

BURLINGTON PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION
645 Pine Street
AMENDED Minutes – April 18, 2012
Broadcast live by CCTV
DVD of this meeting is on file at DPW

Commissioners present: Robert Alberry, Margaret Gundersen, Nathan Lavery, Solveig Overby (joined the Commission on April 16th), Mark Porter, Marc Sherman and Jared Wood

Commissioner Alberry called the meeting to order at 6:16 p.m.

Item 1: AGENDA: No changes.

Item 2: PUBLIC FORUM

John Roos, M.D. – Planned changes for the traffic and pedestrian lights at the intersection of Church and Pearl Streets; concerned about the effect those changes may have on the safety of crossing pedestrians, including his patients (his practice is located at the top of Church Street). Formally requests and suggests that the traffic light be left as it currently is (red light when pedestrians press signal to cross). Feels this will increase the safety of pedestrians overall (noted poor lighting in the area and differing attitudes in yielding to pedestrians. Has a meeting scheduled for tomorrow with Director Goodkind to discuss further.

Commissioner Gundersen supported Dr. Roos' opinion and stated that the planned changes are a mistake. Commissioner Overby, a frequent walker, was concerned over the planned changes when it was first brought up and states that she does not support them, preferring to keep the red light at the Church/Pearl Streets intersection.

Commissioner Porter requested that this item be added to a future meeting, with DPW staff in attendance (with documentation). No work is planned on the project in the next few weeks.

John Sealy – After undergoing an operation last year, experienced difficulty when keeping appointments with Dr. Roos in crossing Pearl Street without the traffic light working.

Jane Mekkelsen – Spouse of Mr. Sealy, concurred that crossing Pearl Street without a functioning traffic signal was scary and she did not feel safe.

Item 3: MAIN STREET AND ST. PAUL STREET PARKING CHANGE

(Joel Fleming, Public Works Engineer)

See Commission Packet: April 9, 2012 Memorandum from Joel Fleming.

This summer, the Farmers' Market will move their Saturday morning sales to St. Paul Street - from Main to College Streets - to accommodate the Parks Department's planned improvements to City Hall Park. DPW staff is recommending that the parking space reserved for the Mayor be moved to St. Paul Street, and the Car Share VT space be moved to Main Street at St. Paul Street. This is the first time an ordinance has been passed formally identifying the Mayor's parking space.

Commissioner Sherman moved to accept staff's recommendation; Commissioner Gundersen seconded. Unanimous approval.

Discussion: Commissioner Porter expressed concern over the number of parking spaces (25?) lost to the general public during Farmers' Market hours. Further discussion on this matter will take place at a later time.

Item 4: NORTH UNION AT LOOMIS STREET MID-BLOCK CROSSING

(Joel Fleming, Public Works Engineer)

See Commission Packet: April 9, 2012 Memorandum from Joel Fleming.

Traffic Foreman Billy Burns brought to Mr. Fleming's attention that, while there was a handicap-accessible ramp at the North Union/Loomis Street intersection, there was no crosswalk. After reviewing the area, staff recommends that two (2) parking spaces be removed from the west side of North Union Street (for adequate site distance) in order to put in a mid-block crossing at Loomis and North Union Streets.

Commissioner Gundersen moved to accept staff's recommendations; Commissioner Sherman seconded. Unanimous approval.

Discussion: Commissioner Wood asked that staff look into the fact that the three (3) crossings in the Champlain College area: the crossing in front of Champlain College and ~~two~~ one crossings around the corner on Maple Street.

Item 5: 116 UNIVERSITY PLACE – ADD A GREYHOUND BUS STOP

(Joel Fleming, Public Works Engineer)

See Commission Packet: April 9, 2012 Memorandum from Joel Fleming.

Per request from Greyhound Lines, Inc. and with support from the University of Vermont, staff recommends placing a bus stop (not specific to any one bus company) in front of 116 University Place/Royal Tyler Theater.

Commissioner Gundersen moved to accept staff's recommendation; Commissioner Wood seconded. Unanimous approval.

Discussion: Commissioner Gundersen asked Mr. Fleming to look into the possibility of building a bus shelter at that site and report back to the Commission at the May meeting. Commissioner Sherman: The bus companies are privately owned, so the bus companies would be responsible for building shelters, with UVM's approval. Commissioner Overby: Concerned about overlapping schedules of Greyhound and Mega Bus at this site.

