

Burlington Conservation Board Open Space Subcommittee

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Open Space Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

August 3, 2026 at 4:30 PM

311 North Avenue, Conference Room or Remote via Zoom

Present: Scott Gustin, Dan Cahill, Sarah Morgan, Zoe Richards, Rebecca Roman, Dale Azaria, Laura Hill, Michelle Lockhart, & Sharon Bushor.

I. Public Comment

Sharon Bushor was present and had comments for the full Conservation Board meeting. She supports the TPL proposal. She also spoke in support of the native vegetation pilot project.

II. Discussion Items

- TPL Ecosystem Services Proposal

SG commented that workflow 3 in the proposal is no longer needed. Sarah Morgan provided background relative to last week's Planning Commission meeting and the decision to drop city parks from consideration for development potential. The anticipated civic assets study will include all city lands, but part two of the study will exclude development potential on city parks and conserved open spaces.

DA and RR asked for clarification. Sarah Morgan replied that there will be a study of all city-owned lands following adoption of PlanNNE to get a comprehensive understanding of those city assets. Consideration of development potential will exclude city parkland and conserved open spaces. SG noted next steps, follow up with TPL to drop workflow 3 and to bring the full Conservation Board an action item next month.

- NBCS Pilot Project

Dan Cahill overviewed the memo relative to the pilot project. He's looking to bring the full Board a more fleshed out proposal next month and the anticipated NOFO. Items to consider include, but not are limited to, amount of available funding, project size, what are the goals? Emphasize work within stewardship zones.

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Sarah Morgan, outside of stewardship zones, perhaps consider proposals that could be a first step towards something larger in areas lacking stewardship zones like the ONE and Downtown. Consider creative place-making, ecological and social significance.

Michelle Lockhart, the BLUE program will have some sort of landscaping category that incorporates / emphasizes native vegetation for a stormwater credit. The landscaping category would be new. Any residential property can participate.

Discussion about areas outside of stewardship zones ensued. RR noted that as a pilot project, focus on stewardship zones is a solid approach. It can expand and evolve over time. Do we know what a given project should cost? Dan, if we think through the lens of square footage and plants, we have good numbers.

Laura Hill, my students can be resources for this work. During the winter, plants are propagated in green houses from plants that were collected in the prior season. Her students have helped with project planning. ZR noted that the quality of work done by Laura's students is very good. Michelle, students could be involved with plant maintenance over time. Laura Hill said that could be done, particularly over the summer, but that would require funding for interns. During the school year, funding would not be needed.

III. Adjournment

5:28 PM.