

# Wards 4 & 7 Neighborhood Planning Assembly Draft Minutes



**Wednesday, October 25, 2023, 7-9pm**

Robert E. Miller Community Center, 130 Gosse Court

Start Time (*Commence*): 7:05pm Finish Time (*Adjourn*): 9:13pm

Note taker: Fosca Bechthold (NPA Public Engagement Coordinator)

Facilitator/moderator: Birgit Bozek

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| Steering Committee Members in Attendance: Matt Hurlburt, Birgit Bozek, Jeff Comstock |
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## Homelessness, Housing & the Goal Towards Healthy Neighborhoods

Moderator: Sarah Carpenter, Councilor, Ward 4

- **Mike Pieciak**, *Vermont State Treasurer*
  - 2020 & 2021 tax return data showed that more people moved to state of VT
    - No other year with dramatic growth from people moving into state
    - More young people living in VT, more tax base, more resources → but strains housing
  - 55.5 million dollars for low-income housing
- **Kesha Ram Hinsdale**, *State Senator Chittenden-Southeast & Chair of the Housing Committee*
  - Home Act (Act 47)
    - Ends discrimination against multi-family housing (how most people get into the market for buying their own home) → pathway for accessing housing
    - Biggest increase in cost of buying a house now
    - Investing in affordable home ownership
  - Need for senior housing
    - 70% of owned homes are 2 person households in VT
  - Looking at neighborhood growth areas, cost of housing, equity, & more
- **Martine Larocque Culick**, *State Senator Chittenden Central, Committee on Health & Welfare*
  - VCAP (Vermont Career Advancement Project)
  - Chittenden County homelessness has tripled
  - 436 homeless children in state of VT (going to rise as they leave VT Motel program)
  - Health & Welfare committee is going to focus on homelessness issue
  - Increasing beds for those recovering from substance abuse
  - Work with landlords to provide lower income housing

- **Carol Ode, House Representative Chittenden District 618**
  - What state has done
    - Before covid, 250 unhoused families → 814 unhoused households/families currently in the state
  - \$110-\$140 million dollars budgeted to increase housing units affordably
  - State general emergency assistance program → provides emergency housing but without services
  - Passed Act 81 → extended motel program for those who were already in the program until April 2024
  - Obstacles for transitioning to permanent housing → lower income, lack of affordable housing units, no previous landlord recommendations, etc.
  - Hopeful things to look at:
    - A need for mental healthcare
    - Insufficient hospital beds
    - Need treatment for those addicted to substances
    - Spectrum (in downtown BTM) will fund income for young ppl (under 24 yrs of age) for 5 years
  - Should contact representatives as well as governor (has a program to prevent homelessness)
- Anecdote from Sarah Carpenter → city of Burlington can't build housing itself (needs other partners such as Champlain Housing Trust)
- **Meagan Tuttle, Director, Burlington City Planning**
  - 10 Point Housing Plan (2022)
  - Long-term strategies (zoning laws that affect what housing can be built where in the city)
  - About 1300 new homes built in the city in the last 10 years
    - Need to build many more
  - Neighborhood Code Project (working with AARP)
    - Aims to make more 'middle neighborhood' housing
    - Changing zoning laws to allow for diverse building types (duplexes, 3-unit & 4-unit buildings)
- **Sarah Carpenter, Councilor, Ward 4**
  - Needing to build where we already have existing infrastructure

## Update – Sewer Break & Repairs

**Megan Moir, Burlington City's Division director for Burlington Water Resources**

- Working on getting sewer pipes fixed and ready for winter, so that current pump station won't have to be running during the winter
- FEMA funds will probably cover about 90% of price of changing current pipe system crossing by the Colchester bridge and other end of Winooski River by the North Sewage Station
- Learn more about updates at this [link](#)