



Burlington
Walk | Bike
Council

AGENDA - Burlington Walk / Bike Council

January 5, 2022, Wednesday 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 (See other remote access options below)

AGENDA:

1. Introductions, brief BWBC overview, review agenda (5 min)
2. Announcements and Public Comments (10 min)
3. 2022 DPW Priorities for Sidewalks and Other Walking Needs (45 min)
Staff from the Burlington Department of Public Works (DPW) will discuss the 2022 projects and priorities for maintaining and improving the city's pedestrian infrastructure.

Previous Meeting – At [the meeting on December 1](#), participants discussed a proposed BWBC work plan for 2022, refining it and identifying next steps for accomplishing an achievable but ambitious set of tasks.

Next Month: BWBC Meets Wednesday, February 2, 2022, 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.

See www.burlingtonwalkbike.org (under construction) and [BWBC Minutes and Agendas](#).

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

* = BWBC Coordinating Committee

Remote access options for non-ZOOM participation: Phone 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>

Burlington Walk Bike Council (BWBC)

January 5, 2022 Meeting Notes

The Monthly Meeting took place 6:00- 7:00 pm via Zoom and at DPW Office.

Attendees: , Erik Brotz (Chair and Ward 5 Liaison), Serrill Flash (East Ave), Jason Stuffle (Ward 1 Liaison), Jonathan Weber (Local Motion), Debra Blumberg, Faith Ingulrsud (Ward 6 Liaison), Mary Manghis, Greg Hostetler (Ward 2 Liaison), Bob Leidy. Nicole Losch, Elizabeth Ross and Laura Wheelock (DPW).

1. Announcements and Public Comments

None.

2. **2022 DPW Priorities for Sidewalks and Other Walking Needs**

Responding to questions Erik had sent to the Department of Public Works (DPW) in advance of the meeting, Nicole explained that the infrastructure bond did not pass so the department is still figuring out the budget and what projects can be accomplished this year. Consequently the mini-roundabout pilot projects don't have funding and there is no funding available for new projects.

Projects that were in the pipeline and will be implemented this year include:

- Mansfield Ave – replace asphalt sidewalk with shared use path; also install traffic calming
- Intervale sidepath is approved and in design phase; construction will be post 2022
- Birchcliff – build raised crosswalks at Alder and Linden for traffic calming
- Cambrian Rise – move mid-block crossing and install RRFB. This has been delayed due to equipment delivery problems but will install when it arrives. The new intersection will be fully signalized.
- Archibald and Intervale Ave intersection will receive quick-build curb extensions
- North Champlain/Manhattan and Park/Manhattan – intersections will be necked down
 - North Champlain will receive pedestrian signals at the crossing
 - Manhattan will have new bike lanes, providing an extra buffer for pedestrians
- Shelburne St roundabout will have new crosswalks
- University Place – improvements will include a new sidewalk, others widened, consolidated crosswalks and bike lanes
- VTrans is repaving several state highways this year – updating signage and markings on Main, Willard, Winooski, and maybe Riverside. Remaining repaving will be in 2023.

Discussion with Nicole included the following Q&A:

Red brick crosswalks are hard to see especially in winter, are slick when wet and don't conform to a standard marking around the city/crosswalk standards. Nicole responded that changing paint patterns requires some logistics on the DPW side to fix. If a crosswalk completely lacks any markings, report to DPW through See Click Fix (SCF)

so it can be added to the list. Currently the contractors are told to “replace what is there”, so if there isn’t paint there, they don’t replace it.

Some crosswalks only have a sign on one side of the road in each direction. New standard is to do 2 on each side for better visual cues. The redundant sign helps alert users to the crosswalk. Nicole agreed and recommended reporting through SCF to get the signage upgraded if you notice a deficient crossing.

Can we bring back the signs for quiet streets installed during the COVID lock-down? That was only intended to be temporary to facilitate social distancing and there is no plan to bring them back.

For the priority intersections identified in the Walk Bike Plan, what is the plan for addressing the ones that haven’t seen any improvements? More funding will be needed to address those.

Will there be funding available to do this work from the federal infrastructure bill? Funding will most likely come through the state, and that will likely not happen until October. It’s likely to be distributed as grants but those take time and administrative processes to set up. It won’t necessarily be a direct handout that the city can use as we wish. That said, there is ~\$500k more in planning funds available through the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) which may mean that more of the requested scoping projects can get funded.

Can that CCRPC money be used for the roundabout pilots? The concept designs are done so don’t need much for additional planning. We mostly need funds for implementation and RPC funds can’t be used for that.

