



CITY OF BURLINGTON, VERMONT
**CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT &
NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE**
c/o Community & Economic Development Office
City Hall, Room 32 • 149 Church Street • Burlington, VT 05401
802-865-7144 VOX • 802-865-7024 FAX • www.burlingtonvt.gov/cedo

Councilor Selene Colburn, Chair, East District

Councilor Tom Ayres, Ward 7

Councilor Adam Roof, Ward 8

Tuesday, June 21, 2016

6:00 – 7:45 PM

Fletcher Free Library

Community Room

Proposed Draft Agenda

1. Review Agenda
2. Public Forum (20 minutes)
3. Approval of Minutes – 5/16 (5 minutes)
4. Discussion on Tiny Homes and Homelessness – 20 minutes
Public Lands Inventory
5. Fireworks Discussion– 20 minutes
6. Next meeting – July 26, 2016 – Fletcher Free Library



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Councilor Selene Colburn, Chair, East District
Councilor Tom Ayres, Ward 7
Councilor Adam Roof, Ward 8

Tuesday, May 31, 2016
6:00 – 7:45 PM
Fletcher Free Library
Community Room

Proposed Draft Minutes

In addition to the Councilors noted above, the following people were in attendance: Caryn Long, Lisa Kingsbury, David White (Planning and Zoning), Joe Speidel, Troy Headrick, Ibnar Avliex, , Moses Laport (Pathways), Paul Kirshner, Erin Sheehan, and Marcy Esbjerg (CEDO)

1. Review Agenda – Chair Colburn started the meeting and began with a review of the agenda. Councilor Roof made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Councilor Ayres. Motion approved.

2. Public Forum

Caryn Long wanted to share a news item about a single family home in her neighborhood that had one accessory dwelling unit. Upon the sale of this home, it was turned into a duplex. There were many people and many cars in a unit originally meant for a single family. This transition did not go through the rezoning process. Neighbors worked independently with an attorney through the legal system up to the Supreme Court. They recently received a 5-0 ruling – that the unit couldn't be turned in to a duplex without following the City process.

3. Approval of Minutes – Chair Colburn looked for the approval of the April minutes with the following amendments:

Amend the minutes to correct the following spelling of the name - Caryn Long; Proposed addition under section 6 – tiny homes – Councilor Colburn noted that the advocacy of Mr. Aviliz, Councilor Ayres and others had ensured an investigation of micro-housing as part of the accessory dwelling review called for in Burlington's Housing Action Plan

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contact Marcy Esbjerg at mesbjerg@burlingtonvt.gov

Councilor Roof made a motion to approve the minutes with noted amendments and Councilor Ayres seconded the motion. Motion passed.

4. Update on UVM off-campus housing tracking

Joe Speidel spoke on various initiatives from the University to ensure quality of life with students in the neighborhoods. He highlighted the spring move out project and listed some of the results of day and showed a photo. 12-15 tons diverted from the waste stream; giant containers; 3 trucks from ReSource were filled; 30 mattresses, 50 couches and other furniture recycled. Many partners were included in this day including CEDO, CODE, UVM, CSWD, Champlain, Casella, Myers to name a few. Additional initiatives can be found on the attachment to the minutes.

Lisa Kingsbury spoke about the various ways UVM has worked to gather address data of their students. Initially they had a pop-up box in Registrar's screen and only 60% responded. Last spring they did a survey, Finally, this spring, they did the pop-up box on the Registrar's site and it is a required field and got an 85% response rate. They plan to do this type of data gathering at the end of Fall 2016.

The University also provided information provided on the cost of housing. It appears that looking at the cost of housing in a monthly figure, the data shows it is cheaper off site but most students sign an annual lease so then it's cheaper on campus. It is also important to include all the additional amenities included on campus like furniture, internet, security, programmed housing options, and utilities.

The housing surveys and data do not include graduate students or med students – about 1500 graduate students and 450 medical students.

Chair Colburn noted that the City wants UVM to do more on campus and did note that the cost is higher due to the additional things offered on campus. Mr. Speidel also hopes that more students desire to live on campus however he said that in a housing study, many juniors and seniors wanted to live off campus because they want independence.

The Committee questioned if Mall housing would consider 9 or 12month leases for their students? Councilors were sure that Don Sinex was looking for 12 month leases.

Councilor Roof asked UVM if moving forward will they continue asking for the address information? The answer was yes and also continue to do the survey.

The group brought up the question of married students. UVM stated that basically they were divesting themselves of those Fort Ethan Allen units – CHT bought them. Some students are looking at the Quarry in South Burlington.