Item 6: CORNER OF BATTERY STREET AND KING STREET PARKING CHANGES

(Joel Fleming, Public Works Engineer)

See Commission Packet: April 9, 2012 Memorandum from Joel Fleming.

Per ICV, owner of newly built building at this southeast corner: Requesting that staff establish parking that includes a handicap-accessible parking space and 30' vehicle loading zone in the area that fronts the Battery Street side of the building; specifically, the 145' section between King Street and ICV's southernmost driveway on Battery Street. DPW staff recommends that the handicap-accessible parking space, 30' vehicle loading zone and three (3) metered parking spaces be allowed.

Commissioner Porter: This additional request should have been brought before the Planning Commission during the planning approval process. Will continue discussion during the Commissioners' Communications portion of the meeting. Commissioner Sherman: Consider locating the proposed handicap-accessible space around the corner on King Street in order to serve the greater block. Also consider an impact fee if the Commission approves the dedication of the requested loading zone. Director Goodkind: The perimeter of a block should have one (1) dedicated handicap-accessible parking space per every twenty-two (22) general parking spaces.

Commissioner Gundersen moved to table this discussion until the May meeting. Also asks staff to look into whether these requests were brought up before the Planning Commission. Commissioner Lavery seconded the motion to table this until next month's meeting. Unanimous approval.

Discussion: Commissioners Porter and Sherman advocated for a Parking Plan. Commissioner Wood suggested developing a Parking Policy; Commissioners Porter and Sherman agreed. Commissioner Lavery asked Mr. Fleming to, once alternative options to this proposal have been compiled, solicit input from area businesses, particularly concerning the handicap-accessible space.

Item 7: 127 BANK STREET – ADD 15 MINUTE PARKING SPACE

(Mr. Joel Fleming, DPW Engineer)

See Commission Packet: March 8, 2012 Memorandum from Joel Fleming.

Per owner of Left Bank Home and Garden: Request a 15-minute parking meter across the street from their store in order to provide a quick turnover parking space.

Commissioners Porter and Sherman again advocated for a Parking Policy to set a general standard/ordinance for requests from individual residents and business owners with regards to 15-minute parking metered spaces (proactive approach, per Commissioner Sherman). Director Goodkind: The City is constantly changing with businesses opening, closing and moving, and such requests are decided upon at the time the business owners bring them up (reactive approach, per Commissioner Sherman).

Commissioner Porter moved to table this discussion until staff can provide more information about the parking availability behind the building. Commissioner Wood seconded. Unanimous approval.

Item 8: CONCEPTUAL APPROVAL FOR CCTA TRANSIT STATION ON ST. PAUL STREET

(Aaron Frank, Assistant General Manager, CCTA; Chapin Spencer, one of two Burlington Commissioner chosen by the Council to represent the City's interest; and Steve Carlson, CCTA Project Manager)

See Commission packet: April 10, 2012 letter from Mr. Frank and attachments.

Mr. Frank presented an update on the study of the new transit center. A new site must be declared by June 30, 2012 or CCTA will lose Federal funding. Tonight, Mr. Frank is looking for *conceptual approval* from the Commission; a motion and a vote. They will then go through more formal traffic studies and processes to make this a closure, and update the Traffic Study, sharing it with DPW. Then, they will inform their Advisory Committee and Board that the plan works for the City and move forward with a more detailed design. The goal they set for completion would be the year 2015.

Out of thirty-seven (37) sites studied, nine (9) were chosen as finalists. "Site B" (on St. Paul Street between Cherry and Pearl Streets) is the most viable, location-wise for passengers, and from a cost perspective. The site sits in the right-of-way, and would affect only one driveway/curb cut (State office building underground parking). The buses would not cross Church Street on their routes to and from the station. Commissioner Alberry to Director Goodkind: Is the parking garage under the State Office Building open to the general public around Christmas time? Director Goodkind: Open to the public off-hours. CCTA hopes to continue to accommodate this tradition.

Commissioner Sherman: Supports the plan for Site B; questions loss of parking spaces on St. Paul, Pearl and Cherry Streets. It is a net parking loss, in the long term, of 19 spaces (16 from St. Paul Street and 4 from the north side of Cherry Street). Eighteen (18) spaces would be restored on the south side of Cherry Street. Battery Street would be the major egress for the buses exiting town.

