

Burlington Conservation Board

645 Pine Street
Burlington, VT 05401
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*Rebecca Roman, Chair
Caryn Connolly, Vice Chair
Zoe Richards
Don Meals
Miles Waite
Ryan Crehan
Hannah Brislin
Kyle Tansley
Leslie Spencer
Elizabeth Cunningham, Student*



Conservation Board Meeting Public Notice

Monday, October 7, 2024, 5:30 PM

311 North Avenue, Conference Room or Remote via Zoom

Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/95590052709?pwd=MIhQcTVTNmUydW5qeIBLeFUwZk9LZz09>

Webinar ID: 955 9005 2709

Password: 346560

Telephone: 1 929 205 6099

1. Minutes

1.1. Accept minutes from September 9, 2024 meeting

1.2. Draft October 7, 2024 minutes

2. Board Comment

3. Public Comment

4. Update & Discussion

4.1. Winooski Valley Park District

Initial consideration of 2 projects and potential use of Conservation Legacy Fund

4.2. Conservation Legacy Fund Grant – application review committee

Request for 3 volunteers

5. Adjournment

6. Informational and Non-Discrimination Statements

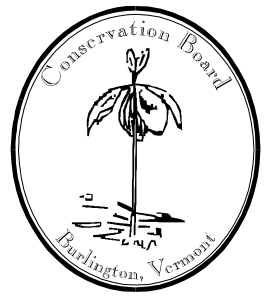
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Burlington ADA Coordinator at 802-865-7000 as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the scheduled event.

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Conservation Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 9, 2024 – 5:30 pm

Remote & In Person Meeting

Attendance

- **Board Members:** Zoe Richards (ZR), Caryn Connolly (CC), Rebecca Roman (RR), Leslie Spencer (LS), Hannah Brislin (HB), Don Meals (DM), Ryan Crehan (RC)
- **Absent:** Kyle Tansley (KT), Elizabeth Cunningham (EC)
- **Public:** John Caulo, Todd Seranos, Nic Anderson, Kevin Worden (Lakeside Ave), T Hanson, Braden DeForge (Conservation Legacy Fund grants)
- **Staff:** Scott Gustin (Permitting & Inspections), Dan Cahill, Daniel Schmidt (Parks & Rec)

RR, chair, called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

Minutes

August 5, 2024 minutes

A MOTION was made by ZR and SECONDED by CC:

Approve the August 5 minutes as written.

Vote: 5-0-1, motion carried (no RC yet).

Board Comment

SG noted that the UVM Spatial Analysis Lab work for the Open Space Plan rewrite is underway. Agency Landscape & Planning will start their work on the plan next month.

RR noted that VHCB is hosting a conservation conference on October 7. VLT will have an annual celebration at the Intervale on September 18.

Public Comment

None.

Open Space Subcommittee

No meeting today.

Project Review

1. **South End Coordinated Redevelopment, 125 & 174 Lakeside Ave & 68 Sears Ln (E-LM/SEID; Ward 5) Ride Your Bike/BCDC/Champlain College**

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Sketch plan review of proposed mixed-use redevelopment.

John Caulo, Nic Anderson, Todd Seranos, Kevin Worden appeared on behalf of this item.

SG overviewed the sketch plan process and project concept. This is not an action item. The applicants are seeking Board comment before submitting an application for development in the future.

John Caulo overviewed the project history and collaboration among the various property owners. There are three parcels totaling ~ 13 acres. He addressed the potential block and street grid layout. There is possibly of one or two crossings of the Champlain Parkway. There may be multiple connections to Pine Street. The three parties have agreed to the concepts included in the sketch plans. He referred to the lot and block dimensional requirements in the SEID zoning overlay standards. The project will likely include details as to building area, footprints, heights, and uses. There is potential of up to 1,400 dwelling units on this site. A mobility hub is contemplated as part of the overall development. Parking is anticipated to be centralized within the development.