Mr. Avliex wondered if they added an incentive, more would fill out the survey.

Mr. Speidel also explained the additional beds being built at UVM. In the building that was demolished, 391 beds were taken down and 699 added. This represents a net gain of 308 beds.

Chair Colburn asked for the handouts to be sent to her electronically so she can add as a communication to the City Council as a follow up to questions and previous items.

The final item that was discussed was accountability of the students for their actions. It was explained that there are 3 tiers and they are based on the severity of the incident. In the past 3 years, 15 students were dismissed; 54 suspended and 86 participated in a deferred suspension program. With officers on foot patrol, there has been a decrease on calls from neighbors. Trends are going on a positive direction. Please see the attached document.

Councilor Roof emphasized the importance of alcohol education and support programs to turn around student behaviors.

Mr. Speidel also mentioned the meeting sponsored by Champlain Housing Trust and the Regional Planning Council on housing and discussed where this group is going. Another comment was made regarding a survey done of Burlington young professionals and they want to touch the ground. The group discussed the importance of perhaps a small backyard or courtyard as filling a need.

5. Planning and Zoning Discussion on Tiny Homes (D. White)

Chair Colburn opened the discussion on tiny homes setting the framework around housing for the homeless. She noted that one of our attendees had a passion for this subject and asked him to speak.

Chair Colburn introduced Paul Kirshner, a resident of Burlington and one that has shown interest in this topic. She asked him to share his thoughts. Paul is interested and has advocated for tiny homes. He stated that the homeless who are living in encampments are in an unstable and unsafe environment. In his contact with homeless persons, he notes that in his conversations the homeless are resistant to living in traditional housing. Paul believes the City of Burlington can meet the needs with a modest structure and stressed the importance of integrating access to services like laundry, bathrooms. In the meantime, he wondered if the City could make lockers available so homeless persons do not need to carry their possessions around everywhere. He suggested identifying a place to have a tiny home village for the homeless on the bus line and mentioned the Barge Canal area.

Mr. Avilix asked if we can make it more safe in the Barge Canal since there are already homeless encamped there. Perhaps have a house on wheels or skids so you can winch onto a trailer and not worry about the contaminated soils. He also asked about the Intervale.

Chair Colburn asked Marcy Esbjerg (Acting Director of CEDO) who serves as the Collaborative Applicant for the Chittenden Homeless Alliance to speak on how the Continuum of Care views tiny homes. Marcy said there was interest but also mentioned that other providers questioned if the homeless who are camping want housing. She also cited the importance of human centered designed – asking those experiencing homelessness what are their needs and wants. She explained it was important to have programs and housing that have a low barrier to entry like Pathways Vermont.

Chair Colburn mentioned that during her research, some tiny home villages, like Occupy Madison, grew out of encampment; she believed it was self-governing and she was surprised at the low cost.

David White, Director of Planning and Zoning gave an overview of City regulations and looked at the concept across the board. Housing has to meet certain standards; micro units – apartment with small units – that can work. He did mention that the size of bedrooms are governed by the building code and mixed use zoning is more acceptable rather than residential. The issue with tiny houses is how it is defined. It is mostly like a recreational vehicle which doesn't have to have a permanent foundation. Tiny homes are permissible in campgrounds or RV parks. David also noted that the tiny homes might be regulated for health and wellness; if they have to be attached to the ground, function in all weather and meeting the building code requirements. David shared the idea of a group of tiny homes like a cottage court with a little green space and reminded the group about the issue of parking needing to be required.

During an open discussion about the subject several points were raised by the attendees:

- Mr. Kirschner – looking at a unit that was 8 by 12 perhaps 10 feet tall for a sleeping loft;
- Councilor Roof – spoke of the regulatory restrictions and land; suggested private land might not be feasible and asked if we have an inventory of public land and wondered what it took to create a campground;
- Mr. White – noted that regulatory changes need to be made in zoning and building code; economics are also an issue – is the project cost effective; he also mentioned city parks, green spaces and the one campground in BTV;
- Chair Colburn said she was pursuing an inventory of public land; also churches and other potential host sites;
- Mrs. Esbjerg suggested a pilot project on public land, possibly the campground;
- Ms. Long asked about tiny homes on owner-occupied private land which David White says can be an Accessory Dwelling Unit.
- Chair Colburn explained that the Committee will review ADU and micro units separately;
- Councilor Ayres mentioned the container housing movement as something to explore

What are the committee's next steps:

- Conduct focus groups with affected people, perhaps partner with other organizations who can facilitate;
- Invite Jesse Bridges (Parks) to a meeting to discuss a seasonal pilot
- Review public lands inventory
- Meet and discuss with VIA and interested members of the faith community;
- Consider the fair housing perspective;
- Research encampment ordinances (regulatory on behavior or bring services – lockers, bathrooms, etc to sanctioned encampments)

Chair Colburn will plan these next steps with Marcy Esbjerg. A list of possible partner agencies include:

COTS
Spectrum

CHT
Safe Harbor
Street Outreach
Pathways
Lacy – BPD
CVOEO

The plan is to discuss the 4 unrelated ordinance in September.