Commissioner Sherman: Concerned about this plan affecting the already-planned changes to the Pearl/Church Street intersection. Mr. Frank has some information about a traffic study done in that area. Director Goodkind said that there will still be two full lanes on Pearl Street at the top of Church Street. The goal of the bump-outs is to slow cars down as they approach that area.

Commissioner Wood is concerned about the congestion on Pearl Street at the intersection of Union Street and suggested that Mr. Frank look at that area.

Commissioner Porter is concerned about the loss of 19 parking spaces and the effect those losses will have on the surrounding neighborhoods.

Commissioner Lavery moved for *conceptual approval* of the St. Paul Street Transit Mall.

Commissioner Sherman seconded. Commissioner Porter voted against the motion; the other six commissioners voted in favor.

Item 9: 2012 OPERATION CLEAN SWEEP (Director Steven Goodkind)

See Commission packet for Clean Sweep Street Sweeping routes.

Director Goodkind: Street sweeping begins next Wednesday night. Vehicles are banned from parking on the streets by zones in order for DPW to effectively clean the streets. Some spot street sweeping has begun to get a jump on the task where there are no vehicles present. Reminder fliers will be placed on car windshields the night before that street is to be swept. Parking ban lights will flash in the zones that will be swept. Large painted wooden signs have been posted at major entrances to the City. Announcements have been posted in The North Avenue News and through social media, and routes and schedules are posted on the DPW website.

Item 10: SIDEWALK PLOWING (Director Steven Goodkind)

Commissioner Wood had requested that this item be added to the Agenda. He had concerns about the condition of the sidewalks after 3-4 snowstorms where pedestrians had trampled down the snow and it froze. He felt the sidewalk plows couldn't effectively clear the sidewalks because of the ice, and requested that in the future when snow and freezing temperatures are predicted, DPW staff spread salt prior to snowfall, and remove the melting snow prior to it freezing (particularly in the central part of the City).

Item 11: TRAFFIC SIGNAL PLAN

(Traffic Signal Technician Dave Garen and Director Steven Goodkind)

See two handouts distributed at the meeting ("Pedestrian Signal Infrastructure in Burlington, Vermont, As of April, 2012" and "Signalized Crosswalks in Burlington, April 17, 2012").

Two months ago, Mr. Garen and Director Goodkind presented the background of how they begin to approach issues with traffic signals (vehicular and pedestrian issues). Tonight's presentation focused on specifics of crosswalks, pedestrian crossing signals and system modification considerations when major problems arise. Some of the newer technology will be applied to the top 11 most difficult intersections identified by staff.

Commissioner Gunderson: Some traffic and pedestrian crossing signals are not in sync (vehicular traffic is given the green turn light at the same time the pedestrian crossing signal indicates that pedestrians may begin to cross the street). Areas of concern include: College Street and Winooski Avenue, Bank and Winooski Avenue, Main Street and Winooski Avenue, and St. Paul and Main Streets (southwest side of

intersection). Expressed frustration that she has brought this issue up for seven years to various people and there has been no change. Director Goodkind assured the Commission that staff is working on these problem areas. Staff follows the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD), nationally recognized standards. Commissioners felt that pedestrian and driver education is an essential component to the location and timing of the traffic and pedestrian crossing signals, with DPW and the City responsible for a share of those education efforts. Commissioner Wood to Mr. Garen: Add to his list of areas of concern, Colchester Avenue/East Avenue intersection, suggesting a longer crossing time for pedestrians or a longer yellow light. Commissioner Overby: Elmwood Avenue/North Street intersection has improved in the past twenty years in regards to the duration of time that cars have to wait at a red light. She also noticed that even if she does not press the pedestrian cross signal, it still operates. There are new signals at that 5-way intersection. Commissioner Wood to Director Goodkind: Would like more uniformity in blinking traffic lights at night. Director Goodkind: The heavy traveled streets typically have blinking amber lights and the side streets have red blinking lights.

Mr. Garen will present at the May Commission meeting to talk in more detail the handout titled, “Signalized Crosswalks in Burlington, April 17, 2012” and where we compare to the MUTCD standards.

