

# South Burlington Planning & Zoning CityPlan 2024 Community Conversations Energy & Climate Change

Wednesday, February 8, 2023

[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]

35 Attendees

## Human focused:

- My view is that we have strong environmental protection standards to help meet the goals
- human focus means meeting climate goals with affordability
- also about how people get around
- how we live our lives, how we build community
- The science is there, but the ability to get there is our ability to do it. Even if you're already embraced the idea, doing it is difficult.
- whatever you set for policies & goals, someone has to do it. If not marrying the two ends of the action needs not going to accomplish
- Is the City doing things? Yes, look at investments, TIF bond votes, staffing; so much that supports bike & pedestrian that supports circulation in the City
- Making progress, but still have a long way to go. Metric: if you had a 10-year old kid, would you feel comfortable with them going to the grocery store
- Input from citizens on city policy is crucial
- bring plan to being human-centered is where ecosystem science is going; glad this plan is focusing on this area. Actors & stakeholder have to be involved to connect the ecosystems and peoples needs. What is the implication of climate change and how to manage stakeholder process is important; would like to connect to the scientific community.
- greatest way of achieving change is people changing their story. Would love to hear the stories of people in the chamberlin neighborhood tell their stories of how the FAA work for sound has assisted their energy. Learn about homes adding PVs, heat pumps. People need to be telling their stories; are telling neighbors, and need to continue this. Bottom-up seems to work well. I think we all live in neighborhoods & all know people.
- flip the coin a little bit. Individual change will make a big difference but it won't happen without the intuitional change, incentives, etc. Infrastructure changes like the bike over the Interstate. Makes transportation decisions easier to make at an individual level.
- Would like to encourage the PC to think about being wider than just humans
- City tries to provide policy to create the opportunities for people (if you don't have a store nearby you can't walk to it. If you don't have a place to charge at your apartment, you can't do it, so city needs to put in the policy
- we won't get close to solutions unless we ALL get engaged. People changing their lawns, as an example. One I the think is challenging is how to we get to that point. And what is the City's part to help get us there? Is there a level below the City that connects to people? Not sure there is, and not sure the city is close enough to everybody?

- there are examples around the world where they have made changes quickly - Finland for example. Look at what they've done right. A lot of these are policies

### Equity / Affordability

- I think sometimes we set up a dichotomy of the "planet" versus the "people". We should flip it around to say how do we design the community for our needs of our future residents. Is the City going to enable the things that will allow us to live in the way we want in the future? Lots of tragedy of the commons examples. We'll need to vote and take action.
- Ebikes. Tech and afford are there. But infrastructure not.
- incrementality. Can we now say that all new homes must have solar on the roof? Every house in the neighborhood in Shelburne could be south facing and have solar on the roof. And also, we are a suburban community. Putting in busses, how many people would use? Tangentially: Lakeside neighborhood in Burlington adding homes and saying they don't want to impact environment, but are bisecting with Champlain parkway
- Like the idea of incrementality. Was concerned about reading somewhere that we're "rapidly implementing". The word I'd like to suggest is balance. Ebikes are great, but not everyone who's 77 will want to take them up. Not to mean doing slowly.
- Not sure what the City is doing about housing. Investing in new housing that is green - to hit two birds with one stone: housing and climate change both. This is a major problem for newcomers.
- Add "trust" to the equation. An important but can be elusive in work to effectuate change. Be transparent, bring data and sources when a subject is introduced.
- Building on subject of trust. Getting a quote on a heat pump system. If you get a quote for \$20k for a gold-plated system, did they offer the \$3.5k solution for a mini-split for 80% of the solution? How can the City help show what the typical cost for doing this?
- Equity. Some places to improve. For people who rent; have been nervous about bringing up to my landlord because I don't want my rent to go up more. Would be interested to provide resources on how renters could talk to their landlords. And resources to landlords to help do. Would also like EV, but live in condos, and would need our property manager do this. Can City help encourage them? As we think about transportation accessible to people with disabilities (and there is a huge variety of people with different abilities), thinking about people with different disabilities and helping them to meet their needs - asthma, anxiety, long-covid, mental health. I think there won't be a one-sized fits all; so thinking about how to consider their needs in all forms of transportation. I wonder if there would be assistance to those with disability to transition to EVs since they may not be able to use bikes/walking.
- A lot of what we've been talking about is what individuals can do. We're a diverse community. Many businesses are a part of the puzzle.
- school bussing and how to help (and admit that I'm one of those parents who will drop off)
- Efficiency VT incentives for landlords
- Need to keep in mind that there are many of our community members who are struggling with their bills for next week and next month. In terms of engaging in the process, ID what's the barrier (eg: dinner and childcare)
- looking out for those with needs doesn't mean other need to sacrifice.
- Critically important is to lead and syndicate solutions to neighboring communities and beyond.
- Project draw-down is an example of private businesses partnering. Project drawdown is an international research entity that publishes worldwide solutions. Focus is more on private business. Business community needs to see strength of partnerships; City needs to be leading and partnering and not competing.

- Reston VA has incredible bike-ped network. Can we study what's been successful and not successful?
- Need to include Climate Adaptation. How to we plan for that piece of it.
- One piece that is important is that move to clean energy has reached a critical mass, but it is a journey. A lot of progress is being made. Small steps lead to big actions. If there can be something that shows SB is leading, that will bring attention. Like the Tree City USA. Facilitating employment coming to here; support ability to import resources from neighboring. Need to support growth of employees and resources.
- In terms of adaptation, we need to think about both peace time and crisis time. Do we think in terms of crisis time - water, food, energy.