Dan Cahill asked if community garden space may be possible within this development. We are presently at capacity for community gardens citywide. Maybe there are some areas where we can consider community garden space. Todd Seranos said they've considered rooftop gardens and have also been in touch with folks in Belgium about an indoor garden concept. There's a green space along "Innovation Lane" that may include opportunity for dedicated garden space. John Caulo said the city owns 68 Sears Lane. Affordable housing and open space are goals for this area. Details are not fleshed out at this point.

Kevin Worden mentioned the impact fee credit in the zoning code for community gardens. Nic Anderson noted other green spaces that have potential for community garden space. Dan Cahill reiterated Parks is definitely looking for more community garden space.

DM, in the spirit of Dan's comments about community gardens, he noted opportunity for stormwater improvements. That will be a direct concern of this Board upon application. Consider innovations such as green roofs, pervious pavers, and the like. It seems that proposed parking of 1,000+ spaces may be high given the emphasis on multi-modal transportation options. Todd Seranos said that figure accounts for the mobility hubs included in the project. The project started out as car-free. It remains a car-light design.

DM asked about the mobility centers. How are they different from parking garages? What's novel? Nic Anderson said they will be centralized mobility centers with bus service, bike parking, and car share vehicles.

DM said the first phase doesn't seem to include any affordable housing. John Caulo said that's not the case.

Kevin Worden noted that features like pervious pavers and gravel wetlands will be considered in the stormwater infrastructure design.

LS asked about Hula parking that uses some of the parking in the existing lots. Todd Seranos said that we do not fully utilize the available parking. Its possible that we could fit everything behind Hula.

CC, have you had any discussions with GMT as to public transit? John Caulo, yes, we've communicated with GMT. They are aware of the project, and we will continue to communicate with them.

RC, what are you expecting from a soils contamination standpoint? John Caulo, we've done some analysis. Prior to being a parking lot, it was a meadow. There are two small hot spots to contend with.

RC, what do you expect to include in your permit application? John Caulo said that maximum dwelling units, parking spaces, and uses may be included in the overall PUD application. Subsequent phases

would include more building details. Nic Anderson clarified that they'd likely seek approval of the project size and uses.

RR, whenever you do have your plans finalized, be sure to have your final stormwater management plan details. They will be important for the Board's consideration.

ZR, environmental heat and heat management are growing concerns. Think about cool building designs and incorporation of green spaces within the development. She mentioned the biophilic cities work underway internationally. RR noted these themes are consistent with the Climate Addendum to the Open Space Protection Plan.

RC, be prepared with a detailed planting plan with your application. John Caulo said that will be included in the public realm plan. DM mentioned that its important to pay attention to the species list as to shade tolerance and invasiveness.

Update & Discussion

1. Nature Based Climate Solutions

T Hanson from the VT Garden Network overviewed her organization's grant work this past year. She noted that we have established two new gardens with the help of the Conservation Legacy Fund grant. There were substantial pressures this year between heat, flooding, and mosquitos, but the grant is, in part, aimed at helping communities adapt to climate change. She noted the collective garden space is substantially larger than a typical community garden spot and is managed collectively by a group of residents. Providing access to land is so empowering for our community.

Braden DeForge spoke to the Wildways' grant projects, including enhanced pollinator diversity across the city and providing educational materials to address biodiversity. Wildways offered several educational events, and reached hundreds of folks within the community. We have expanded school programs to two additional schools within the Burlington School District. Our trail stewardship program is seeing higher enrollment this year. The city nature celebration was successful with broad public participation. The Burlington Conservation Newsletter is going to more than 4,000 people now. The Wildways trails are soon getting a brochure.

Daniel Schmidt addressed the VYCC projects. They worked with Parks, Rock Point, and WVPD. Efforts focused on trail work and invasive species management, particularly knot weed and bittersweet.

DM said he was impressed with all three reports and what was accomplished with the funding provided. RR recapped that this is wrapping up year one of the grant program.

Dan Cahill noted that this was a top priority of the Board identified at their June 2023 retreat. The revisions for year two are pretty minimal. Some of the language framing what's eligible has been clarified, and some of the categories have been revised and re-weighted.

