

Parks Commission Meeting

April 14th, 2026 at 5:30pm

Commissioners in Attendance: Lantieri, Boehm, Mobley, Davis, Johnson & Bergmann

Staff in Attendance: Lewis, Sauve, Kaeding, Madalinski, Doyle & O'Daniel

Public in Attendance:

1. Agenda

1.1 Motion to amend/adopt agenda

Boehm made a motion to adopt the April agenda. Bergmann seconded. All were in favor, none opposed.

2. Consent Agenda

2.1 March Meeting Minutes

2.2 Battery Park Special Use Permit (Burlington Burn Club)

2.3 Battery Park Special Use Permit (COTS)

2.4 Battery Park Special Use Permit (CVDSG)

2.5 North Beach Special Use Permit (PHPG)

2.6 Oakledge Park Special Use Permit (ALS)

2.7 Oakledge Park Special use Permit (CFF)

2.8 Oakledge Park Special Use Permit (Steps)

Mobley made a motion to adopt the consent agenda. Bergmann seconded. All were in favor, none opposed.

3. Public Forum, Time Certain 6pm

3.1 Verbal Comments

Public forum was opened at 6pm, but with no one was present, it was closed at 6:01pm.

4. Deliberative Agenda

4.1 Oakledge Park: Food Vendor, Alcohol

Kaeding opened by introducing himself as the Campground and Beach Manager. He continued that last year was the first time they had a food vendor at Oakledge Park and it went well. This year, they put out an RFP and introduced the winner of that process, Christina McClay, who was in attendance, and explained that they were here today looking for approval to add serving alcohol.

McClay opened by sharing that she has run La Shack LLC in Stowe for 4 years, which was a concept based on a mobile food model focused on selling food that brings people together. She continued that most of her food is Italian, which culturally includes the concept of aperitivo, a drink and snack before continuing on to dinner. She shared that it has been her goal to continue this vision beyond Stowe and develop it in the Burlington community. McClay continued by sharing her concept of Pizza Serafina, which she's hoping will be a forward thinking third place at Oakledge – a place for people to come, stay and create community, which would include thoughtful intent around serving alcohol. She continued that this would be a controlled, food-led environment that encourages people to stay in the park and support the existing activities in the park, NOT a bar with high-volume alcohol service or a drinking destination. She then shared the initial menu, which is based on her Stowe menu and she has a plan for trialing things, which will evolve the menu over time. She noted that all of the items are grab-and-go friendly and adaptable yet curated. She then touched on the alcohol philosophy, which will be an aperitivo-style program, which involves low ABV and encourages food pairings. She continued that this will be built for prevention, not reaction, which will include ID verification and a stamp system, maximum 2 drinks per transaction, designated drink areas and staff trained with food and beverage service experience. Next, McClay explained that this will be a hybrid operation, which will include a food truck and service from the pavilion window with an additional seating area on the patio, which will be clearly designated.

Bergmann asked for clarification of where the alcohol will be served and where the alcohol consumption area will be.

Moreau noted that there is an overhang over a paved area that is not part of the public lower shelter that people rent, and will be designated by a physical barrier provided by McClay.

McClay explained that the alcohol will be served from the window of that corner of the building.

Bergmann then asked if people who were just eating food from the truck would be able to sit in the alcohol section.

The answer was yes, food can be eaten anywhere.

McClay then touched on the community impact, noting that Oakledge is already a recognized community gathering point, and that this will create a managed alternative to informal park drinking and encourages longer family-friendly park use and return visits. She continued that this will diversify users, and offer opportunity for further expansion and deeper partnerships with local producers. She then explained why “third places”, community spaces beyond home and work, matter, specifically at Oakledge, noting that this is where community happens.

Moreau then addressed the Commission, and went over what actions were required from them. She noted that alcohol is allowed at Oakledge already per the Ordinance, but that any request for park use which isn't detailed in the Ordinance, like the vending of alcohol, needs to be reviewed and approved by the Parks Commission. She shared that with the success of the North Beach vendor selling alcohol, they will be able to have the same success at Oakledge.

Mobley asked for clarification if the approval would just be for this vendor or all potential vendors in the future.

Moreau answered that if there was a different vendor in the future that they would come back to the Commission and confirmed that this request is specific to this vendor and this location.

Davis made a motion to approve the request to allow a food and alcohol vendor at Oakledge Park. Johnson seconded. All were in favor, none opposed.

