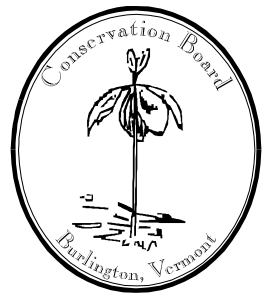


Burlington Conservation Board

645 Pine Street
Burlington, VT 05401
<http://www.burlingtonvt.gov/DPI/CB>
Telephone: (802) 865-7189

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



Conservation Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, August 3, 2026 – 5:30 pm

Remote & In-Person Meeting

Attendance

- **Board Members:** Rebecca Roman (RR), Zoe Richards (ZR), Alan Reichard (AR), Ryan Crehan (RC), Dale Azaria (DA), Kelly Farrell (KF), Evan Horne (EH), Lee Toomey (LT)
- **Absent:**
- **Public:**
- **Staff:** Scott Gustin (Permitting & Inspections), Dan Cahill (Parks & Rec)

RR, chair, called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m.

New Board member, Lee Toomey, was introduced to the Conservation Board.

Minutes

June 1, July 6, & 16, 2026 minutes

A MOTION was made by DA and SECONDED by EH:

Approve the minutes as written.

Vote: 8-0-0, motion carried.

Board Comment

RC noted he went to the Planning Commission meeting last week re: PlanNNE. References to development in parks will be taken out. There were a lot of articulate people who came out to speak to the matter and in favor of open space. RR noted that it's a win for us and the community. We as a board are not anti-development. The work that we've done to highlight all of the values of our open spaces is being considered.

Public Comment

None.

Open Space Subcommittee

RR, we spoke about the revised TPL proposal and the new info that PlanNNE is dropping parks and conserved open spaces from consideration of development potential. Also, we discussed and further fleshed out the NBCS pilot project centered on native plantings in stewardship zones.

Annual Organizational Meeting

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

1. Nomination and election of Board Chair, Vice Chair, and Long Range Planning Committee representative

A MOTION was made by KF to nominate the current slate of Board officers (RR Chair, RC Vice Chair, & ZR on Long Range) to continue for another year and SECONDED by DA.

Vote: 8-0-0, motion carried.

Update & Discussion

1. Conservation Board Retreat

Discussion & creation of goals for a Conservation Board retreat

RR provided an overview. We've done one in the past. A retreat provides an opportunity to ground ourselves in what we're doing and what we want to prioritize. Our prior retreat identified some priorities from our former Open Space Plan. That plan has since been updated. Kelli Perkins can join us to help facilitate discussion around intersectionality of outdoor spaces. Any other thoughts?

ZR, we assigned ourselves a lot of tasks in the Open Space Plan. We can talk about what that involves and possibly talk timelines. DA, we can identify priorities.

RC agrees with Open Space Plan items. In the past few years, we've dealt with shorelands, wetlands, and steep slopes. We can make significant changes. ZR, we don't need to solve things in our retreat, we can figure out goal-setting. DA agreed. DA said she doesn't really understand the relationship between the Open Space Subcommittee and the full Conservation Board. It feels like a work group. It may be beneficial to better define.

SG noted that the date will be in September, a week later due to Labor Day. He asked Dan Cahill to reserve this space. We'll aim for a longer form format and avoid any application reviews. We will have some action items at the beginning. RC encouraged folks to attend in-person. ZR, have it as in-person only. RR agreed. ZR suggested a reflection on the year we've had – particularly things that came up that have not before. Consider SWAT analysis for moving ahead.

KF likes the SWAT analysis for identifying our strengths and determining what we most want to work towards. We'll aim for a 5pm start. Food and beverage from City Market will be provided.

RR left at 6:09 PM.

2. Ecosystem Services Analysis

Preview of anticipated ecosystem services analysis and funding request

SG overviewed that the study is and why we're pursuing it. SG also noted dropping workflow 3 from the proposal. As the city's parklands and conserved green spaces will not be considered for development potential in the anticipated civic assets study, workflow 3 is moot. The proposal will be back as an action item in September. ZR, concurred and said she is interested in learning what the analysis tells us. It will help us understand what healthy ecosystems do for us.

RC noted a comment that he heard at a Planning Commission meeting about being concerned with monetizing the value of green spaces. RC is interested in seeing what TPL has done for this type of analysis in other communities. ZR, is the outcome limited to monetary value? SG, no, but it will be part of the study.

KF was curious to hear more about the decision-making framework. EH, maybe it is worth spending the money to have it in our back pocket. DA, who's asking for the analysis, and how will it be used? SG noted if we go with work stream 3, we need to be prepared for continuous stakeholder engagement with the usual folks but also with the planning office and administration. RC said it seems like kicking the

hornets' nest and is unnecessary. ZR concurred. RC, the goal is broadly about supporting greater implementation of NBCS. EH, maybe adapt the peer-review subtask from work flow 3 to work flows 1 and 2.

KF, the Open Space Plan broadly defines Open Space. She's curious to know what types TPL will use in this analysis: lawns, gardens, forest, etc. ZR agreed on being specific about what's included in the analysis.

3. Draft amended vegetation ordinance

Review and discussion of latest draft of the amended ordinance

SG gave overview of the draft ordinance and the process thus far and coming up. Dan Cahill noted that authorities have been spelled out, inclusive of tree warden and deputy tree warden. The Conservation Board will serve as the tree board for the purposes of this ordinance. We've drafted standards around collecting vegetation in public spaces. We have worked to establish values for trees within the context of application reviews.

KF, as to the heritage tree definition, clarify DBH and/or age threshold.

ZR, in Sec. 2.6 definition, include flooding and flash flooding. Also, in Sec. 2.16, should we put in "native" bees and pollinating insects? KF, yes. DA, is "urban wild" in the text of the ordinance? If not, it can be removed. EH & KF both suggested more fully fleshing out vegetation varieties if there is to be a list.

KF, somewhere in Section 7 put in prohibition of soil compaction within tree drip lines.

SG, reference to Sec. 9.2 s/be 9.1 in Sec. 8.5.

DA, Sec. b 2 for green stormwater infrastructure has a typo. DA pointed out the alternatives for caliper to caliper mitigation are subject to BCB review. EH, sounds like the proposal comes through us first.

KF, is the violation penalty enough to not be worth it for the applicant? SG noted the zoning enforcement penalty of up to \$200 per day. It almost never is actually a full \$200 per day. It is a court-imposed fee. Frequently, zoning enforcement includes a stipulation agreement with a smaller penalty fee and corrective action prior to reaching a court trial.

EH, plantings in general should be subject to Conservation Board review.

Dan Cahill, should we try to define value for trees? ZR, I don't think we're there yet. RC agreed. We don't want to go too far.

DA, it looks like the city arborist will be a lot more involved. SG, he's involved in the working group. Dan Cahill noted that he is the deputy tree warden.

LT, what about vegetation other than trees?

KF, refer to herbaceous vegetation rather than to specifics as to non-tree vegetation.

Adjournment

7:16 PM.