeman

Zoraya Hightower

Mark Barlow

Joe Magee

Gene Bergman

Ben Traverse

OTHERS PRESENT: Miro Weinberger

Katherine Schad

Kim Sturtevant

Jordan Redell

Lori Olberg

Meagan Tuttle

Charles Dillard

Samantha Dunn



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Chapin Spencer

Sarah Morgan

Darren Springer

Neale Lunderville

Michael Ahern

Jen Green

Chris Burns

Bill Ward

Patti Wehman

1. CALL TO ORDER and AGENDA

1.01 Motion to amend/adopt agenda

The meeting was called to order by City Council President Paul at 5:40 PM.

MOTION by Councilor Magee, SECOND by Councilor Hightower, to amend and adopt the agenda as follows:

- **add to the consent agenda item 6.28 Communication: Jim Lockridge, Big Heavy World, re: Submission of proposal for the adaptive reuse of Memorial Auditorium.**

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

2. WORK SESSION RE: SOUTH END PLANNING AND ZONING

2.01 Work session re: South End Planning and Zoning

Director Tuttle said that this presentation is centered around zoning changes in the South End and other activities that will help those zoning changes be successful. She spoke briefly about the planBTV South End. She noted that when the plan was adopted, housing was not allowed in the Enterprise Zone, but that one of the zoning amendments before the Council tonight would be to allow more flexibility in that zoning district. She noted that components of the plan tie directly into one or more of the ten-point Housing Action Plan that was discussed at the Council's previous meeting (and that it most directly relates to point #8).



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Principle Planner Dillard began by speaking about the zoning amendment for the South End Innovation District (SEID). He noted that the key question for this change is exploring how large surface parking lots and other underutilized sites on and near Lakeside Avenue be re-envisioned to enhance and preserve South End identity, create new space for businesses, artists, and homes, and increase the area's environmental and economic resilience. He outlined the proposed location of the district, which would be from Howard Street to Sears Lane west of Pine Street, and would focus on properties with large surface parking lots and other underdeveloped areas. He noted that the Barge Canal properties are not included in the new district. He noted that the SEID would apply to approximately 25% of the existing Enterprise district in the South End. He spoke briefly about the proposed land uses that will be permitted (multi-family residential, arts/making, offices and research/development and community spaces), limited (convenience/service, entertainment/amenity, and hotels), and not permitted (heavy manufacturing/logistics/other and single-family residential). He also talked about the urban form concept, which would be a light urban form code approach. He spoke briefly about the public engagement that has occurred around this new district.

Director Spencer spoke about infrastructure preparations to implement the proposed zoning changes. He provided a status update on the various projects in the South End Construction Coordination Plan, noting progress on all projects. He spoke about infrastructure considerations, including activities under traffic management, sewer management, and stormwater management.

Assistant Director Dunn spoke about the Barge Canal area within the South End. She said that while the parcels in the Barge Canal aren't in the zoning amendments, there is still activity occurring there. She provided an overview of the remediation activities occurring as a result of the Canal's Superfund Site designation. She noted which parcels in the Barge Canal area are owned by whom. She spoke about a development plan for 453 Pine Street. She spoke about next steps around the Barge Canal area over the next 6 months.

Assistant Director Dunn then spoke about activity around developing a Multimodal Transit Center in the South End. She said that a Multimodal Center Feasibility Study was conducted in 2022 and should be publicly available in the next month.

Assistant Director Dunn then spoke about an MOU between the City and the owners of 125 Lakeside Avenue, which describes mutual goals and actions that will take place over the next 9 months to inform a potential development agreement for phased, mixed-use redevelopment. She noted that it envisions a scope of work that would move toward achieving those goals.

Councilor Hightower asked whether the plan for the park could come to the Council at the same time as the zoning amendments. Director Tuttle replied that they are currently working through some of the constraints around working with the space around Barge Canal (which is currently a brownfield), which will likely mean that the plan for the park would come to the Council in January.