Item 13: MINUTES OF 2/15/12 AND 3/21/12 (Moved up to accommodate Commissioner Gundersen’s need to leave early, as she is recovering from a concussion)

Minutes of February 15th: A motion had been made at the March 21st meeting to accept the minutes pending Commissioner Wood’s approval.

Commissioner Wood: The Minutes (specifically, Item 7) do not reflect what was said by Rich Goodwin, Assistant CAO for Finance, Clerk/Treasurer’s Office: That a bond issue was set up so that an amount was set aside each month. When it ballooned, we would have enough money to pay it off without raising the rates. Somehow, that got stopped; why? What happened to the money already set aside?

Commissioner Wood claims that Mr. Goodwin did not address these questions in his presentation at the February meeting.

Director Goodkind: There was never any money set aside; it was never stopped because it was never started. There was a plan that was never implemented. To Commissioner Wood’s question of who made the decision, Director Goodkind replied the City Treasurer or City Council; not DPW.

Commissioner Porter suggested that Mr. Goodwin could be invited back for further clarification. Because only four (4) commissioners (Commissioners Lavery, Porter, Tracy and Wood) have the authority to pass the Minutes, they cannot pass without Commissioner Wood’s approval.

Commissioner Wood does not approve the Minutes.

Commissioner Sherman moved to archive without accepting the Minutes of 2/15/12; Commissioner Gundersen approved. The Minutes will be posted to the DPW website as “Not approved by the Commission.”

Discussion: Commissioner Sherman suggested that Commissioner Wood watch the recording of the February meeting to listen again to what Mr. Goodwin said, and to add a comment in this evening’s Commissioners’ Communication, that Commissioner Wood goes on record as saying that he approves what was in the Minutes was what happened in the meeting, but absolutely disapproves the way that it was gone about. Commissioner Wood agreed to this.

Commissioner Alberry asked for formal approval of the February Minutes from Commissioner Wood. Commissioner Wood said that he “will agree” (to approve the Minutes), and will add an additional comment under Commissioners’ Communication.

Minutes of March 21st: **Commissioner Lavery moved** to approve the Minutes; Commissioner Gundersen seconded. Unanimous approval.

Commissioner Gundersen excused herself from the remainder of the meeting. Before leaving, she expressed disappointment that the Performance Report was scheduled so late on the Agenda.

Commissioner Porter moved to postpone Item 12 (Performance Report) until the next meeting and schedule it earlier on the Agenda. Commissioner Sherman seconded. Unanimous approval. The commissioners already have copies of the Performance Report.

Commissioner Gundersen also asked for a status report on the following:

- Update by Mr. Fleming on the status of Lyman Avenue and Pine Street (next month's meeting);
- Update by Mr. Fleming after talking with Church Street Marketplace staff about a loading zone request by Dobra Tea owner (still in discussion with Ron Redmond);
- UNH study on the toxic seal coat e-mailed to Director Goodkind;
- Pearl and Union Streets intersection: Director Goodkind: changes have been made to the signal. Staff has given it a protected pedestrian phase.
- Per the bottom line of Page 6 in the Minutes of March 7th: Status requested on Commissioner Tracy's concern that when cars are driving north on Union Street and come to the Pearl Street intersection, and they wish to turn left, the signage for the left-hand turn lane is not visible in its current location and is partially obstructed by a parked car;
- Update on TruGreen solicitation Commissioner Gundersen received at her home address. This was forwarded to the Code Enforcement office. Commissioner Gundersen will follow up directly with that office.
- Follow-up on the discussion from Items 5 and 6 of the February meeting. Mr. Goodwin was scheduled to appear on this month's Agenda but was unable to attend due to budget workload. Director Goodwin hopes that Mr. Goodwin will be able to attend the May meeting.

Item 12: PERFORMANCE REPORT (Director Steven Goodkind)
As per motion made in Item 13, postponed until the May meeting.

