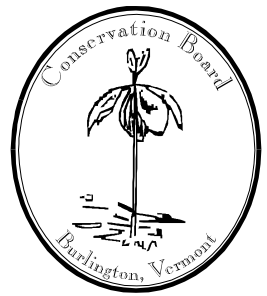


Burlington Conservation Board

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



Conservation Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 6, 2026 – 5:30 pm
Remote & In-Person Meeting

Attendance

- **Board Members:** Rebecca Roman (RR), Zoe Richards (ZR), Alan Reichard (AR), Ryan Crehan (RC)
- **Absent:** Dale Azaria (DA), Kelly Farrell (KF), Evan Horne (EH)
- **Public:** Sharon Bushor, Marty Spaulding, Nick Warner
- **Staff:** Scott Gustin (Permitting & Inspections), Dan Cahill (Parks & Rec), Charles Dillard, Sarah Morgan (City Planning)

RR, chair, called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

Minutes

June 1, 2026 minutes

Defer due to no quorum.

Board Comment

RR has seen ongoing communications around ash tree management. Can we make a post on Front Porch Forum sharing information about EAB and give the city arborist an opportunity to weigh in? RC, makes sense, especially given the Board's role in tree management.

Public Comment

Sharon Bushor spoke to the Auer property item. Any property acquisition needs to be in keeping with Burlington's conservation priorities, even if the purchaser is not the city itself. Should there be criteria to consider? How much money is in the Conservation Legacy Fund now? I don't know if what I've mentioned was discussed during executive sessions. She supports acquisition of the property. RR said the allocation of Legacy Fund monies annually is 30% NBCS grant, 30% to stewardship, and 40% for acquisition. Staff is working on getting quarterly reports for the funds' status.

Open Space Subcommittee

RR, we focused on the would-be pilot project for supporting native plantings in private properties within stewardship zones. ZR, discussion included what's under way already and whether there opportunity for coordination.

Project Review

1. **ZP-26-286; 110 Institute Rd (I, Ward 4) Burlington School Dept / David Marshall**
Proposed construction of an auxiliary storage building and a salt shed at the north end of campus.

The programs and services of the Dept. of Permitting & Inspections are accessible to people with disabilities. For accessibility information call 865-7188.

Marty Spaulding appeared on behalf of the application.

Marty overviewed the project. It includes two accessory buildings within the Arms Forest natural area buffer zone. The two buildings include a utility garage and a salt shed. The construction site is asphalt or grassy vegetation.

RC, can they be accessed without further disturbance to the buffer? Marty, yes. RC said he appreciates that construction will stay within the disturbed area. All Board members present supported the projects.

Update & Discussion

1. Plan NNE Follow Up

Discussion of current draft of Plan New North End

Sarah Morgan & Charles Dillard appeared on behalf of this item.

Sarah Morgan noted the intent of tonight's presentation. A July 28 Planning Commission public hearing is scheduled.

Sarah presented the timeline for Plan NNE. The effort kicked off November of 2024. Sarah Presented slides with some of the primary themes: sense of community, housing opportunity, multimodal transportation, place-making, and urban design. She displayed a "focus area" map with 5 different nodes.

Sarah touched on housing and community spaces on city-owned land. It aligns with, and furthers, the Mayor's housing strategy. Significant additional study and public engagement is needed. She noted that building on public land may make housing more affordable, fund the park system, and model what sustainable development looks like.

Charles Dillard reiterated that a civic assets study is needed. Engagement will continue with the planBTV 2050 effort. There will be additional community engagement at least through September 2026. Park acreage and program replacement will need subsequent consideration. He also mentioned the role of VT's CHIP financing. Reform the city's process for procuring public-private partnerships.

Sarah noted conservation-related revisions: Nature based climate solutions have been referenced, reiterates transportation framework's alignment with the open space plan, states the opportunity for integrating OSP goals at recreation waypoints, identifies key ecological connections identified in the OSP as they relate to the mobility network. It cites the need for additional community gardens, ecological corridor design guidance, and includes a map of ecological connectivity and how the two plans relate.

RR, on pg. 14, reference to ecological framework for building on city-owned land. What is that? Charles, the recommendations are cumulative.

RC, since you were here last, are there any significant changes? Charles, we are not likely to include the development visions in the plan. They have spawned significant confusion and misinformation around the city intent to build on parklands. ZR noted the draft plans still include them. Charles, they will be removed. The revised plan will be the focus of the upcoming neighborhood meeting on the 22nd of this month.

RC, what is the project timeframe? Charles, the neighborhood plans have a 20-year time horizon. It may change sooner, depending on changing environmental factors. He would like to change to a 5-year timeline for neighborhood plans and to work on them, in different areas, continuously. Charles, we would like to explore reintroducing a requirement for publicly accessible open spaces in the PUD standards. RR, in the urban design section, all of the community feedback sections were rewritten. I'm curious to hear more about that. Charles noted disagreement around parking at Starr Farm Park. Some folks said more parking is needed while others said less is needed and that it should be bicycle- and pedestrian-centric.

ZR supports pulling the conceptual development visions out of the plan.

2. Conservation Legacy Fund

Consideration of funding request by WVPD.

Nick Warner appeared on behalf of this application.

SG mentioned that this is an action item. We don't have a quorum. Let's aim to get a show of support from those present tonight and hold a "special" meeting just for this item before it goes to City Council.

RR agreed on that plan.

Dan Cahill noted his support for the acquisition.

Nick Warner addressed Sharon Bushor's comments from earlier in the meeting. The property will have to go under a conservation easement. Conservation will be in perpetuity. The conservation easement will be co-held with the Lake Champlain Land Trust. Access to the site remains in discussion. It has ready bike path access. The road is a dirt road that is basically deeded driveways.

RR, do you have a copy of the conservation easement yet? Nick, not yet. Lake Champlain Land Trust are co-holders of the conservation easement at the former marina. RR, be sure you bake in any anticipated needs into the easement.

RC, some of our Legacy Fund monies have gone to the best projects like Rock Point.

ZR, it would be great to put the Legacy Fund logo onsite to make folks aware of the fund's role.

All Board members present supported the acquisition funding request.

Adjournment

7:03 PM.