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Councilor Traverse said that this plan aligns with what many of the people in the community are looking for in this area. He asked about the requirement that housing can only go into new buildings, rather than in existing buildings. He asked how this plan would preserve the character of the South End and its buildings. Principle Planner Dillard said that developers would likely be able to charge more rent to commercial tenants in existing buildings than convert those to residential units and charge rent. He noted that some of the existing buildings could be extended and new housing placed into those extensions. He noted that the proposed zoning amendment wouldn't affect the majority of the South End. Councilor Traverse asked whether the Multimodal Transit Center and the zoning amendments have interdependencies or whether they could exist on their own tracks. Director Tuttle replied that they can move on parallel tracks, and that the zoning amendment does not preclude parking being created.

Councilor Shannon asked whether the additional height of the zoning amendment would lead to additional housing, and also asked whether there are concerns that taller buildings and structured parking would drive up the cost of housing too significantly. Principle Planner Dillard replied that taller buildings don't necessarily mean more affordable homes. He noted that inclusionary zoning could mean many more units of affordable housing. He noted that the zoning approach does try to prioritize detached, centralized parking where possible. Councilor Shannon asked about green space or more sustainable landscapes in the new zone. Principle Planner Dillard replied that the City will propose a bonus of an additional 10% of lot coverage if a developer can show that the impervious surfaces are composed of green stormwater infrastructure. Councilor Shannon asked how the City can encourage the building of individually-owned units rather than landlord-owned units. Director Tuttle replied that owner vs. rental is not normally regulated through policy. She noted that with CEDO and others who are collaborating on this project, they will explore options for homeownership.

Councilor Bergman asked whether there has been a study conducted of the land not included in the SEID. Director Tuttle replied that planBTV South End conducted an analysis of all properties within the South End District and determined how much potential they had for growth. She said that they have looked at current market research on the industrial market in Chittenden County and that the industrial market in the South End is weaker than in other parts of Chittenden County. Councilor Bergman said it would be helpful to know about the potential maximum number of units and commercial square footage that could come out of this. Director Tuttle said that they are assuming that they can generate 500 units. Director Spencer added that in terms of infrastructure, new capacity will need to be added in terms of water, sewer, and stormwater, and that the City is working with other partners through the MOU on addressing additional needs.

Councilor Magee emphasized the importance of a mix of affordable housing, given the City's housing needs.

3. DISTRICT ENERGY UPDATE (VERBAL)

3.01 Neale Lunderville of Vermont Gas, Michael Ahern of Ever-Green Energy and Darren Springer, BED General Manager, re: District Energy Update

General Manager Springer provided context for this update. He said that district energy was the intent since the beginning of the McNeil Plant. He said that the current version of this proposed arrangement started in 2018 and would send excess steam to the University of Vermont and the UVM Medical Center. He said that there were three, one-year phases of feasibility work, a letter of agreement between the partners, a resolution that supported the creation of a 501(c)3 nonprofit



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that would be managed by Evergreen, and approval for over \$5 million in funding that was secured at the federal level by Senator Leahy. He said that they are currently looking for construction bids, working with the State on financing, working with the joint owners of McNeil to determine pricing for the steam, and working with VGS and Evergreen on the overall system design. He spoke about the importance of the McNeil plant when it comes to meeting the City's net zero energy goals.

Mr. Lunderville spoke about activities that VGS is engaging in to combat climate change. He spoke about its transformation, acknowledging that natural gas contributes to climate change. He spoke about VGS's focus on using less energy, through weatherization and other efficiencies, pioneering in-home innovation, particularly around selling heat pumps, and expanding its portfolio of alternative supply options, such as renewable natural gas and district energy.

Mr. Ahern spoke about the latest proposed routing map for the project. He noted that they have been going through an extensive design process for routing. He said that they are currently receiving pricing from prospective bidders for construction. He said that through an archaeological, permitting, and wetlands process, they have identified a path up to the University customers that avoids any archaeological sites.

General Manager Springer noted that the project is ready to move forward with submitting its Act 250 application to the State, which is a significant milestone in this project.

Councilor Hightower asked whether the frequency of noise from the steam would be disruptive to residents near the university or medical center. Mr. Ahern replied that there will be construction noise during construction, but there shouldn't be noise from the steam. He noted that they are coordinating with DPW to ensure that disruption to paving activities during construction of this project is minimized to the extent possible. Councilor Hightower asked about the community solar component of the model. General Manager Springer replied that the entire premium and benefits would not be put on one or two customers, but that the university and medical center would share that with the City and other partners.

