

# South Burlington Planning & Zoning

## CityPlan 2024 Community Conversations

### Jobs & Economy

Tuesday, February 7, 2023

12 Attendees

[THESE NOTES REFLECT SUMMARIZED COMMENTS OF THE PUBLIC AT THE COMMUNITY CONVERSATION, NOT ANY COMMITMENT BY THE CITY TO ANY PARTICULAR POLICY POSITION; THEY ARE NOT VERBATIM QUOTES AND HAVE NOT BEEN EDITED]

- **Opportunity-oriented**
  - Strengths
    - World class businesses - Beta, OnLogic, Dynapower
    - We have small businesses
  - HOUSING
    - Not enough housing for the businesses, not enough people to work at the businesses
      - Need more housing at all levels, for all kinds of families, etc.
    - Wanting to look more broadly at the region - housing for the state, etc.
    - Not enough money to support state level policies if we don't have more business growth
    - HOUSING
      - Economic challenge
      - Cost for workforce to drive from other places
      - Acreage - how much is available in the tech park areas?
    - Issues with regulation for housing projects
    - Going to have a population increase to add workers to our businesses
    - Use of the land resources effectively - need to meet growth needs, but also be carbon neutral
  - Business types
    - Organic growth of different sizes of businesses - large businesses attract small ones, etc.
    - Don't think the City has gone out of its way to encourage business
    - Development of additional land is capped by the financing/capital available
  - Tax growth needed to sustain overall development - not just housing, also business and other revenue sources - evaluate how much growth we need to sustain City maintenance
  - Need to change the policies that restrict land development
  - Capacity in the existing built environment - increasing density in the built environment to accommodate the growth
    - Allowing increased density in the environments that they are in
  - Enhancing the retail footprint in South Burlington
    - Would like to take some of the local option tax back from Williston and Colchester

- Reinvest in the U Mall - people want to go somewhere for an experience
  - Flexibility in the regulations - form based code is restricting on the property
- **Human-focused**
  - Retail needs parking - development in Williston has been parking focused
    - Issue with leases on the large stores at the U Mall - visibility required for the large stores that prevent the development of the property along the street
  - Addressing issues with compliance required with the FBC
    - Need to be able to bridge the gap between existing buildings and new regulations
  - Driving needs to be planned for - people will be driving, if its EVs, something else, etc.
    - Still going to be a big part of our future
    - Not taking into account industrial and commercial activity
    - People coming in and leaving from other places - we are still reliant on driving and roads - and need to be focusing on carbon efficiency of driving
  - If we have infrastructure serving an area of our community, we should be able to develop it and use it efficiently
  - Changing zoning for Tesla was a pro
  - Economic development is done well when you meet multiple goals
    - Ecosystem services has a value to include in the comprehensive plan
    - Community open space amenities, not just density
  - Redevelopment of U-Mall
    - Option to have Higher Ground to the Sears site, close to student housing, existing parking, access, etc. instead of at Burton/near Queen City Park
  - Issue of coming up with the right mix of homes, businesses, etc.
- **Inclusive, Fair, & Just**
  - Housing
    - Issue of Spear Meadow - appealed too many times, made it unaffordable to anyone (\$700K+)
    - Adding ANY housing will improve the housing problems - people will buy that and move out of their home
    - Best thing will be to create more product
  - Dynapower - has 41 positions that are open and they can't fill
    - Why do all the businesses have open positions? We need to figure out how to attract people - they will train anyone
      - Looking for ways to advertise differently, etc.
  - Challenge to find people to work at the positions
  - Dynapower does national search for hiring
  - Affordability of living is an issue
- Townhomes are not a negative thing
  - Families choose to live in a townhome, or other multifamily, for varied reasons
    - Not requiring maintenance on the weekends, etc.
  - Need for missing middle housing - people who can afford more than an apartment or condo - and could have townhomes
  - Make sure there's quality space for the high density housing areas to have green space, open space, etc.
    - Including 3+ bedroom apartments for families