DM said he has one big problem with the matrix. It lacks a criterion aimed at measurable outcome so that we can evaluate project success. ZR said she's happy to have that in the matrix, but she feels that they are just estimates. ZR how do we actually measure success?

SG noted that this is the matrix that will guide review of received applications. The actual application does contain a criterion asking for how project success will be measured. He'll defer to the Board as to whether this is adequate or not.

RC agrees with DM. It's easy to drift away from what the grant is intended to support.

Dan Cahill, could we put applicants through a logic model? RR, it seems that DM's point could be included in the project feasibility criterion. Do you feel that the three reports from this year addressed your point about measurability? DM, feels they did a good job.

ZR, it might be interesting to keep some metrics as to dollars invested and outcomes achieved. CC, maybe there could be a way to quantify project results, such as funding awarded versus economic value of projects implemented. ZR said there are several publicly available tools that show this information.

LS noted the Center for Climate Impact Measurement recently launched by the Gund Institute. Daniel Schmidt, the community benefit criterion could be expanded. There could be a measurable component to the project's impact. DM agreed.

SG noted that this is an action item. Deferral to October is possible but pretty tight for the 2nd year launch.

A MOTION was made by DM and SECONDED by HB:

Discussion: RC, only question was, is there any concern with getting the same good project or same bad project being proposed every year? DM said projects should be evaluated on their own each year.

Approve the changes for year 2 and revise the "community benefit" criterion to read: "Community and ecosystem impact: Will the project benefit a large and diverse segment of the community? What are the metrics/measurements of success?"

7-0-0, motion carries.

2. Natural Resource Overlay District

RC overviewed this item. He's just looking for a refresher on the Natural Resource Overlay District standards. By our nature, we're a reactionary body responding to applications that come to us. He noted that the Urban Reserve is its own district with its own set of rules. There has been some interest by the Sailing Center to put boat storage into the adjacent Urban Reserve. He's looking to shine a light on this overlay.

CC noted the call for stormwater details in the standards. Applicants are commonly not prepared with stormwater details. SG noted the need to update applicant guidelines. That will be drafted this coming winter.

ZR appreciates putting this on the Board's radar. DM, we do a lot more proactive stuff now than we did some 15 years ago or before.

Dan Cahill, wants the notes to reflect that our city plans do not reflect what the applicants said about the city not pursuing more Parks' garden spaces.

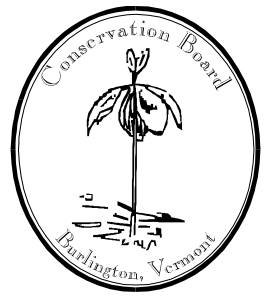
Adjournment

7:16 PM.

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Conservation Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, October 7, 2024 – 5:30 pm

Remote & In Person Meeting

Attendance

- **Board Members:** Zoe Richards (ZR), Caryn Connolly (CC), Rebecca Roman (RR), Leslie Spencer (LS), Don Meals (DM), Kyle Tansley (KT), Ethan Ely (EE), Elizabeth Cunningham (EC)
- **Absent:** Ryan Crehan (RC), Hannah Brislin (HB)
- **Public:** Nick Warner, Lauren Chicote (WVPD)
- **Staff:** Scott Gustin (Permitting & Inspections), Dan Cahill, Daniel Schmidt (Parks & Rec)

RR, chair, called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

Minutes

September 9, 2024 minutes

A MOTION was made by DM and SECONDED by ZR:

Approve the September 9 minutes as written.

Vote: 6-0-0, motion carried (no KT yet).

Board Comment

Ethan Ely, new member, introduced himself and Board members to him.

SG noted the Open Space Plan kick off this past Friday and follow up for an initial engagement discussion this Wednesday. He also noted the Legacy Fund Grant opened October 1.

Dan Cahill noted exploration is underway for an EPA grant. One possibility includes involving the Intervale as a community partner. It is due in November. He also mentioned an internal working group within the city focused on addressing climate resiliency. The Mayor is looking to be sure that nature based solutions are integrated.