6. Next meeting – June 21, 2016 – Fletcher Free Library, Marcy Esbjerg will not be present so she will find someone else from CEDO to staff the meeting. Councilor Ayres made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Councilor Roof seconded that motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcy Esbjerg
Acting Director
CEDO



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Councilor Selene Colburn, Chair, East District
Councilor Tom Ayres, Ward 7 (absent)
Councilor Adam Roof, Ward 8

Tuesday, June 21, 2016
6:00 – 7:45 PM
Fletcher Free Library
Community Room

Proposed Draft Minutes

In addition to the Councilors noted above, the following people were in attendance: Alicia Freese (Seven Days), Rita Markley (Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS)), Chris Brzovic (Burlington Housing Authority/Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity), Cory Dawson (Burlington Free Press), Stephen Marshall, Michael Monte (Champlain Housing Trust (CHT)), Councilor David Hartnett (North District), Emily Velush (Pathways Vermont), Erin Sheehan, and Todd Rawlings (Community & Economic development Office (CEDO))

1. Review Agenda – At 6:08 PM Chair Colburn started the meeting and began with a review of the agenda. Councilor Roof made a motion to amend and approve the agenda to add Item 5.1, a discussion of the work plan for the Committee, seconded by Chair Colburn. Motion approved.
2. Public Forum
Stephen Marshall commented that the tiny home discussion should not be limited to homeless individuals and that it is a solution that should be considered for others in need of housing. Chair Colburn agreed and expressed that the Committee intends to look broadly at the idea of microhousing in the context of accessory units as mentioned in the Housing Action Plan. She restated her wish to hold a public event around microhousing.
3. Approval of Minutes – Councilor Roof made a motion to approve the May minutes as drafted. Chair Colburn seconded the motion. Motion passed.

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4. Discussion of Tiny Homes and Homelessness

Chair Colburn summarized the history of the tiny homes discussion. She described that a local, philanthropically-minded businessperson approached various Councilors about the idea of tiny homes as a possible solution to homelessness in Burlington. In the first CDNR meeting that addressed this issue, the committee looked at various examples across the country. The second meeting looked at how this solution might work in the context of planning and zoning ordinance requirements.

Councilor Roof commented that he thought that, based on conversations with City staff, this was a viable option. He expressed the desire to review an inventory of City land and have the Committee explore a pilot of the idea. He mentioned that one idea that has been expressed was the possibility of using the campground at North Beach during the winter.

Chair Colburn understands from Parks Director Jesse Bridges that there is very little suitable land that is not park. She said another idea that has been suggested is a winter warming shelter with tents at North Beach. She suggested that the idea of tiny houses as a solution to homelessness needs to be looked at from the Fair Housing perspective and that the Committee should work with the Continuum of Care on this idea. Chair Colburn would also like to see a public lands inventory.

Stephen Marshall noted that the Continuum of Care's correct name is the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA), not the Continuum of Care.

Rita Markley suggested that the CCHA and form a work group to explore the tiny home idea.

Chair Colburn read an email from CEDO Acting Director Marcy Esbjerg. The email described the idea that the CCHA would like to do a focus group for homeless individuals. CCHA is requesting a joint session in August and the suggestion is a breakfast meeting on Saturday since there is no breakfast provided in our City on Saturday. They have the funding and would help get the folks there. The idea might be going to one of the churches but maybe the library would be fine as well.

Stephen Marshall commented that CCHA would like to do story gathering around safety and well-being. He suggested that the discussion around solutions to homelessness be broadened and not go immediately to tiny homes.

Councilor Roof agreed that tiny homes are one tool in the tool box for safety, security, and stability for homeless individuals.

Councilor Hartnett said that he has had discussions with members of the business community who are concerned about the homeless individuals in Burlington. He suggested that whether or not the City sanctions the encampments, they will and are happening anyway. He has spoken with homeless individuals and they want tiny homes. He believes that tiny homes have been successful elsewhere and thinks the City should try it.

Chris Brzovic asked: what vision we are committed to in Burlington? He asked: why not get homeless individuals in housing, and then once housed, get services to them and help them with sobriety? He said that tiny houses are just an extension of the shelter model.

