

**Ward 6 Neighborhood Planning Assembly**  
**Minutes June 7, 2012**  
**As revised October 2, 2012 and Approved at the October 4, 2012 Meeting**

The meeting kicked off with an introduction from our newest addition to the Steering Committee, Peter Keating, who works on transportation for the Chittenden County Regional Planning Committee. He was elected at the last meeting in April.

John Caulo from Champlain College reported that most construction on the Res-Tri project will be pushed off to next summer. However, they have almost completed the first building. They are replacing sidewalks near the Aiken Center and are working on completely rehabilitating the inside of Bader Hall. Due to a fundraising issue, construction on Hauke will begin in the fall of 2013. UVM has leased the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity building to Champlain College for 5 years. It will be converted from a fraternity to a residential hall, and the inside will be rehabilitated.

Alan Matson, one of our school commissioners, said that construction will begin at Flynn Elementary this summer. It will be a two-year project funded by the \$9.7 million bond passed in 2009. In terms of the issues arising in the press recently, he explained that the school board has three jobs: hiring/evaluating/replacing the superintendent, creating policies and evaluating the quality of the schools, and creating a yearly budget. This year, the evaluation process for the superintendent is a little different. He thought that Jeanne Collin's work on diversity and equity should only be one part, and other questions should be addressed as well. She is currently under a rolling two-year contract that could end in June 2013. He stated that the board knows they have to keep working on diversity and equity issues. So far they have created two magnet schools and the district is the only one in Vermont to have a diversity and equity office. Alan proposed to have more discussions that aren't held through the press, in political and accusatory ways, etc. Peter Potts was present from Burlington's Planning Commission to discuss Plan BTV. The department first visited the NPAs in 2011. They compared the comments they got then to ones they received in feedback sessions this spring and found them remarkably consistent. Over 450 people participated in the charettes this spring and over 480 different ideas were submitted. Online, an additional 672 comments were added and there were 45000 "likes" and "dislikes" on their online public forum. In July a detailed plan will be released, and public input will be accepted on a similar online forum. That will be followed by a 2-3 month review period, then the adoption process will begin mid-fall. A lot of information, including taped events, are on their website [www.burlington.vt.gov/planBTV](http://www.burlington.vt.gov/planBTV).

The next topic was on the proposed roundabout at the intersection in front of the Greek Orthodox Church (where NPA meetings are held). VT Agency of Transportation representatives Amy Bell (Planning Coordinator), Joshua Schultz and Michael Croy explained the project. This area was designated an "accident-prone intersection" at the state level and so became a priority area. Discussion on the area began in 2006, and after looking at many alternatives it was decided that a roundabout would work out best for many reasons: it would lead to a 90% reduction in crashes and is efficient; it slows down cars which results in a safer area for bikers and pedestrians.

Specifically, wider sidewalks would be added as well as more crosswalks. There would be some traffic buildup at rush hour but a roundabout remains the best alternative. Construction workers will have to dig down 4 ft to improve the current stormwater collection system. This is very complex because the stormwater would need to be treated underground and there are many utility lines underground at that intersection. Before construction can begin (it is estimated to begin in 2015) the designers and coordinators need to speak with utility companies, begin the right of way process (which takes about a year and a half), and complete the final design. The cost is estimated to be \$2 million, which is 100% federal money.

The final part of the meeting was dedicated to a legislative session update. State Senators Philip Baruth, Sally Fox, Ginny Lyons, and Representative Suzi Wizowaty participated. Because of personal health issues, Sally Fox had to be absent for a chunk of the session. However, she is well now and will be running for reelection. She focused on the impact of Irene on mental health and the restoration of the state hospital. She also worked on the second phase of the Affordable Care Act. Philip Baruth worked (and succeeded) in extending autism health care coverage to age 21 instead of age 6. He also focused on finding ways to lower the cost of higher education, a bullying and hazing bill, and passed a bill that created incentives for small school districts to merge. As part of the Agriculture Committee, he focused on the effects of phosphorus on the lake and stormwater treatment. He worked on a “working lands” bill that would assure that open landscape doesn’t turn into developments. Ginny Lyons explained that much of the session was focused on the impacts of hurricane Irene. A bill was passed that helped communities receive federal funds. Fracking was banned in the state of Vermont. The state’s AAA bond rating was maintained, and there is a low budget gap. Suzi Wizowaty, the only Representative present, worked on tax adjusting for towns affected by Irene, and also on redistricting. On the Judiciary Committee, a bill was passed to prohibit discriminatory credit checks on people with low-income jobs. Another bill stated that every police department must have bias-free policies and training. Also, insurance will now pay for phone consultations with doctors that specialize in a field that isn’t represented in the area. Next year, she plans to continue her work to stop Vermont prisoners from being kept in a proposed 3-state private prison in New Hampshire.

The next NPA meeting will be September 6<sup>th</sup> at the Greek Orthodox Church on Ledge Road. The meeting starts at 7:00pm with a social time beginning at 6:45.