

Burlington Planning Commission

149 Church Street

Burlington, VT 05401

www.burlingtonvt.gov/cityplanning

Andy Montroll, Chair
Michael Gaughan, Vice Chair
Alexander Friend
Erhard Mahnke
Erin Malone
Ryan Nick
Julia Randall

Burlington Planning Commission

Tuesday, September 15th, 2026, 6:30 P.M.

Hybrid Meeting via Zoom and in City Hall's Bushor Conference Room

Draft Minutes

Commissioners Present:

- | | |
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| ☒ Andy Montroll | ☒ Erhard Mahnke |
| ☐ Ryan Nick | ☒ Erin Malone |
| ☒ Alexander Friend | ☒ Julia Randall |
| ☒ Michael Gaughan | |

Virtual

City Staff Present:

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| ☒ Charles Dillard, Director, Office of City Planning |
| ☒ Sarah Morgan, Principal Planner |
| ☒ Scott Gustin, Division Manager, P&I |

Public Attendance: Alice Rudd, Sharon Bushor, Audrey Whalen, Melo Grant

1. Agenda

Call to Order: 18:34:00

Changes to Agenda:

- Added item 6, update on the City's Tier 1A application.

2. Public Forum

- A. Rudd: Expressed strong opposition to planBTV NNE, highlighting the soft site analysis that reviewed all parcels for potential development, including a Jewish cemetery. Called for the plan to be sent back for a full year for additional community engagement.
- S. Bushor, asked, "Is the currently defined open space is protected or not?" She went on to ask questions about the North Ave. Alliance Church and the Ethan Allen Shopping Center. Expressed concerns over shared use paths. Went on to share thoughts about Tier 1A amendment and application.
- A. Whalen, expressed concerns about Act250 exemption and the potential for lack of environmental review.
- Councilor Grant raised concerns related to fences, asking for a status update on the past amendment.
 - C. Dillard responded letting Councilor Grant know that the City Council Ordinance Committee deferred action for the time being but that he would circle back.

3. Chair's Report 18:53:00

- No Report Given.

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4. Director's Report 18:53:00

- Initially no report to be given but C.Dillard responded to a question by E.Malone regarding Vegetation Ordinance.

5. Updated 2026 Meeting Schedule 18:56:00

- S.Morgan shared a slide outlining the updated 2026 meeting schedule.

6. Review of planBTV New North End 18:57:00

- S.Morgan presented. Gave summary of the 9/10 Community Meeting. Two primary provisions following that meeting; one related to soft-site analysis and the other being Bend Ethan Allen Design Vision.
- Changes Warned for Public Hearing as presented on October 6th at 7pm***
Motioned by: E.Mahnke
Seconded by: E.Malone
- E.Mahnke asked about the significance of the Soft Site score in regards to the inclusion of an existing cemetery. C.Dillard responded. S.Morgan also commented on the City's limited GIS data and lack of privately owned cemetery data.
- E.Mahnke suggests an amendment to the plan and requested that the cemetery parcel be re-scored to 1.
- *Amended* Changes Warned for Public Hearing as presented on October 6th at 7pm***
Motioned by: E.Mahnke
Seconded by: E.Malone
Vote: Passes, Unanimous

7. Tier 1A Update

- C.Dillard gave some background information on Act 47. This is the legislation that created the statewide housing target. Act 181 serves as the mechanism that facilitating hitting those housing targets. Goes on to cover Act 250 exemptions, Act 181 design structure and the Tier 1A Proposal.
- E.Mahnke voiced concerns over staff capacity as it was a topic that had been flagged in the previous meeting in terms of increasing development expect from Act 250. S.Gustin responded to these concerns. Stated that it is unclear how much staff capacity will be affected as most Act 250 permits lack geo-referencing. Workload will become clearer in time..
- M.Gaughan asked what the appeal/approval process would look like. Determined that it would be based on current ordinance. Continued to express concerns about potential for inadvertently restricting themselves when adopting this language from the state.
- E.Mahnke asked if the responsibility of identifying and geolocating these projects should not fall on the City. Expresses concerns about the map readability.
- S.Morgan shares document with the commission to illustrate the CDO and Act250.

8. Proposed CDO Amendment ZA-27-03 Natural Resource Overlay Updates 19:49:00

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- Three parts to this amendment
 - Article 4, Natural Resource Overlay District: Wetlands
 - Article 4, Natural Resource Overlay District: Significant Natural Communities and Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species
 - Article 13, Specimen Trees
- S.Gustin shared state and local overlay wetland maps. M.Gaughan comments on the layers and discrepancies or lack thereof.
- E.Mahnke asked S.Gustin if in his professional opinion, the city significantly adding to the current wetland areas. S.Gustin responded, No. Any additional wetland areas identified by the state to be added are very small.
- S.Morgan moved on to the second item, Natural Communities etc. This amendment serves as a solution to bridge the gap to get to Tier 1A. Establishes review process for properties that are 10 acres or more.
- M.Gaughan again voiced concern and asked the commission in as many words to proceed with caution. His main concern is unforeseen restrictions/consequences down the road.
- E.Manhke voiced opinion about the density of language and suggested that it may be beneficial to simplify for readability and understandability.
- S.Morgan continued to the third item, Specimen Tree definition. Language of definition is proposed to be aligned with the Vegetation ordinance.

Motion: Proposed Amendment go to Public Hearing 20:39:00

Motioned by: E.Mahnke

Seconded by: J.randall

Vote: Passes, one abstention by M.Gaughan

Referred for public hearing on October 6th

9. Commissioner Items 20:40:00

- J.Randall called attention to the closure of Radio Bean. Asks commission to support local venues and cites closure of other locations recently, Nectar's etc.
- J.Randall called attention to the petition for two way bike lane on South Union St.

10. Adopt Minutes and Accept Communications

Action: Adopt Minutes

Motion by: E.Mahnke

Seconded by: E.Malone

Vote: Passes

Notes or Corrections: August 11th IZ meeting, Proposal 3, note to be adjusted

11. Adjournment

Action: Adjourn

Time of Adjournment: 20:45:00

Motion by: J.Randall

Seconded by: E.Malone

Vote: Passes