



**Burlington
Walk | Bike
Council**

Burlington Walk / Bike Council Agenda

www.burlingtonwalkbike.org

Wednesday, November 3, 2021, 6:00 – 7:00 pm

Meeting Options:

- 1. In-person - small DPW conference room at 645 Pine Street, Burlington**
- 2. Virtually - using Zoom**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88225473951?pwd=YzFFQ1Q3Y3J4bzczR2VNYWRFWnhtUT09>

Passcode: 091788 Or iPhone one-tap : US: +13017158592,,88225473951#,,,,,0#,,091788# or 13126266799,,88225473951#,,,,,0#,,091788#. Or Telephone: Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location): US: +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 205 6099 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 669 900 6833 Webinar ID: 882 2547 3951 Passcode: 091788

International numbers available: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88225473951?pwd=YzFFQ1Q3Y3J4bzczR2VNYWRFWnhtUT09>

Previous Meeting – The meeting notes from the October 6 meeting can be found [here](#). The meeting included a discussion of the Queen City Park Road project and discussion of the Proposed Walk-Bike Projects List for 2022, continued from the September meeting.

AGENDA

1. Introductions, brief BWBC overview, review agenda (5 min)

2. Announcements and Public Comments (10 min)

3. Q&A on the December 7 Bond Vote (30 min)

Chapin Spencer, director of the Public Works Department will respond to questions about the bond.

4. BWBC Next Steps on the Bond Vote (15 min)

Discuss and determine any next steps BWBC will take on the bond vote.

Next Month: BWBC Meeting, Wednesday, December 1, 2021, 6:00 – 7:00 pm

The BWBC is an all-volunteer advisory council to the City of Burlington. We work closely with and advise the Department of Public Works and the Department of Parks, Recreation, & Waterfront on infrastructure improvements and policy changes for walking and bicycling. The council also leads advocacy efforts and organizes events and activities that promote and celebrate walking and biking in Burlington and beyond.

BWBC Community Liaisons

Erik Brown Brotz, Ward 5, erik@burlingtontelecom.net, Chair

Greg Hostetler, Ward 2

Faith Ingulsrud, Ward 6

Peter Keating, Ward 6

Justine Sears, Ward 3

Karen Sentoff, Ward 4

Jason Stuffle, Ward 1

Kerry Swift, Ward 4

Allegra Williams, Ward 3

Burlington Walk Bike Council 11-03-21

November 3, 2021, 6:00- 7:00 pm via Zoom and at DPW Office

Attendees: Erik Brotz (Chair- Ward 5 Liaison), Jason Stuffle (Ward 1 Liaison), Greg Hostettler (Ward 2 Liaison), Karen Sentoff (Ward 4 Liaison), Faith Ingulsrud (Ward 6 Liaison), Jonathan Weber (Local Motion), David Brantley (UVM Intern), Eliana Fox, Jason Segelman, Matt Cropp, Chapin Spencer (Director DPW), Nicole Losch (DPW), Elizabeth Ross (DPW),.

Meeting Notes

1. Announcements and Public Comments

Faith reported that David the intern has begun work on building a new website for BWBC.

2. Q&A on the Bond Vote

DPW Director Chapin Spencer started by providing an overview on the pending bond vote, showing a few slides from the presentation provided to the City Council. The full presentation is available [HERE](#).

- Burlington is an aging city with all infrastructure needing to be upgraded.
- Thanks to the General Obligation bond approved in 2016, the rate of sidewalk replacement tripled. With 130 miles of sidewalks, it's important to keep up with the accelerated pace of replacement.
- The funds from that bond have been spent and to maintain the rate of improvements for sidewalks and other facilities, and address public facilities that weren't covered in the last bond (buildings, fire trucks), the bond this year is necessary.
- This year's bond will allow the city to borrow for three years, and decisions about what exact projects to fund will be made in a capital budget each year.
- If the bond fails, DPW will not be able to repair facilities proactively and instead will be triaging failing systems.
- Grant projects that the city has and expects to obtain funding for will need to be matched. These include the Champlain Parkway, the Railyard Project and the Intervale Side Path.

Erik asked the following questions based on the objections to the bond that councillor Joan Shannon posed in her Front Porch Forum posts and Chapin responded.

Given the likelihood of federal infrastructure funding, why do we need the bond?

- The capital budget includes \$24.3 million from the federal infrastructure funding. Even if the anticipated federal funding is received we will still need the \$40 million to meet the

capital budget and continue our progress, so funding from the bond is needed. It is unlikely that federal funding would close that gap.

How do we know exactly what we are paying for with a general obligation bond since it isn't specified?

- Voters overwhelmingly approved a similar general obligation bond in 2016 and the city spent it responsibly on the items it had intended to spend it on, including improvements to the waterfront bike path
- Flexibility in the funding allows the city to move funds around to be more responsive to circumstances as they arise.
- Funds can be moved between projects when new grants and revenues are received
- This year's bond covers capital not included in the last bond such as \$10 million for Memorial Auditorium, and funds for necessary public building maintenance, and police and fire equipment.

Participants asked and received responses to the following questions:

Could the bond pay for striping equipment so the city can paint the bike lanes, sharrows and other street painting in-house in a timelier way?

- DPW recognizes the frustration with having delays in painting each year but the specialized equipment would cost \$150 - \$300,000 and would need trained workers to run it. This would also add work to the already overburdened machine maintenance staff.

Can beg-buttons at intersections be removed at all intersections for pedestrian crossing?

- It's not a good idea to automatically make cars wait if there are no pedestrians at a crossing because drivers will then start to violate the pedestrian signals. Best to wait until we can install technology at crossings that offer passive detection of pedestrians. This will be a capital upgrade that will need funding and could be implemented over the next five years.

How are you managing debt from previous bonds and how does that affect taxpayer costs with the pending bond?

- Chapin showed a slide titled "Responsible Fiscal Management: Summary of Projected Debt and Impact of Proposed \$40M Bond" showing how the debt ratios for the city infrastructure and school bonds would play out over the next six years.

Is there a proposed project list for work to be accomplished with the bond?

- Chapin showed a slide titled "Proposed GO Bond Capital Plan Investments" listing projects and categories of projects, clarifying that this is just a general road map

- He also explained that the Main Street Great Streets project will move forward at an estimated cost of \$20 million but will be paid for through the downtown Tax Increment Finance District with revenue from existing and proposed development projects.

What happens if the bond doesn't pass? Would you consider shifting attention from capital projects to furthering a major policy initiative like Vision Zero?

- If the bond fails, the city will likely shift to initiating some policy discussions but the timing may not be right for Vision Zero because the police department will need to be key partners in that initiative and they are now focussed on restructuring.
- The city will need to seek other sources of funding and hope for more economic activity downtown that can bring in parking revenues etc.

3. BWBC Next Steps on the Bond Vote

Erik asked those present at the meeting if BWBC should actively support the bond. While there was concern about the increase in property taxes of about \$13 per month for a median \$380,000 property, all present agreed we should support the bond. BWBC will post letters of support to Front Porch Forum and other outlets as soon as possible.

4. Other

A final question was posed about whether there is a log of all walk/bike accidents in the city. There was a crash at Mansfield/Colchester 1 week ago, Monroe Park 2 days ago, and Chase/Colchester Ave tonight.

Chapin and Nicole responded that when any intersection is reviewed for improvements, the crash data will be analyzed but no department at this time is proactively seeking out that data. There is a need for a better system of collecting police reports on crashes as they occur.