

Burlington Planning Commission

149 Church Street
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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, July 28, 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 | |

City Staff Present:

- | |
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| ☒ Charles Dillard, Director, Office of
City Planning |
| ☒ Sarah Morgan, Principal Planner |

1. Agenda

Call to Order: 6:51pm

Changes to Agenda:

2. Chair's Report

No Report shared.

3. Director's Report

No Report Shared.

4. Adopt Minutes and Accept Communications

Action: Motion to Accept

Motion by: E.Mahnke

Seconded by: A.Montroll

Vote: Unanimous

Notes or Corrections: None

5. Public Hearing for proposed neighborhood plan: planBTV New North End

- **The Planning Commission will not take a vote on whether to refer the current draft plan to the City Council during this Public Hearing.** This hearing will be used as an opportunity for residents to share their comments and feedback with the Commission.
- **Presentation on planBTV New North End from Staff**
S.Morgan and A.Montroll gave open remarks and overview of plan prior to taking questions in the Public Forum.

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Public Forum related to planBTV New North End:

No Name Given: Asks Bank Parcel be removed from housing opportunity maps. Cited legal challenged due to restrictive covenants. Submitted pre-suit and formal objection.

No Name Given: States strong opposition to inclusion of parks and green spaces in the plan. Asks, "Do today's budget issues justify the permanent sacrifice of our public parks and green spaces?"

E. Litwin: Acknowledges speakers from Ward 7 and thanks Chair and Planning Commission.

Sharon Bushor: Noted her attendance at Miller Center meeting and thanked S.Morgan for conducting a difficult meeting well. Notes the benefits to the NNE included in the plan and asks community for support. Goes on to share concern for building on green spaces.

M.Mechanic: Ask for clarification if Starr Farm and Ethan Allen Parks are still being considered for development. C.Dillard responds; asks if community to specify if there is support for recreation facilities in the parks and notes illustrations have been removed. S.Morgan responds to side question asking for definition of "City Land" to include parks, parking lots, other lots, etc.

R.Crean: Cites community sentiment of mistrust of the process. Requests plan is rejected unless all parks and green spaces are removed.

G.Carlos: "Parkland is sacrosanct. It needs to be available to all Burlington residents in perpetuity."

C.Whiting: Suggests that a member of the NNE community be used as a mouthpiece to raise support for the plan.

G.Dragon: In support of this plan. Believed this plan will transform the NNE in a positive way. Acknowledges points made by opposition. Refers to specific benefits of the plan such as transportation access and safety.

E.Gould: Frequents both parks extensively. Passionate about providing affordable housing in the NNE. Supports proposal for Starr Farm Park.

L.Davidson: Concerned about differentiation between publicly owned land vs. park land. Specifies building on publicly owned land is positive and beneficial and that building on park land is not.

S.Smith: Thanks S.Morgan. Asks for clarification on who wrote the plan and data sources as well as storm and wastewater mitigation, etc.

S.Carpenter: Looks forward to seeing the public asset study. Wants to see growth and is in general support of plan.

B.Selder: Notes plan includes reference to previous plans but is concerned that there are two missing, specifically the Open Space Protection Plan. He does not support building on the parks. S.Morgan clarifies that plan is referenced throughout the plan.

A.Rudd: Proposes scrapping NNE plan draft and starting over. Raises concerns over overflow parking, infrastructure upgrade to the bike path and habitat loss and groundwater runoff.

C.Crean: Expressed concern over the possibility of losing parks and access to green spaces.

M.Roby: Voiced support for the plan but expressed that he felt concepts of building on city land was not made clear in earlier meetings and felt it was thrown in at the last minute. "Why is there no parks master plan?"

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N.Morris: Stated that they support bike and pedestrian infrastructure after hearing opposition to it at the last meeting.

D.Elliott: Echoes previous sentiment that green spaces and parks must be preserved.

S.Sherring: States that the housing issue is being discussed in a vacuum without considering rapid development in South Burlington, Essex, Winooski Etc. Asks if the housing problem will fix itself organically as these new areas are developed. Wants a moratorium on new housing.

D.Farnan: Feels that the issue of building on parks is being diluted by other additions of the plan, bike lanes etc. Wants to focus on the question, "Do we need to worry about losing our parks?"

Commission discussion following public hearing:

While specific revisions from Planning Commissioners were not recommended to staff, Commissioners were in agreement following public forum that, while they were supportive of using City-owned land for housing, there shouldn't be development for housing in City Parks. Commissioners directed staff to revise the draft plan to remove any recommendations related to developing housing in city parks or permanently conserved open spaces, but to retain recommendations for exploring developing housing in other types of city-owned land.

6. Public Forum (Topics not related to planBTV New North End)

No topics were discussed at Public Forum.

7. Commissioner Items

- A. Montroll discussed meeting length and noted much repetition in the statements made during public forum.
- J.Randall and E.Mahnke voiced support for A.Montroll to keep comments shorter and move off topic speakers along, time check, keeping meetings to allotted time, etc.
- J.Randall shared three items, the first of which asking for supporting meeting items sooner. The second point they made was that it was, at times, difficult to both hear and follow what the constituents were saying; that the discussion felt scattered. Went on to ask if there was a way to better structure conversation. J.Randall's third item was to ask why Cambrian Rise was seemingly randomly removed from the plan and her question was answered by A.Montroll and E.Mahnke.
- A.Montroll requests holding off on Item 2 until next meeting.

Adjournment

Action: Motion to Adjourn

Time of Adjournment: 9:07pm

Motion by: E.Mahnke

Seconded by: A.Montroll

Vote: Unanimous