Can the all-stop pedestrian signals be marked for diagonal movement? DPW opted not to enable diagonal markings for all-way walk signals partly because of concerns about the difficulty and expense if the signal is changed. Revisiting that policy would require a broader conversation with the DPW director, etc.

- *We need a list of all-way intersections.*
- *Maybe do a demonstration marking just at Pearl / Winooski. This is important because with so many first time users of the intersections don’t know you can walk diagonally and otherwise need to wait for two signals.*

Can we make sure Pearl/Willard is changed from a signalized intersection to a 4 way stop when VTrans does the repaving? We can make it a demonstration of the no/low cost - just bagging the lights or flash red and install 4 stop signs. Nicole is not yet able to provide a response.

Laura Wheelock, engineer for the DPW, introduced herself saying that she has managed the sidewalk program for the past eight years. Because the recent bond vote failed, the city can only commit to repairing 1 mile of sidewalk this year. The city administration is considering another bond vote for March that would be for a smaller amount and devoted mostly to transportation improvements. If that passes, then sidewalk replacement can resume at the 3 miles/year level that we have had in recent years.

With 130 miles of sidewalks, DPW needs to prioritize repairs based on criteria. Sidewalk improvement priorities are based on a 2014 inventory of sidewalk deficiencies along with an activity score of how much the sidewalks are used. With limited funding, the repairs are mostly triggered by safety conditions such as 2" or higher offsets and missing sidewalk segments. When expanded funding is available, the city can address longer segments. When sidewalks are repaired, they are expected to last 40-60 years. .

New safety criteria are being developed now along with the new sidewalk inventory, that will include some new categories for evaluating sidewalks including roughness/smoothness, and gaps between sidewalk segments that aren't addressed in the current safety criteria. This will help raise the priority of some existing unsafe sidewalks.

Discussion with Laura included the following Q&A:

Is there a way to surface sloped sidewalks so they offer more grip in icy conditions, such as a cross hatch or diamond cut like the walk in front of the Echo center with lines to help give traction? At this time there is no plan to do so.

While salting the sidewalks helps, Burlington seems to use an excessive amount of salt on sidewalks, especially when compared with South Burlington. The salt is hard on pets, plants and possibly the lake, and also it penetrates into the concrete and breaks down the surface. The Street and Stormwater Teams have considered this question and Laura will get back to us with a response. Finishing sidewalks earlier in the season can help make sidewalks more durable since a good 20 days of curing can help. If salted too soon after pouring, the concrete breaks down and doesn't give the length of service desired.

How are flooded sidewalk sections prioritized and how can we avoid them?

Ponding sidewalks should be reported through SCF since the sidewalk survey doesn't really capture it, although it is now receiving more attention as a deficiency - especially if ponding is present in summer as well as winter. Greenbelt mounding is often caused by mounding at the edges of the greenbelts that occur over time. There is now a new line work item for sidewalk replacements to "shave the greenbelt to be concave." Paying attention to the subbase is important to reduce sidewalk sinking. The city arborist is also often involved because ponding can involve existing or proposed trees. The greenbelt is maintained by the Parks and Recreation department.

What can we do when the homeowner side of property encroaches on the sidewalk ROW? That is a violation of city code so you should report it through SCF. The landowners will be given 30 days to fix it and if they don't, the city takes action and charges the property owner. In summer 30 days is a long time and vegetation can grow fast. Also the city has trouble responding promptly to this category of SCF requests because the parks department gets involved and requires contacting property owners.

How are sidewalk activity levels determined for establishing priorities? It's hard to do counts so data like population, the number of households without vehicles, and the distances to schools are used to determine where people are likely to walk. But the

categories need updating. For example improvements to North Avenue sidewalks were missed due to inadequate categorization of activity data.

Shouldn't sidewalks that are vital connectors and that would require a long detour if unusable, be considered a high priority? Yes, that is actively being discussed now.

What about places where new sidewalks are needed? One important location is Mill Street where there is a high volume and need for safe pedestrian access. Can we do a quick build with bollards or jersey barriers? The current inventory is identifying gaps and ranking their priority; need money from RPC for planning new sidewalks. New sidewalks can be difficult to implement because they often require property owners to give up a part of the front yard.

What about wider sidewalks for high traffic areas? The city is now involved in working on new engineering standards. This will include standards for sidewalk widths. Currently the Great Streets standards for Downtown Burlington requires a minimum sidewalk width of 6 feet.

Erik thanked Laura and closed the meeting .