Public Comment

None.

Open Space Subcommittee

No meeting today.

Update & Discussion

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1. Winooski Valley Park District

Initial consideration of 2 projects and potential use of Conservation Legacy Fund

Nick Warner and Lauren Chicote appeared for this item.

Nick Warner overviewed what WVPD is, where located, and what they manage. He noted they used Legacy Fund monies for the Derway project a few years ago when the marina was removed and the area naturalized. There are two items tonight: Wetlands Walk repair/replacement and Derway Cove erosion problem. WVPD estimates 20,000 sf of land has been lost due to erosion next to Mayes Landing. We need to do something, not just armoring or just planting, but probably something in between. The wetlands walk was built in 1992. Its been very heavily used, particularly by students. We're looking at ~ \$170,000 to revamp the boardwalk. We'll probably use helical anchors to limit disturbance. We have applied for monies under a separate grant program and were awarded \$50K. If the money is not spent by the end of this year, we lose it. It will likely be reallocated other city projects at this point.

DM, as to Derway, the erosion forces seem to be coming from both the river and the lake. Nick Warner, correct. DM, where is the wetland walk? Nick Warner, at the Ethan Allen homestead.

EE, what does the boardwalk connect? Nick Warner, there are other trails integrated in the network, but the primary purpose is access into the wetland.

Lauren Chicote noted that all of WVPD's parks are open year round with free access. The new trail design would widen the boardwalk from 4' to 5.'

ZR, feels its an incredible opportunity for improving access. Education, stewardship, and acquisition are primary pillars of the Conservation Legacy Fund. The Legacy Fund is fully funded now.

DM agrees with ZR's comments.

Nick Warner noted the conservation easement on the Derway property. RC, who holds it? Nick Warner, the Lake Champlain Land Trust.

DM noted Board's support of non-structural stabilization techniques. Public education should be integrated into the project as a demonstration site.

RR said the wetlands walk seems like a strong candidate for a Legacy Fund application.

Lauren Chicote asked about things to touch on in the application. RR, note public benefits. DM, we'd need assurance that permits have been obtained or will be.

Dan Cahill, is the Board considering a general Legacy Fund Grant application? RR, yes, but just for the walkway. ZR suggested talking to RC before moving ahead.

2. Conservation Legacy Fund Grant – application review committee

Request for 3 volunteers

DM, RR, KT volunteered. RR asked about follow up and dates. Dan Cahill said he'd follow up. He asked about putting the Legacy Fund "standard" application on OpenGov. SG said we could.

Adjournment

6:21 PM.



Winooski Valley Park District

Ethan Allen Homestead
Burlington, Vermont 05408

Tel: (802) 863-5744 Email: info@wvdp.org www.WVPD.org Fax: (802) 865-0647



Date: 9/30/24
To: Scott Gustin
From: Nick Warner
Re: 10/7/24 Conservation Board Meeting

Thanks for the opportunity for initial discussions on upcoming WVPD projects with the Conservation Board. We will prepare additional images/materials for the Board will help tell the story, and we look forward to fielding any questions or concerns.



The **Wetlands Walk North (WWN)**, a 370' elevated boardwalk, built in 1992, has served thousands of visitors as a place of refuge and connection to the natural world. Normal deterioration and a flooding/freeze event in the winter of 2018 severely compromised the structure prompting its closure. WVPD seeks funding for the reconstruction of the WWN, completing the restoration and enhancement for accessibility and longevity for the next generation of outdoor recreationalists and naturalists to enjoy.



Derway Cove has been significantly impacted by multiple flooding events in 2023-4. As a result, an estimated 20,000 square feet of land has eroded away, as well as several large trees. As a conserved deed-restricted parcel, most "armoring" techniques are not being considered, however WVPD looks to use a combination of methods to replicate natural shoreline while reducing erosion. WVPD seeks funding for the design and installation of shoreline mitigation to address this issue, which is complicated by its location and heavy river flows.