Councilor Barlow asked about excess steam capacity that would be left over from this project. Mr. Ahern replied that since this project is using the excess steam from the system, he isn't sure that there will be further excess steam left over once this project is operational.

4.0 PUBLIC FORUM

4.01 Verbal Comments

Forum opened at 7:30 PM.

COMMENTS:

Burlington residents (in person):



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- Carolyn Bates expressed concern about the proposed zoning amendment for the South End that would allow for 8-story buildings, which would negatively impact neighboring properties. She also expressed concerns about increasing the number of residents in that area, given the heavy traffic that already affects certain intersections there.
- Pike Porter spoke about the Burlington Electric Department and its statements that burning wood at the McNeil plant is carbon-neutral. He said that the use of natural gas is less carbon-offensive than burning wood. He urged the City to calculate the emissions coming out of the McNeil plant.
- Carol Livingston spoke about redistricting. She said that the Council should strive to balance the needs of all wards. She said that the City should factor the off-campus student calculations into their decision-making, instead of solely focusing on the on-campus student population.
- Jonathan Chapple Sokol spoke about redistricting. He said that residents aren't upset that there are so many students in the wards, rather they are upset that there are so few owner-occupied residences in those same wards.
- Steve Goodkind spoke about the net zero projects being discussed tonight, including the deliberative item around changing the building code and the district energy update. He said that both projects are relying on electricity coming out of the McNeil plant. He said that the City should look critically at the amount of emissions coming out of that plant. He urged the City to have BED report on that. He also expressed concern about the forests being cut to power this plant.
- Robert Bristow-Johnson spoke about the ad hoc committee on redistricting. He said that the committee resoundingly expressed dissatisfaction with Ward 8 in its current configuration, as well as dissatisfaction with drawing the district lines down Maple Street or King Street. He also spoke about the desire that came out of that committee for a downtown district. He said that if the Council supports either district map version that will be presented tonight, it won't take these considerations into account.
- Erhard Mahnke spoke as a Ward 1 resident. He expressed concern about the two district map versions that will be presented tonight. He said it would be good to maintain the Ward 1 boundaries as they exist. He said that the City needs to address off-campus student housing.

Burlington residents (via Zoom):

- Dan Castrigano spoke about BED's presentation on the district energy project. He said that to combat climate change, the planet needs to stop burning things altogether, which include trees and renewable natural gas (both of which are touted as renewable and sustainable). He said that the City cannot continue to install fossil fuel infrastructure. He said that fossil gases have the potential to leak, which leads to further climate degradation.
- Sheryl Green spoke about redistricting. She urged the Council to be transparent as they discuss the redistricting issue tonight. She expressed concern at the lack of representation on the Council for Ward 8 or East District during this conversation. She urged compromise during this discussion.
- Ashley Adams spoke about the BED presentation on the district energy project. She expressed concerns about the McNeil plant's contribution to global heating. She said that burning wood is not a solution for the climate crisis.
- Carter Neubieser spoke about the BED presentation on its district energy project. He said that natural gas and biomass are not renewable and that the City needs to begin counting emissions accurately in order to meet its 2030 net zero energy goals. He also spoke about redistricting, saying that he supports moving to an all-ward configuration and getting rid of districts.
- Maddy Poezig spoke about redistricting, expressing concern that Ward 8 has no representation on the Council, largely because it is comprised of a disengaged electorate. She asked for a solution that leads to a more diverse electorate in Ward 8. She asked that the Council endorse map version 1.3.
- Sharon Bushor said that redistricting has been a challenge for the City every time it has had to address it. She said that both on-campus and off-campus students are factors that influence the makeup of wards. She urged the



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Council not to vote for a map version that guts Ward 1.

- Anne Breña spoke about redistricting as a Ward 8 resident. She expressed support for map version 1.3, as it addresses many of the concerns brought up by the ad hoc redistricting committee.
- Keith Pillsbury spoke about redistricting as a Ward 8 resident. He urged the Council to support map version 1.3.
- Christopher Haessley spoke about redistricting. He spoke about the main themes that came out of the ad hoc committee on redistricting, which include the elimination of Ward 8 in its current configuration, the elimination of districts, a desire to return to a model that allows 2 Councilors per ward, as well as a downtown ward and unifying the King/Maple neighborhood. He expressed concern that the versions of the redistricting maps that will be presented tonight do not go far enough in addressing enough of these concerns.