Rita Markley suggested that the focus should be on creating more options for people who are homeless. She cautioned against just making tiny homes available to homeless individuals only and she urged making tiny homes available to young professionals and others who need housing. She suggested that tiny homes should be part of a broader strategy on homelessness.

Michael Monte described CHT's research on the attitudes of prospective homebuyers about small, energy efficient homes and many were not interested. He wondered if using tiny homes as a solution for homeless individuals had been successful in a cold weather climate. He also wondered whether it was proposed that tiny homes would replace tents. He described CHT's approach of buying motels and providing the spatial equivalent of a tiny home (200-400 square feet).

Councilor Roof commented that physical structure is part of the issue, but services are critical. He agreed that this solution cannot be separated from overall housing strategy as described in the Housing Action Plan (HAP).

Chair Colburn mentioned that the HAP has a section on homelessness and she affirmed the City's commitment to the Housing First model. She expressed that some anecdotal evidence suggests that some homeless individuals do not want to live inside.

Chris Brzovic suggested that that was not his experience and he would like objective data on how common that belief is.

Chair Colburn expressed that tiny homes are one option and that safety of encampments is key. She discussed different approaches that different cities (specifically Los Angeles and Seattle) have concerning homeless encampments. She described a variety of safety and security strategies for tiny home villages: some are self-governing, some are managed by one individual, and some are managed by a non-profit. She expressed that it was exciting how quickly these tiny house villages have been funded and built elsewhere.

Councilor Hartnett said that it was important to house those most in need of housing first.

Chris Brzovic added that having rental subsidies available is critical.

Stephen Marshall suggested that the two main issues here are safety and dignity. Sustainability is not the first priority: homeless individuals need potable water, latrines, and safety immediately. He suggested that people be given the power to create their own homes through free materials or kits. He said that if given the opportunity, those who want to move inside, will. He suggested that when we move homeless individuals into housing, we also move them out of their community. He believes that these folks should have our respect and love.

Rita Markley commented that the City's response to the encampments should be

somewhere between that of Los Angeles and Seattle.

Michael Monte expressed that CHT has a spectrum of housing opportunities from motels to homeownership. He offered to contact the person in Seattle who has been involved in the distribution of tents.

Councilor Roof suggested that quick fixes are acceptable as long as we are not complacent and they become long term solutions.

Stephen Marshall disagreed with the idea of centralized camps. He said does not want to overburden neighborhoods and he wants increased opportunities for homeless individuals to engage the community.

Rita Markley commented that many communities allow organic placement of encampments.

Stephen Marshall noted that the next meeting of the CCHA is July 7. He suggested that the Committee draft a letter to the BPD around encampment safety.

Chair Colburn summarized the next steps for the Committee:

- Need an update from BPD and the administration about their approach(es) to encampments
- Continue the conversation with Parks regarding public land
- Investigate a working group between CCHA and CDNR.
- Michael Monte will share CHT's tiny home research findings.

5. Fireworks Discussion

Chair Colburn expressed that the Ordinance Committee has had discussions about fireworks and that she felt that it was appropriate to discuss the issue at CDNR. She explained that fireworks are regulated in City parks but otherwise not specifically mentioned elsewhere in the City ordinances. She would like the Committee to discuss whether fireworks should be called out specifically in the noise control or "social noise" ordinance. She felt that police are more empowered to enforce the noise ordinance for social violations as opposed to fireworks violations.

Councilor Roof agreed that this idea should be brought to the Ordinance Committee. He felt that education as a strategy has been successful with social noise. He would like BPD to be more empowered to enforce noise violations for fireworks, but he recognized that enforcement can be challenging given that these violations typically occur in public spaces as opposed to private homes.

Chair Colburn will draft a memo to the Ordinance Committee regarding this issue. The memo will address the issue of fireworks only being mentioned in the context of the City's parks.

5.1 Work Plan Discussion

Chair Colburn summarized the draft Work Plan for the Committee:

- Housing Action Plan Work:
 - Get targets for various housing types
 - Make progress on the Neighborhood Stabilization Program
 - Continue to work on the evaluation of the Inclusionary Zoning ordinance
 - Review of accessory dwellings
- Continue discussion of microhousing and homelessness
- Revisit Four Unrelated Persons ordinance (late summer/early fall)
- Maintain CDNR as a clearinghouse for quality of life issues
- Focus on encampments and safety

6. Next meeting – July 26, 2016 – Fletcher Free Library. Councilor Roof made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Chair Colburn seconded that motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:48 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Todd Rawlings
Housing Program Manager
CEDO