Item 14: CHAIR'S REPORT (No report)

Item 15: DIRECTOR'S REPORT (Steven Goodkind, Director)

- Hopes to present on the new Customer Service IT tracking system at a future meeting (Commissioner Porter offered some metrics about customer service which he will forward to Director Goodkind);
- Crosswalk on Grove Street at Schmanska Park, part of the joint discussion with Parks Commission during the March DPW Commission meeting: Staff has evaluated the area. They will connect the two sidewalks that end abruptly, work with the Burlington Electric Department to add overhead street lighting (a pole is already in place), install a ramp and do striping. Staff is also reviewing zoning plans which included S.D. Ireland's installation of sidewalks, to find out whether the sidewalk work is complete in that area, or they still have more to install;
- Spring and summer work will include, after further evaluation, adding striping on St. Paul Street in the area of Kilburn Street and Smalley Park;
- Discussion will continue about Dr. Roos' concern for pedestrian safety as a result of planned improvements on Pearl Street at the top of Church Street. Commissioner Porter reminded the Commission that this has already been discussed and can be reviewed in the past meeting Minutes;

- Budgets: The Mayor’s intention is to not have a tax increase this year. DPW staff is working with the Administration to identify how money might be saved this year (e.g., snow removal savings or possible extra revenue from Trades), or next year;
- College Street: Sewer line and a brick manhole collapsed. Staff had not noticed anything unusual a couple of weeks prior when they were cleaning them. A possible back-up investigation two weeks later revealed major damage (concrete pipe instead of the recorded reinforced concrete was used), and many utilities had been run over that pipe. A pipe bursting technique was used. As of today, things look good. Staff is closing the site up and plan to begin paving on Monday.
 - Areas where commissioners identified a sewer-type odor:
 - Pearl Street Beverage area, going east to west on Union Street, halfway across;
 - Greene Street/Pearl Street area;
 - Grate next to the funeral home on South Union at the bottom of Bradley Street;

Item 17: COMMISSIONERS’ COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Porter

- Northeast corner of North and Prospect Streets (coming down North Street and take a right onto Prospect Street), there is a pothole near a catchbasin, quite deep;
- Requests an estimate for removing the bump-out on Brookes Avenue (due to lack of parking) and an investigation into alternative traffic calming measures;
- Requests that Director Goodkind approaches the Planning Commission and tell them not to approve any new buildings unless the question has been asked, “Will you require anything special for off-street parking.” (ICV’s request in Item 6 of tonight’s Agenda is one example.)
- Requests that Director Goodkind return to next month’s meeting with more information on how parking needs are processed during planning phases of new construction, and ultimate approval by the Planning Commission, so that DPW can be more involved in up-front consideration of parking needs.
- Would like the Commission and DPW staff to begin to build a Parking Policy which could serve as a screening tool when parking requests come before the Commission. Director Goodkind suggested that through the NPO a consultant could offer an overview on previous policies used;
- Asked for history on how the Farmers’ Market’s new location this summer (St. Paul Street). Director Goodkind: The Burlington Police Department has the power to decide on allowing events to occur in the right-of-way. They have the authority to grant permission to use sidewalks and streets for events. DPW has an agreement with the Farmers’ Market wherein they agree to pay for the use of the metered parking spaces and will rent meter hoods to reserve metered parking spaces for loading and unloading on College Street. Commissioner Porter would like the Commission to be part of the conversation as they were caught off guard by the decision to move the Farmers’ Market for this summer and possibly on a permanent level, even though DPW has no decision-making power. The ordinance grants the BPD authority to make such decisions.

Commissioner Wood

- Items 5 and 6 of the February Minutes: If the Minutes said that the City agreed to set aside money and then decided not to, in order to pay for it (balloon payment), then he is amazed that that was accepted as standard procedure. He admitted that he wasn’t sure that that is what Mr. Goodwin said at the February meeting but is disappointed that that decision was made twenty years ago.
- Parking at Willard Street Market: Delivery trucks frequently double-park and block off the street. Director Goodkind recommended that Commissioner Wood call the police when he witnesses this happening, as DPW has no authority to ticket the illegal parking.

- East side sidewalk in front of Mater Christi School (Mansfield Avenue) needs repair. Director Goodkind said that it is on this year's list.

Commissioner Lavery

- Budgets: Attended the Department review which included the Mayor and interim CAO, etc. All departments will be asked for suggestions on closing gaps, and where spending hasn't reached expected expenditures; those funds may be used to offset FY13 gaps.

Item 18: COMMITTEE REPORTS: No reports.

Item 19: POLICY UPDATE: No policy updates.

Item 20: ADJOURNMENT: Commissioner Wood moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m.; Commissioner Sherman seconded. Unanimous approval.