Non-Burlington residents (in person):

- John Bossange spoke about public safety concerns in Burlington. He urged the City to appoint Acting Chief Murad as the City's permanent Police Chief. He said that the workplace climate must be stable and supportive in order to recruit more sworn officers.

Non-Burlington residents (via Zoom):

- Cheryl Joy Lipton spoke about BED and burning forest biomass. She said that burning wood emits more carbon dioxide than coal and is harmful to human health. She said that calling the burning of biomass carbon-neutral is very misleading. She said that trees are more valuable to the climate if they are alive.
- Zack Porter, the Executive Director of Standing Trees, urged the Council to help Vermont lead by example and move away from biomass electricity. He noted that Massachusetts recently ended subsidies for biomass electricity generation. He said that the City should not sink public dollars into an obsolete power plant.
- Judy Dow spoke about recommendations that were drafted by the Biomass Task Group Committee. They include discontinuing the use of biomass facilities, phasing out wood biomass, assessing and reducing the negative impacts on public health of burning biomass fuels.
- Daniel Batten spoke about the McNeil plant and biomass fuel burning. He said that it is the state's largest industrial source of global warming pollution and its number one industrial source of a number of air pollutants.
- Amy Demetrowicz spoke about the Champlain Housing Trust and its commitment to energy efficiency and combating climate change. She said that CHT adheres to smart growth techniques and standards when constructing new developments. She said that electrifying buildings and getting them off of fossil fuels is costly. She asked that the Council consider a deferral of the requirement to electrify domestic hot water systems in affordable multi-family housing until 2026.

Forum closed at 8:19 PM.

5. CLIMATE EMERGENCY REPORTS

5.01 Climate Emergency Reports

None.



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6. CONSENT AGENDA

- 6.01 Motion to adopt the consent agenda (as amended) and take the actions indicated
- 6.02 Communication: CT Office, re: Accountability List - waive the reading, accept the communication and place it on file.
- 6.03 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes, October 17, 2022, Draft - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes at the December 12, 2022 Regular City Council Meeting.
- 6.04 City Council With Mayor Presiding Meeting Minutes, October 17, 2022, Draft - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes at the December 12, 2022 Regular City Council Meeting.
- 6.05 Local Control Commission Meeting Minutes, October 17, 2022, Draft - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes at the December 12, 2022 Regular City Council Meeting.
- 6.06 Board of Civil Authority Meeting Minutes, October 24, 2022, Draft - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes at the December 12, 2022 Regular City Council Meeting.
- 6.07 Local Control Commission Meeting Minutes, October 24, 2022, Draft - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes at the December 12, 2022 Regular City Council Meeting.
- 6.08 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes, October 24, 2022, Draft - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes at the December 12, 2022 Regular City Council Meeting.
- 6.09 Special City Council Meeting Minutes, November 1, 2022, Draft - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes at the December 12, 2022 Regular City Council Meeting.
- 6.10 City Council With Mayor Presiding Meeting Minutes, November 7, 2022, Draft - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes at the December 12, 2022 Regular City Council Meeting.
- 6.11 Board of Civil Authority Meeting Minutes, November 7, 2022, Draft - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes at the December 12, 2022 Regular City Council Meeting.
- 6.12 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes, November 7, 2022, Draft - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes at the December 12, 2022 Regular City Council Meeting.
- 6.13 Full Board of Abatement of Taxes Meeting Minutes, November 21, 2022, Draft - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes at the December 12, 2022 Regular City Council Meeting.
- 6.14 Local Cannabis Control Commission Meeting Minutes, November 21, 2022, Draft - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes at the December 12, 2022 Regular City Council Meeting.
- 6.15 Board of Civil Authority Meeting Minutes, November 21, 2022, Draft - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes at the December 12, 2022 Regular City Council Meeting.
- 6.16 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes, November 21, 2022, Draft - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes at the December 12, 2022 Regular City Council Meeting.
- 6.17 Communication: Jennifer Banazek, re: A recent visit to Burlington - waive the reading and place it on file.
- 6.18 Communication: Brad Wiltfong, re: Red Light and Security Cameras in Burlington - waive the reading and place it on



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file.