4.2 Pilot: Vendor Cart Program

Moreau opened by explaining that over the past few years the Department has gotten a lot of inquiries about vending in or near parks, but up until now there hasn't been a process in place to allow for this for vendors that were not associated with an event or a brick and mortar location. She continued that they worked with CEDO on this process, and what was discovered is that through some Ordinance changes over the years, the Department could open an application process for this. Moreau clarified that they are looking for an approval of a special use permit for the BPRW Vendor Program from the Commission and that this would be a pilot project.

Kaeding shared that this is based off of the Church Street Marketplace's program.

Moreau continued that CEDO has shared that there is a high volume of interest from small carts wanting to be in or near the parks. She continued that this pilot will involve 3 locations to begin with – Leddy, Starr Farm and the Skate Park, and will run from June – September. She shared that BPRW is interested in using this pilot and process as an opportunity to gather data about these areas from the vendors while they're out there. Moreau noted that the cost would be a new fee, \$400 base fee per cart + 3% gross sales. Moreau then touched on the requirements to participate in the program, including cart management, data reporting and a program sticker for monitoring. She then went through the process, starting with this moment with the Commission. If approved, the next step will be an online application launch, then a BPRW & CEDO committee evaluation followed by signed contracts with vendors, ideally. Moreau shared that there will be some considerations, like not setting up on big event days, like July 3rd, the expectation that once agreed upon locations and schedules are finalized that vendors will be there unless they notify the Department and that payment will be due at the end of each month. Moreau then went over the locations, why they were all chosen, what the anticipated spots at each location would be and what the recommended timeframe for heavier traffic would be.

Kaeding noted that with these locations as well as the vendors at North Beach and Oakledge, it means vendors would be nicely spaced along the entirety of the waterfront. Moreau closed by sharing that the actions required from the Commission were approving park use that is not in the Ordinance and the fees.

Davis asked how they came up with the \$400 fee, noting that she felt like it was on the low side.

Moreau answered that they wanted to make this program accessible to newer vendors and is excited to begin gathering data. She noted that this fee could absolutely be raised

in the future. She shared that if approved, she's hopeful that they will get a lot of applications and can accommodate everyone who applies.

Boehm asked if they would be approving each vendor or the program.

Kaeding answered the program and the fees.

Lantieri asked if they would be approving the pilot for one year, or this program moving forward.

Moreau answered just the pilot and that they would like to come back for 2027 with data and most likely adjustments to the contract and potentially the process.

Mobley made a motion to approve this vendor pilot program and the fees associated with it. Bergmann seconded.

Lantieri made a motion to amend it to a vendor pilot program for 2026 and the fees associated with it. Davis seconded the amendment. All were in favor of the amendment, none opposed.

All were in favor of the overall item, none opposed.

4.3 Rate Changes: Recreation

Lewis opened by referencing the memo that was sent, noting that they are looking for an approval of fee increases for Leddy Arena beginning on July 1st, 2026. He continued by sharing that the last fee increases were in 2024 and the suggested increases reflect that as well as rising expenses. He shared that with approval happening now, there would be time to notify users and make appropriate provisions to the system.

Mobley asked if these fees would be retroactively added to existing reservations.

Lewis answered that they have only been "penciling" in reservations and having conversations with users with this in mind, anticipating this change.

Boehm made a motion to approve the recreation Leddy Arena rink fees changes for FY2027. Davis seconded. All were in favor, none opposed.

4.4 Tree Ordinance Update

Gustin opened by introducing himself and noted that this is more of a teaser for what's to come than anything else. He continued that the Open Space Plan that was adopted earlier this year had an action item that called for updating the City's tree ordinance, which is very old and out of date and brief. He shared that the working group has met once and focused on baseline conditions and will be meeting again in a few weeks.

Gustin continued that there is a current state statute that outlines the standards around the term "shade trees" and currently that definition is basically any City-owned tree. He continued that the City's existing zoning code has some provisions for tree cutting and planting on private property, but the group is looking to flesh some of that out more to be more aligned with the statute where need be but also introduce the concept of offsets where appropriate. He closed by sharing that they hope to have more details and information for the Commission in May and opened it up for questions.

Mobley asked if the concept about the offset is more focused on City trees or private trees.

Gustin answered tentatively both.

Lantieri asked how things like the issues with Ash trees would be addressed.

Gustin answered that there is a section on handling infestations in the statute.

