



Ward 5 NPA
DPW Conference Room, 645 Pine Street
June 29, 2016 7:00 – 9:00 pm
Draft Agenda

7:00 - 7:15 - Welcome and Open Forum

7:15 - 7:30 - Vote on Resolution Concerning Memorial Auditorium

7:30 - 8:00 - City Council Update, Councilors Shannon and Mason

8:00 - 8:30 - Legislative Update with Senator Michael Sirotkin

The Steering Committee Members for Ward 5 are:

- Bill Keogh, Alder Lane, bkeogh@burlingtonvt.gov
- Alec Bauer, awbauer@gmail.com
- Nate Orshan, natosongs@gmail.com
- Elisa Nelson, nelsmith@burlingtontelecom.net
- Mike Fife, mikefife37@gmail.com
- Ben Traverse, bentraverse@gmail.com
- Joanna Grossman, joeyinvermont@gmail.com

The Ward 5 NPA meets on the third Thursday, 7-9pm of each month at DPW/Parks and Rec at Lakeside and Pine Street. For more information about Ward 5 NPA visit <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/CEDO/Neighborhood-Services/NPAs/Ward-5-NPA>



Neighborhood Planning Assembly Minutes

NPA:
(choose one)

Wards	Wards	Wards	Ward	Ward
1 & 8	2 & 3	4 & 7	5	6

Date of Assembly : **6 / 29 / 2017**

Start Time: (Commence): **7:00 PM**

Location: **DPW Building, Pine St.**

Finish Time: (Adjourn): **9:00 PM**

Notetaker: **Nate Orshan**

Steering Committee Members in Attendance:

Alec Bauer
Mike Fife
Bill Keogh
Elisa Nelson
Nate Orshan

Discussion Topics and Action Items:

(1) Open Forum

Took note that Blodgett Ovens announced they're leaving the South End. Announcement of June 30 talk at SEABA re historic preservation and gentrification. Request for a facilitated discussion with UVM professor Pablo Bose re voting participation.

(2) 242 Main Resolution Discussion and Vote

Resolution updated to include a sentence saying, "The Steering Committee will select one or more representatives to represent Ward 5." There was some concern that the resolution or the All Wards NPA might not be appropriate for the matter, but then all concerns appeared to be allayed. Meeting participants voted to adopt the resolution as presented.

(3) City Council Update – South District Councilor Joan Shannon and Ward 5 Councilor Chip

Updated the NPA re permitting process reform, form-based code, Burlington Telecom sale process, and the upcoming North Avenue Pilot data-release meeting.

(4) Legislative Update – State Senator Michael Sirotkin

Discussed the process of passing the teacher health care plan, its effect on school boards, and the housing bond issue.

Motion to adjourn adopted at 9:00 PM.



Neighborhood Planning Assembly Minutes – Full Notes

Date of Assembly: 5/18/2017

Start Time: (Commence): 7:00 PM

Finish Time: (Adjourn): 8:45 PM

Location: DPW Building, Pine St.

Notetaker: Nate Orshan

Steering Committee Members in Attendance:

Alec Bauer
Mike Fife
Bill Keogh
Elisa Nelson
Nate Orshan

(1) Open Forum

Summary:

Took note that Blodgett Ovens announced they're leaving the South End. Announcement of June 30 talk at SEABA re historic preservation and gentrification. Request for a facilitated discussion with UVM professor Pablo Bose re voting participation.

Bill Keough: Blodgett Ovens announced that they're moving to Essex Junction. A big deal re zoning, re what goes there after. I don't know what will go there.

Alec Bauer: They do Vermont proud with their ovens. It'd be interesting to have that as an agenda item in a future meeting.

Andy Simon (Resident): Tomorrow night: event at SEABA that includes Tom Visser , UVM's chair of historic preservation talking re Memorial Auditorium. Also Peter Moscovitz. (see <https://vtdigger.org/2017/06/13/rights-democracy-host-speaker-gentrification-development/>) Also, for fall agenda item: I'd like to proposes a facilitated discussion re voting participation. Pablo Bose of UVM's interested in helping facilitate that. He's got students helping him. (Andy will follow up with the committee.)

(2) 242 Main Resolution Discussion and Vote

Summary:

Resolution updated to include a sentence saying, "The Steering Committee will select one or more representatives to represent Ward 5." There was some concern that the resolution or the All Wards NPA might not be appropriate for the matter, but then all concerns appeared to be allayed. Meeting participants voted to adopt the resolution as presented.

