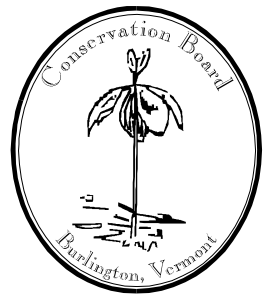


Burlington Conservation Board

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



Conservation Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 14, 2026 – 5:00 pm

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:** None
- **Public:** None
- **Staff:** Scott Gustin (Permitting & Inspections), Dan Cahill, VJ Comai (Parks & Rec), Dr. Kelli Perkins (REIB)

RR, chair, called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

Minutes

August 3, 2026 minutes

A MOTION was made by DA and SECONDED by AR:

Approve the minutes as written.

Vote: 5-0-0, motion carried. (RC LT, KF not yet present)

Public Comment

None.

Update & Discussion

1. Ecosystem Services Analysis

Consideration of ecosystem services analysis proposal and funding request

RR overviewed the proposed analysis and why we're pursuing it. SG noted that the Parks & Recreation Commission voted to approve it last week, and he mentioned next steps with the Board of Finance and the City Council if the Conservation Board approves the request tonight.

A MOTION was made by ZR and SECONDED by KF:

Approve the funding request for the ecosystem services analysis.

Vote: 8-0-0, motion carried.

2. Draft amended vegetation ordinance

Consideration of amended vegetation ordinance

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

Dan Cahill provided context and intent for the proposed vegetation ordinance amendment.

SG presented slides outlining the major features of the amended ordinance. He noted the draft ordinance will proceed to City Council for a first read on September 28 if the Conservation Board recommends approval tonight.

DA noted that the amendment has come a long way since the initial draft.

A MOTION was made by KF and SECONDED by DA:

Recommend approval of the amended vegetation ordinance.

Vote: 8-0-0, motion carried.

Conservation Board Retreat

Presentation by Dr. Kelli Perkins focused on outdoor spaces in America and follow up Board discussion.

Following discussion of Dr. Perkins' presentation and discussion, KF offered paw paw seedlings that she's grown.

RR overviewed board responsibilities and subcommittees. Open Space Subcommittee meetings are hour-long work sessions open to any board member who's interested in whatever is being worked on. The Long Range Planning Committee is tied to the Planning Commission and meets as-needed to talk long range items.

Board members expressed interest in improving the format and facilitation of the annual joint meeting.

RR noted additional work items that are underway:

- Specimen tree map
- Wetlands ordinance amendment
- Legacy fund (funding and conservation infrastructure)
- Vegetation ordinance
- Ecosystem services assessment
- Communications collaboration with Parks Communications staff

RC noted shoreline standards that have been established

KF, are there things we'd like to get ahead of? RR, this is something to consider as part of the SWOT analysis.

Board discussion: What's your passion?

DA, concern about climate change brought her into this realm. Her passion is protecting Lake Champlain. We need places to cool off, to protect our drinking water.

AR wants to be proactive and work to fix things. As an educator, he sees a lack of environmental education. Let's help kids care about where they live.

RC, the NNE schools and parks are close together, but there's not much operational connection among them. He's interested in making those connections.

ZR, climate change is an area the Conservation Board can focus on supporting (native plants, nature connections for students). What is our role in elevating nature based climate solution work?

KF, the biodiversity crises. It is just as dire but less reversible than the climate crisis.

RC, make change part of the community fabric.

EH noted some quick wins like listing out the local environmental organizations and what they're up to.

DA said she feels like she has capacity to help with the work of the Board outside of meetings.

LT is super passionate about the non-human inhabitants of Burlington. Interested in habitat protection and steering growth into appropriate locations. Curious about community forest funding and how that might be leveraged towards conservation.

RR summed up two broad themes: 1) Land protection and using the Board's soft power 2) Place-based connections, land stewardship and connections.

ZR, we can elevate the folks doing this work.

Adjournment

7:50 PM.