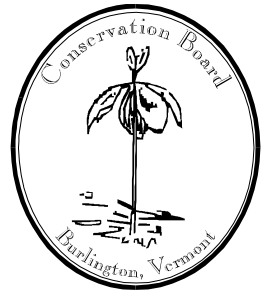


Burlington Conservation Board

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*Rebecca Roman, Chair
Ryan Crehan, Vice Chair
Zoe Richards
Don Meals
Ethan Ely
Dale Azaria
Evan Horne
Kelly Farrell
Alan Reichard*



Conservation Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 4, 2026 – 5:30 pm
Remote & In-Person Meeting

Attendance

- **Board Members:** Rebecca Roman (RR), Evan Horne (EH), Ethan Ely (EE), Don Meals (DM), Kelly Farrell (KF), Zoe Richards (ZR), Dale Azaria (DA), Alan Reichard (AR)
- **Absent:** Ryan Crehan (RC)
- **Public:** Andres Torizzo
- **Staff:** Scott Gustin (Permitting & Inspections), Dan Cahill (Parks & Rec)

RR, chair, called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

Minutes

April 6, 2026 minutes

A MOTION was made by DM and SECONDED by DA:

Approve the April 6 minutes with correction to the date in the header and note “remote” meeting.

Vote: 8-0-0, motion carried

Board Comment

EE said he’s moving out of Burlington, so he’ll have to step down.

ZR mentioned spectacular nature day last month. Over 1,000 native plants were given away.

DM is there any update on use of the Legacy Fund to fill budget holes? RR, yes, its been dropped.

RR, next month, Sarah Morgan from the Office of City Planning is coming next month to talk Plan NNE. She, ZR, and SG have met with Sarah to better balance the Plan NNE with the Open Space Plan and the climate addendum. We also talked about the future civic assets study and the need to include ecological values in that.

Public Comment

None.

Open Space Subcommittee

RR said we talked about the Tree Board and Pilot Project items. We’ll talk about them as agenda items tonight.

Project Review

1. ZP-26-103; 0-64 Southwind Dr (RL, Ward 5) Spencer Karins / Southwind HOA

Proposed retrofit of existing stormwater treatment pond into a gravel wetland.

Andres Torizzo appeared on behalf of the application.

Andres Torizzo overviewed the project. The project is a collaboration between the city and the property owners. It's a stormwater retrofit of an existing stormwater feature near Flynn Ave. It handles much of the runoff from Southwind. The existing stormwater facility is old and in need of improvement. The state's 3-acre rule is spurring this project.

Andres said the old defunct basin will become a gravel wetland. There are two pre-treatment hydrodynamic separators. All of the work will remain within the existing footprint. In terms of permitting, it needs a state wetlands permit.

RR, anything else in the project plans you'd like to point out? Andres, no.

ZR, is there much tree removal? Andres, there are some trees that have grown up within the stormwater basin that will need to be removed. There's little disturbance outside of the basin. The spillway out of the stormwater facility will need work as well.

DM, as to the current status of the stormwater basin, is it no longer performing as intended? Andres, it's still working, but there's been a lot of sediment accumulation over time, and the metal piping is deteriorating.

DM, has there been modeling of the proposed gravel wetland? Andres, yes, there has. The gravel wetland will handle the target water quality flow.

EE, gravel wetlands are considered one of the best ways to remove phosphorous.

KF, where will the seed mix be applied? Andres, the upland slopes will be a conservation seed mix. Within the wet areas, a wetland mix will be planted.

A MOTION was made by ZR and SECONDED by KF:

Recommend approval as presented.

Vote: 8-0-0, motion carried.

Update & Discussion

1. Tree Board and Stewardship Zones Pilot

Dan Cahill overviewed the Tree Board concept and discussions with the group working on the tree ordinance. The Parks Commission presently serves as the tree board; however, they are not active in that role. With where the tree ordinance draft is going, it seems the BCB would be a better fit for that role.

RR, the idea is that BCB would serve as the Tree Board. There is state statute as to shade trees. SG recapped the potential roles for the Tree Board (review process for tree removal and mitigation, community forum for tree-related matters {i.e. ash tree removal}, consulting with the city arborist for annual goals as to tree management).

DM wondered how much of the Board's time could be taken up by folks weighing in as to particular tree removal.

EH wondered about potential time as well. SG noted the BCB see projects including tree removal within natural resource areas and their buffers already. Tree removal projects outside of those areas typically total less than 10 applications per year. If we end up being just a tree board and nothing else, we'll have to make changes.

RR, BCB holding this responsibility makes a lot of sense as to expertise and experience on the Board.

DM, even if we all agreed right now to make the change, it will still take time to get the charter change.

RR pointed out the stewardship zone provisions within the new Open Space Plan.

KF, it would be great if there could be follow up evaluation of successful implementation (i.e. like improved biodiversity).

Dan Cahill touched on the stewardship zone pilot. Maybe the focus is on ecosystem resiliency with native plantings. It may be possible to prioritize certain actions annually through the Legacy Fund grant program. A certain amount may be set aside for those priorities.

Dan mentioned the tree data that we've got from the Open Space Plan work. Is there a way to address concern about loss of trees, like the ash trees, to promote community healing with something like inclusive neighborhood planting events for installing new native trees?

RR, would we be open to having a subset of the monies allocated to the pilot program?

KF, would the form be aimed at existing organizations, or more of a parcel-based thing? SG, we envision something that's neighborhood-based.

KF, maybe create a template guide. ZR, yes, we're looking to make something that's transferable.

EH, we want to make sure this is equitable. Engage Burlingtonians that wouldn't normally be involved.

DA pointed out that there are no stewardship zones in the Old North End. ZR, they are focused around natural areas.

RR, we're looking to get more folks involved in our nature based climate solutions grant program. Maybe a different title (not stewardship zone) would be appropriate. ZR, it will be neighborhood focused. DM said he can think of reasons why the stewardship zones should be targeted.

SG mentioned the need to start small with a pilot to get it working and evaluate it. Then, open the door for wider opportunity.

Dan, we'll come back to the Board with a draft concept for the Board to react to. Scientific and ecological impacts are valuable, but so are educational and engagement opportunities.

Executive Session

The Board moved into executive session at 6:39 PM.

The Board moved out of executive session at 6:51 PM.

Adjournment

6:51 PM.