

# Keeping Up With the Council

Tim Miller, City Council

August 20, 2024

While I usually do these summaries to cover the entire month, I thought it important to deviate from that a bit and cover the August 14th meeting separately.

The 5th item from that agenda brought Champlain Valley Exposition Director Tim Shea back before the City Council to continue to discuss and address any additional questions or concerns the Council had regarding the proposal from CVE for additional sound waivers. Additionally, I chose to start here because it has the potential to have a large impact on our community. No action was taken at this meeting, and the Council plans to continue the conversation at another meeting in the near future. We have talked about this a couple of times now and there has been a tremendous amount of feedback already, but if you have an opinion that has not been shared, we encourage you to do that before our next meeting. The City has added a form on the City's website where you can provide feedback, or you can find our email addresses here:

<https://www.essexjunction.org/boards/city-council>. I strongly encourage everyone to watch the video, not only for the presentation but for the conversation that follows.  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvo5ZN\\_jXL0&t=6743s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvo5ZN_jXL0&t=6743s)

The meeting Wednesday led off with the appointment of Cristin Gildea to the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission. Cristin also currently serves Essex Junction as a member of the Development Review Board, and we are excited to have her engagement on both.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvo5ZN\\_jXL0&t=1054s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvo5ZN_jXL0&t=1054s)

As construction on the Crescent Connector is coming to a close with a scheduled completion around September 18<sup>th</sup> (this remains subject to change), the council was given a presentation by City Engineer Rick Hamlin on the new signals and traffic patterns. There are some substantial changes to traffic patterns around Maple and Park Streets. Of particular note – travelers on Maple Street will no longer be able to make a left-hand turn onto Park St at Five Corners; instead travelers will go left on the new Crescent Connector road. Please take a moment and familiarize yourself with the changes:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvo5ZN\\_jXL0&t=1422s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvo5ZN_jXL0&t=1422s)

Lightshift Energy spoke about a proposed battery electric storage project on the GlobalFoundries campus. The stated intention of the project is to reduce their electric consumption during peak times and provide broader clean energy and electric reliability benefits to the region. GlobalFoundries is preparing to submit a Certificate of Public Good petition to the state Public Utility Commission for the storage facility. That presentation is here,

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvo5ZN\\_jXL0&t=3065s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvo5ZN_jXL0&t=3065s)

Clayton Clark, the General Manager from Green Mountain Transit, joined via Zoom to speak about the funding gap that GMT is currently experiencing. While it's too early to tell exactly how rider services will

be impacted, GMT is preparing a service reduction plan based on an anticipated 30% reduction in services and will be holding public hearings on that plan this fall. There is also a potential for increased cost to municipalities. There were a number of scenarios to help close their gap, and this was more informative rather than an action item for us at this time.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvo5ZN\\_jXL0&t=4331s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvo5ZN_jXL0&t=4331s)

The meeting then brought us Essex Junction's results from the VCLT Welcoming and Engaging Communities Cohort that was done in partnership with Abundant Sun. Taking part in this cohort were the City Manager, City Council President, and our Human Resources Director.

The discussion about those results is linked here.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvo5ZN\\_jXL0&t=9457s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvo5ZN_jXL0&t=9457s)

On a personal note, I just wanted to take a moment and thank everyone who has reached out to any member of the council. The community engagement has been encouraging. I would love to see it continue to grow, and not just for the hot-button issues. I will continue to say that the more engagement we receive, the stronger our sense of direction will be.

The Champlain Valley Fair starts August 23rd, and Back-to-School is upon us as we hold on to the last drops of summer; it won't be long before we will be in the throes of autumn, so I encourage everyone to take a moment and appreciate where we are today.