

Ward 1 Neighborhood Planning Assembly (NPA)

MINUTES

Wednesday, December 13, 2023 7:00 - 9:00 PM

Facilitator: Tom Derenthal

Minutes: Carol Livingston

6:30 Welcome and Food: Sam Ayotte

7:00 - Formal start - Introductions: name, street

Announcements: share events, meetings, activities of interest to Ward 1 community.

- Community Forum - tomorrow 12/14 6 pm Contois - gun crime & drug trafficking
12/19 at 6 at Contois - substance use disorder & property crime
- Peter Lackowski has petition to make B apartheid city
- Sam A - announcement for Julia Orsaki at DPW: In January, Plan BTV Vision Zero - getting task force of people to look at transit in area - rep from each ward
- Jonathan - Carter Neubieser and Geoff Hand were welcomed and hope to have forum at January's Ward 1 NPA meeting.
 - In Civic Clerk - trying to circulate proposal for resolution for City Council to describe relationship between NPAs and City Council: running issues by NPA's before CC vote
- Carter will be meeting with folks at East Ave. Cohousing - 7pm 12/20

7:10 - Speakout - an opportunity to raise concerns and appreciations about Ward 1

- Green hearts - blue and green mixed in flags - pick up and put on windows
- Carol: expressed support and concern for Prospect Street neighborhood

7:30 - School Commission Update - Gary Golden (budget process)

- East District commissioner
- Need Ward 1 commissioner to run in March, 2024 - thank you to Aquilas Lakossou for his service
- In budget process - combination of local & state control - reviewed Brigham decision background. This budget process fosters a give & take process. Federal money, grant funding and reimbursement - State money running which has major impact on budget planning. 18% increase publicized by news outlets & governor's office - not that simple. Read today's FPF posting - please email with questions.

- State changes in weighting formula will, hopefully, bring more funds to Burlington - to use, for example, for ELL (English Language Learner) services
- Senator Martine G - some other districts are trying to undo the weighting decision - please give support to our state representatives.
- So budget is moving target - waiting for info from state in order to build BSD budget.
- GG asking about admin costs when student numbers decreasing
- Principal turnover - many skill sets - admin positions are very challenging - families struggling. Important to think about "growing our own" administrators - and about increasing number of adults on staff who are part of global majority. Challenging fall
- Tim D: thank you for your work - 3 kids in BSD. Very challenging tasks - very concerned about principal turnover & temporary space & societal issues.
- G: very capable staff and strong superintendent.
- Kathy O: organized statewide group of school districts who worked together to shift the weighting - may be some districts now pushing back - Martine working in the state Senate
- Erhard M - urge district to get city lobbyists to work to defend the weighting in addition to the state reps. Ques: what is school dept doing to retain black professionals? What is % of educators who are people of color?
- GG - personal anecdotes about admin of color departures; need to look at support/mentoring

7:40 - City Council Updates

Tim Doherty - Public Safety Committee update

- Key issue right now: encourage people to attend the public safety forums - tomorrow night (Murad, Drug unit head, ATF agent ...) 12/19 Jess Kirby, Mark Lavine, chief, mayor, Rachel Jolley). Forums are product of resolution on public safety & public health - important to hear from professionals about public safety issues. City website - can submit questions; Tim can also pass along questions. Tim: a lot of misinformation and misconceptions about law enforcement and judicial process and people suffering from addiction, mental health - hope is to inform folks. City Council Safety committee goal = being able to identify areas within CC purview where CC can make differences in public safety with action items this winter and spring. Website: google - public safety community forums.
- Example of misconception: gone on tip line, notified police and nothing happens, watching drug deals & seeing needles - why can't you do anything. T: prosecutors can't go before judges to get arrest warrants to move forward drug investigation based on neighbor observations. Need to gather admissible evidence - difficult process to get what is needed to prosecute. Standard of proof is very high for probable cause for search -

leads to understandable frustration by residents observing criminal behavior. Due process.

Zoraya Hightower - Status of Memorandum of Understanding between City and UVM

- CC hasn't gotten an update since last NPA or CC meeting. City admin happy with direction headed; Zoraya is not confident in direction.
- MOU for UVM medical ctr - land agreement coming up next year; community meeting next year and discussing MOU as community
- Tim & Zoraya advocating for having plenty of time for community input on proposed MOU. Agenda item on Monday's CC mtg - Q/A on MOU. Then more opportunities for city officials to speak to NPAs in January with CC vote in January. Proposed to have City team and UVM person come to NPA meeting or larger community meeting.
- Kathy - often get info same month as CC vote. Z & T can ask for it - but CC president & mayor decide the agenda and timing of consideration of CC decisions.
- Brian P - can go back to admin office and give sense of the NPA meeting that we are looking for 45 days to discuss the proposed MOU

Z: - foot traffic and participation on Church St is same as before COVID. Shopping is different than pre-Covid - purchasing has decreased.

T: beautiful downtown.

Sharyl: thank yous to T & Z on public forum this past Monday about crisis in Gaza

Erhard: need positive public announcements about Burlington - not dour reports on media.

Perception problem - National trend for retail ending.

T: there are serious public safety issues, can't ignore - but hyperbole about downtown needs correction

Joel - millennials raised on limiting consumerism; love cafe atmosphere.

8:00 - Gateway Block Proposal - Samantha Dunn and Brian Pine (CEDO)

Brian Pine - Dir. of CEDO - S. Dunn joining remotely.

***** SEE SLIDE PRESENTATION attached to Civic Clerk meeting as PDF titled "Other" *****

- Period of due diligence - 4 months - until end of March, 2024. Then development agreement that sets roles and responsibilities. Look for "Capital projects" under city website.

- Kathy O: Will buildings be greener? Brian: standard for energy performance higher than state; all electric bldg - no fossil fuels, looking at renewable energy
- Carter N: Status of Fletcher Free Library? Brian: library not changing, except some parking; church looking at more green space & parking
- Jonathan: library looking at geothermal energy
- Brian: may be some interest by gas station owners across Main in participating in development
- Erhardt: Memorial Auditorium: additional repairs need to be made to stabilize over the planning years. Brian: approved \$1 million and repairs were made and should last over next few yrs.
- Concern about bldg pieces falling - fence being set up
- Chris H: wanting to be sure to have community space / public event space; ownership shift from city to private? Brian - no, city may look at leasing.

8:30 - Richard Kemp Center - Christine Hughes

- Only 10 minutes left - we will look at having on agenda in January
- See slideshow –
- Christine invites people to come to the space - across from Community Health Ctr.

Charlie G - accessibility to City Council

- 5 - 15 yrs ago - NPA's had BSD superintendent visit every January as routine.
- NPA can invite president of CC to come to meeting. Ward 2 & 3 did this usually.

9:00 - Adjourn

OUR NEXT NPA MEETING IS JANUARY 10, 2023 AT FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE.

Ward 1 NPA Steering Committee

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