6.19 Communication: Brad Wiltfong, re: Remove Street Parking on North Street - waive the reading and place it on file.

6.20 Communication: VTIFF, re: Thank you - waive the reading and place it on file.

6.21 Utility Easement with Green Mountain Power for BETA Technologies – Airport - approve and authorize a Utility Easement with Green Mountain Power for BETA Technologies for the Airport parcel located at 3000 Williston Road in South Burlington, Vermont, subject to final review and approval by the City's Attorney.

6.22 Liquid Deicer Unit Purchase from Fortbrand Services – Airport - authorize a purchase from Fortbrand Services for a Liquid Deicing Unit in the amount of \$68,000.00.

6.23 Two grant amendments for CJC - CEDO/CJC - approve the acceptance of these two grant amendments (VT Attorney General FY23, and VT Department of Corrections FY23) to existing contracts, and to authorize CEDO Director, Brian Pine, to sign the grant amendments, subject to the review and approval of the City Attorney's Office.

6.24 Burlington Extreme Heat Advisory and Response Policy Brief - Board of Health - waive the reading and place it on file.

6.25 Communication: Pike Porter, re: Fw: Greenhouse Gas, CAP resolution draft for your consideration - waive the reading and refer it to the Council's TEUC for further discussion and deliberations.

6.26 FIO Document – for information only.

6.27 Resolution: Approving the Issuance of Grant Anticipation Notes for the Costs of Certain Airport Improvement Projects (Board of Finance) - waive the reading and adopt the resolution.

6.28 Communication: Jim Lockridge, Big Heavy World, re: Submission of proposal for the adaptive reuse of Memorial Auditorium - waive the reading and adopt the resolution.

MOTION by Councilor Dieng, SECOND by Councilor Hightower, to adopt the consent agenda and take the actions as indicated for items 6.01-6.28 (Councilor Traverse recused himself from item 6.21).

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

7.DELIBERATIVE AGENDA

7.01 Darren Springer, Jen Green and Chris Burns, BED; Bill Ward and Patti Wehman, DPW, re: Final Report on Thermal Charter Change Work/City Council Resolution Relating to Decarbonizing All Buildings in Burlington by 2030 (30 mins.)

General Manager Springer began by providing context for the resolution around decarbonizing buildings in Burlington. He noted that buildings and ground transportation are the major sources of emissions in Burlington. He said that a charter change was approved in 2021 that gave the City the ability to regulate emissions and assess carbon impact fees as part of that regulation in buildings. He also noted that the City adopted rental weatherization standards for buildings in 2021, as well as adopted an ordinance related to renewable heating.



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He spoke about progress made by BED and partners since the July 2022 interim report on decarbonizing all buildings in Burlington. Activities conducted included stakeholder meetings convened for building owners in August and October, a 2030 District webinar with building owners and building design professionals, work conducted with the Building Electrification Institute to analyze policy proposals and leverage their technical expertise and assistance, and attendance at NPA meetings to share possible approaches to decarbonization and to solicit feedback from the community.

He then spoke about the scope of the proposed policy. He noted that it would apply to new construction, large existing commercial and industrial buildings (over 50,000 square feet), and municipal/City buildings. He said that it would not apply to existing residential buildings, existing small business buildings and all existing commercial/industrial buildings under 50,000 square feet.

He outlined policy recommendations for new construction and large existing buildings. He said that new construction should be required to be 100% renewable for thermal energy, including heating, water heating, cooking, appliances, and other systems. He noted that the definition of renewable is broad, including geothermal heat pumps, air source and water source heat pumps, advanced wood heating, and conventional systems with renewable fuel supply. He noted that if a building does not use a renewable fuel or technology, the policy proposes to assess an alternative compliance carbon pollution impact fee of around \$150 per ton of emissions. He noted that for existing buildings, the policy recommends requiring 100% renewable energy technology or fuels for replacement heating or water heating at time of permit, or assessment of a carbon impact fee of cap of 75% of cost of conventional system, if using fossil fuels. He outlined the definition of a large existing building. He noted a recommended feature of the policy of a credit for emissions reduction.