Resolution updated from,...

The Ward 5 Neighborhood Planning Assembly endorses the All Wards Neighborhood Planning Assembly in organizing and noticing public meetings regarding the future of Memorial Auditorium.

..., to:

The Ward 5 Neighborhood Planning Assembly endorses the All Wards Neighborhood Planning Assembly in organizing and noticing public meetings regarding the future of Memorial Auditorium. The Steering Committee will select one or more representatives to represent Ward 5.

Chip Mason (Councilor): City's doing another Request for Proposal for Memorial Auditorium. Is this resolution intended to replace anything?

Phet Keomanyvanh (Community Development Specialist, CEDO): We had an All-Ward meeting last week. All Wards there voted to move it forward. Right now CEDO isn't doing anything with Memorial Auditorium, but we welcome working with the NPAs.

Mike Fife: Sounds like this is an attempt at a public forum around Memorial Auditorium, with the goal of coming up with a discussion that could be publicized. Other than that, there aren't a lot of "teeth" to it.

Q (Attendee): Do you see it as an info session?

Phet: It's up to whatever the NPAs decide. Since the NPAs will be inviting the city, we're hoping there's an agenda. You can bring your own speakers.

Joan Shannon (Councilor): I'm wondering if we could get more info before voting.

Phet: The All Ward's a meeting that happens every other month, opportunity to share agendas, share best practices.

Andy Simon (Resident): To me, spirit of NPAs is that it's a citizen-led process. I don't see how this is a politically-charged process except for one person's "misinformation" being another person's "information".

Bill Keough: I think this is innocuous because there's no plan for Memorial Auditorium at all. It's just a public meeting.

Mike: I'm more than happy to go to All Wards Meeting and come back and share.

Elisa Nelson: We're not endorsing an outcome, just saying, "Let's have a public meeting."

Meeting participants vote: (Unanimous)

(3) City Council Update
– South District Councilor Joan Shannon and Ward 5 Councilor Chip Mason

Summary:

Updated the NPA re permitting process reform, form-based code, Burlington Telecom sale process, and the upcoming North Avenue Pilot data-release meeting.

Chip: Just came from a permit-reform meeting. Two years ago we retained a consultant who solicited input from over 600 users of the permitting process (including homeowners and tradespeople). That report was presented to the Council, and we decided to do an Ad Hoc committee. The next public meeting is Thursday.

Joan: Permit reform isn't about helping developers, who have plenty of staff to help them. It's more to help people, e.g., trying to put in new windows or change a fence. That's a lot of what this is trying to address.

Chip: Everything's currently done on paper, so there are tech changes that need to be made. We're hoping to establish a single office, which may be in the DPW building temporarily. Another issue needing to be addressed: the need to close out permits once the work is done.

Joan: Chip and I have been serving on the form-based code (FBC) committee for three years. We just passed a version along to the commission. There may be some modest changes, but, re the Council, we won't have further review. It's gone through to all the NPAs, came back to us, and now we expect it'll come before the Council for a vote soon. FBC for downtown is based on PlanBTV and turns it into a zoning code for downtown; more picture-oriented, more about the form of the building, less about the use of the building. It's very prescriptive. E.g., maybe 12 different building types with no more than 4-feet between glazings on ground floor...that sort of thing. It tells anyone who wants to build what exactly they can do! We tried to be careful to change the height of buildings; there were a few places where we adjusted height, but that wasn't the point of doing this.

Paco (Attendee): Why just the downtown? Plan to push to Enterprise Zone in the South End?

Joan: We pulled back from original area. There are still many form districts in downtown.

Chip: This is almost on a trial basis. Given how long it took to do four blocks of downtown, it would probably take much longer to roll out into more areas. This is an ordinance change, so it'd have to be adopted by Planning and Zoning and by the Council.

Joan: We've raised the bar on the environmental impact of development.

Chip: The buzzword is 'pedestrian experience'. We hope to promote more of that.

Q: What about rent stabilization for businesses to help local business?

Joan: That waxes and wanes with the economy, but that's outside of our scope.

Q: I know that Seventh Generation was talking about moving to South Burlington due to rents.

Chip: Not a great year for our pension investment returns (I think it was zero).