He spoke about policy recommendations for the use of carbon pollution impact fee revenues. He said that these include supporting capital needs to electrify City vehicles, creating a new fund to support clean heating technologies for low-income Burlingtonians, and, for existing buildings, provide a portion of their fees back if they submit proposals to reduce emissions.

Councilor Shannon asked to see calculations of operating costs and appliance costs for each of the examples provided by BED in the presentations. General Manager Springer noted that operating costs vary by building and by the technology used over time. He said that they could provide general operating cost and appliance cost estimates for each scenario.

Councilor Hightower expressed support for pricing the carbon fees at \$150 per ton. She also said that transportation distance for wood should be taken into consideration when determining when wood is no longer considered sustainable, as it relates to the McNeil plant. She noted concerns from the public around renewable gas, leakage, and transportation issues, and would like to understand the implications of those issues. General Manager Springer said that renewable hydrogen is a newer option and has not yet been used in Burlington, and that renewable gas has fewer emissions than non-renewable gas and that leakages are a system issue rather than an issue with the type of energy. He said that the McNeil plant is in good condition and has air emission controls installed that ensure that the plant is below what the State and federal government require in terms of limits on particulate emissions and pollutant levels. He said that the wood harvesting for the plant occurs in Vermont and northern New York, generally within a 60-70-mile radius.



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Councilor Bergman said that he would like BED staff to address the concerns raised by the public, in terms of facts and science around the energy used by the City. General Manager Springer said that BED asked BEIC to conduct an analysis on the worst-case scenario in terms of upstream emissions for operating McNeil (including transportation of wood chips and fossil fuel used on-site) and the best case scenarios for other New England power plants (not including their upstream emissions). He said that the analysis found that McNeil reduces emissions by 85% relative to natural gas. He also said that the Department of Health (VDH) conducted an analysis of the McNeil plant and Ryegate plant to determine whether there were correlations between those plants and health outcomes of surrounding residents. He additionally noted that the City is not yet at the point where it can replace McNeil with a wind or solar facility in terms of maintaining power on the grid. Councilor Bergman requested further information on pollutant level emissions for the McNeil plant.

Councilor Barlow asked about current or anticipated policy changes for other municipalities or the state that are similar to this policy proposal. General Manager Springer replied that South Burlington adopted its own version of the primary renewable heating ordinance (and even took it further). He said that the State is considering a clean heat policy which would put similar standards and requirements in place (though he acknowledged that the legislation around this was vetoed during the last legislative session).

Councilor Traverse asked what other circumstances exist under which developers would choose to use a non-renewable system. General Manager Springer replied that some developers are electing to use renewable systems of their own volition, though it is not uniform and is not applied to every system in a building. He said that absent a policy, certain buildings will choose to using fossil fuel systems. He said that in order to achieve 2030 net zero energy goals, the City should require that new buildings use renewable fuels.

Councilor Dieng asked why existing residential homes were taken out of the ordinance. General Manager Springer replied that they are offering incentives such as heat pumps, and that federal investments could aid in those, and that the City can gain good experience implementing the policy on larger existing buildings at this juncture than existing residential. Councilor Dieng asked whether BED has considered phasing out McNeil and what that would mean for the City. General Manager Springer replied that the state does not have other equivalent industrial power plants and that McNeil is the State's largest power plant. He addressed concerns about emissions, noting that there is a cycle of regrowth and sequestering carbon with a biomass plant. He said that by buying wood chips, BED is providing economic value for landowners who are managing their lands responsibly. He said that it is a complex issue and that analysis should be put into the context of Vermont, rather than of other parts of the United States and Europe. He said that he does not believe that there are currently cleaner alternatives than McNeil for on-demand power.

MOTION by Councilor Dieng, SECOND by Councilor Carpenter, to waive the reading, accept the communication, and place it on file.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.



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7.02 Resolution: Burlington Redistricting Plan 2023 (Councilor Paul)

City Council President Paul

MOTION by Councilor Hightower, SECOND by Councilor Freeman, to move December 2, version 2.3 map.