Joan: We solicited offers for Burlington Telecom's (BT) sale per our agreement with Bluewater & Citibank. We need to have a sale in place by start of 2018, otherwise the city gets less and less of the final transactions. We have eight qualified buyers.

The Keep BT Local group is one of them; they're the only group that's been public about it. We set criteria a while back for evaluating potential buyers, for example: Not one of the big telecom conglomerates; Make local interest (rate-payers and tax-payers) front of our minds; Get a buyer who's well financed; Make sure they plan to build out the rest of the city.

The BT Advisory Board, which I serve on (with Jane Knodell, Karen Paul, and Dave Hartnett, plus four public members chosen years ago), have seen a wide variety of types of potential buyers. I don't know which will be selected, but we should feel good in all the interest! Many, if not all of the buyers, are willing to give the City a share.

Bill: Are you confident we'll make the sale before January 2?

Chip: We have a huge financial incentive to make it happen. There WILL be a public process once the next round of candidates are advanced forward.

Joan: But we have to get their OK to be made public. They know that, at some point, they'll have to come before the public.

Chip: On July 10, there will be a public meeting at Miller Center re the North Ave Pilot Project's data. Crash data, etc., will be discussed there.

(<https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/DPW/North-Avenue-Pilot-Project>)

(4) Legislative Update
- State Senator Michael Sirotkin

Summary:

Discussed the process of passing the teacher health care plan, its effect on school boards, and the housing bond issue.

I'm one of six State Senators. I live on Shelburne Rd.

Re Schools: Way back at beginning of session, Governor Scott suggested freezing all school budgets at levels of previous year. It was both a dramatic and a late-in-time proposal, as school budgets were already in place.

School boards were outraged at that proposal. The Legislature then, said, "No, it's too late and too massive a proposal." So it went by the wayside, and there was continued work on consolidation, but no dramatic proposals from Admin...till April 27th.

I'm on finance committee, and we heard about it 10 days prior to our being scheduled to adjourn. Proposal was to move all collective bargaining with teachers to the Executive branch of government to negotiate with all school districts. The premise was that the existing health care plans, under the Affordable Care Act, were subject to the "Cadillac Tax", a steep hit. So the school districts and the National Education Association got together and reconfigured the plan to be more similar to the "Gold plan", which would avoid the Cadillac Tax. This would start on January 1, 2018.

The Governor said, "if you let me negotiate, I'll get \$26 million in savings". Actuaries said that using health reimbursement arrangements (HRA) and health savings accounts (HSA) to cover the typical out-of-pocket costs will make people use healthcare less and thus engender the \$26 million savings.

The Governor kept saying, "Unless you let me do it, those savings will end up being used to do work in the schools, not to lower property taxes.". It was an affront to the legislative process, but the public just heard, "The Governor has a way to save \$26 million, but the Legislature won't let him do that."

We promised that the \$13 million in 2018 savings will go back to the taxpayers, but no direct negotiations with teachers. The Governor vetoed that.

The compromise: \$8.5 million sent back to taxpayers in FY18, \$4.5 million back to them in FY19. We took \$13 million *out* of educational spending. The school boards got hit the hardest. It's very much an "in the weeds" problem, which led to the public not necessarily understanding it.

Joan: How is it that the Legislature can step in and reduce the Burlington school budget by \$300,000?

Michael: You don't necessarily have to reduce the budget...if you can raise the revenue somehow. One thing that makes it easier to swallow: When the health plans go into effect and lead to less healthcare spending, that could be a windfall; most school boards wouldn't think about returning that money to taxpayers.

Yes, it makes negotiations harder for teachers; there's less money to work with. But there was MORE money to work with in the first place.

Andy: Where did you feel pressure?

Michael: From a lot of the public. Teachers, school boards, people clamoring for property tax relief. Governor Scott also did unusual thing: "I'll veto...the budget!" He can pick any issue he wants and say, "I'm gonna veto the biggest bill out there", for example, for parental notification...

Paco: What are your views on, per Sen. Tim Ashe, the "once in a lifetime opp" to negotiate teacher healthcare?

Michael: That was based on all the contracts coming due at the same time. We set it up so that there'll be a SECOND possibility in one and a half years afterward...

Phil Baruth got a lot of respect in the Education Committee this year.

Another issue: I was involved in the housing bond issue. It didn't pass till last week.

Motion to adjourn adopted at 9:00 PM.

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