DISCUSSION:

- Councilor Hightower expressed disappointment that the Council is not meeting most of the priorities outlined for it by the initial process and feedback from the ad hoc redistricting committee, such as small wards, the gerrymandering and look of Ward 8, and the King/Maple neighborhood issues. She said that this map tries to address some of those concerns by not dividing the Maple/King neighborhood, maintaining the same amount of on-campus student population for Ward 8, and utilizing natural boundaries for wards. She said that the Council needs to think about what one ward wants and look at the overall configuration.
- Councilor Bergman said that in this map, wards 2 and 3 will be fundamentally different. He acknowledged that this map preserves Ward 1 and addresses their concerns. He noted that Ward 8 would now contain a portion of Ward 2, which should help ameliorate some of their complaints.
- Councilor Traverse said that the City needs an independent map-making process for redistricting activities. He said that the main versions of the map for consideration tonight are not much different than previous iterations. He said that the main issue that needs to be addressed is around Ward 8 and that 45% of its residents are on-campus students. He noted that the current map has Ward 6 taking a substantial number of Ward 8's on-campus students, and he cannot support this. He said that Wards 1, 6, and 8 should divide the student population equally.

VOTING: 4-6 (Councilors Barlow, Carpenter, Dieng, Paul, Shannon, and Traverse dissenting); motion fails.

MOTION by Councilor Traverse, SECOND by Councilor Barlow, to move December 2, version 1.3 final map.

DISCUSSION:

- Councilor Carpenter said that sharing the burden of on-campus students between wards is fair, given that accessing and soliciting that population is difficult. She said that this version of the map is fair.
- Councilor Hightower said that this is not a fair map and does not address most of the concerns raised through the ad hoc committee on redistricting.
- Councilor Barlow said that this map modestly addresses the concerns and goals raised in the ad hoc redistricting subcommittee. He expressed his support for this map.
- Councilor Magee said he will not support this map, for many of the reasons voiced previously by Councilor Hightower
- Councilor Shannon said that she would be willing to take more students into Ward 6, but respects the opinions and desires of other Councilors. She noted that a number of compromises have been made in these maps. She expressed support for this map.

VOTING: 6-4 (Councilors Bergman, Freeman, Hightower, and Magee dissenting); motion carries.



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MOTION by Councilor Hightower, SECOND by Councilor Bergman, to move an 8-ward, 2-councilors-per-ward, configuration.

DISCUSSION:

- Councilor Hightower and Councilor Bergman both expressed their dislike for districts in addition to wards, and said that this is in line with feedback that came out of the ad hoc redistricting committee.
- Councilor Carpenter said that the compromise around having an 8-ward map instead of a 7-ward map was to have 4 districts. She expressed disappointment, as the 8-ward, 4-district map was unanimously voted on at the Council's October 24, 2022 meeting. She also noted that a 16-person City Council will make governance more difficult.
- Councilor Shannon also expressed disappointment, saying that the arrangement including districts was agreed-to as a compromise.
- Councilor Dieng expressed support for a 16-Councilor map and that it makes sense for each ward to have two representatives.

VOTING: 5-5 (Councilors Barlow, Carpenter, Paul, Shannon, and Traverse dissenting); motion fails.

MOTION by Councilor Barlow, SECOND by Councilor Hightower, that the City keep the district configuration as it is today, which pairs Wards 4 and 7 in one district, Wards 2 and 3 in another district, 1 and 8 in a third district, and Wards 5 and 6 in the last district.

DISCUSSION:

- Councilor Bergman said that it does not make sense to prolong the discussion around this, so he will support this.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

MOTION by Councilor Bergman, SECOND by Councilor Magee, to suspend the rules and complete the deliberative agenda.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

MOTION by Councilor Hightower, SECOND by Councilor Traverse, to waive the reading and adopt the resolution.



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VOTING: unanimous; motion carries (Councilor Freeman absent for vote).

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

8.01 Verbal Reports

None.

9. CITY COUNCIL – GENERAL AFFAIRS

9.01 Verbal Reports

None.

10. CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT – COUNCIL UPDATES

10.01 Verbal Reports

None.

11. MAYOR – GENERAL AFFAIRS

11.01 Verbal Reports

None.

12. ADJOURNMENT

12.01 Motion to Adjourn

MOTION by Councilor Dieng, SECOND by Councilor Magee, to adjourn the meeting.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

The City Council meeting adjourned without objection at 10:40 PM.

RScty: AACoonrad



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