4.5 VT 127 Pathway Report

Madalinski opened by introducing himself and Bryan Davis from the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission and then shared screen. He began by explaining where the 127 path is and noting all of the project team members and advisory group members. He continued by sharing that the main purpose of the project was to scope and evaluate opportunities to create a new connection, including a new active transportation connection with a focus on creating a safer connection for the public and improving safety along the entire length of 127. Madalinski continued that the project needs statement was to facilitate improved access for path users and more direct connections to important destinations, while making it safer, more accessible and comfortable for path users. He shared that there were 2 public meetings – a local concerns meeting and then an alternatives presentation, 3 advisory committee meetings and an online survey. These resulted in key takeaways like lack of access points and path maintenance, safety concerns, and that most users use it recreationally and a desire to maximize the separation of vehicles and pedestrians. He continued that there was a safety and path widening assessment, including a 5 year crash history and roadway-path separation, and some recommendations for potential safety countermeasures were made, as well as many other assessments. Madalinski then shared the alternative plans that were presented to the community and touched on an evaluation matrix, noting that Alternative 1 would be the most cost effective, most intuitive and least impactful to the environment, had the greatest public support. He continued that they key refinements in the preferred alternative were to increase separation between vehicles and path users, improve aesthetics, consider pedestrian-scale lighting and how to improve some intersection safety. Madalinski then noted that the conceptual cost estimate would be around \$5.1 million. He closed by sharing the remaining timeline, noting that next will be the DPW Commission, then the Transportation, Energy and Utilities Committee with a final approval sent to City Council in May.

Mobley noted that this seems like a win across the board, with the lowest costing, most effective version also being the public's favorite option.

Lantieri asked who would own the project whenever the plan is implemented.

Madalinski answered that this process has been extremely collaborative, so he was not quite sure given that everything is very overlapping.

Sauve chimed in that this would go into the annual process of reviewing larger, cross-Department projects.

Boehm made a motion to support the recommendations from the 127 Pathway report. Bergmann seconded. All were in favor, none opposed.

4.6 Capital Budget Presentation

Sauve began by sharing screen and noting what she shared about the Capital Budget selection process at the last meeting and that some projects will be covered by Penny for Parks funding and Bond funds in addition to Capital funds. She continued that a large

project for FY27 will be updating the Calahan Park courts and completing a storm water project – which will include fixing the existing tennis courts, adding pickleball courts and moving the basketball court, and noted that this will tap into multiple funding pots. Sauve continued that Leddy Park playground and restroom design is on the list, as well as a new playground for Smalley Park. She continued by touching on projects that will be covered by the Bond – including major repairs to the Boathouse, maintenance to the Marina and a small portion to public art. After a brief discussion about the anticipated timing of these projects, all of the group’s questions were answered. Davis made a motion to approve the capital budget presented to the Commission. Bergmann seconded. All were in favor, none opposed.

4.7 FY27 Budget Process

Lewis shared that he did not have any major updates to share at this time, but gave an overview of some important upcoming dates: General Fund overview is scheduled for April 27th, the Capital Budget presentation is scheduled for May 4th and that BPRW’s presentation is scheduled for May 7th. Lewis noted that he would be happy to discuss what comes of those meetings at the May 12th Commission meeting, or give an overview of the presentations if Commissioners are interested in that. Lantieri asked if there was anything Commissioners could do from their end. Lewis answered that after the budget information has been shared publically, there will be about a month between that and City Council’s adoption of the budget, so this body would be welcome to advocate for things they felt were important in that window. Lantieri said that he would like to have a full presentation of the BPRW budget at the next meeting so that the group can figure out if they want to take any follow-up steps.

4.8 Comprehensive Plan Update

Sauve began by sharing the flyer for the Plan BTV 2050 community open house happening on April 30th and invited Commissioners to attend. Mobley noted that they’re hoping Commissioners can help get the word out! And she encouraged Commissioners to attend. Lantieri asked if this could be moved to a standing item moving forward.

5. Standing Items

5.1 Parks Foundation Update

Lantieri shared that there was a Parks Foundation meeting last week and that they are running their playground campaign with the hopes of figuring out how to do so more publically. Sauve noted that the Pomeroy Park playground construction will be starting in 2 weeks, and she feels that this could be a great moment for them to reignite their campaign.

5.2 Director's Report

Lewis noted the monthly report and that 2 Commissioner positions will be opening up at the end of this fiscal year. He continued that Commissioners can re-apply for their positions if they would like and that there is a deadline of May 20th to submit the applications.

5.3 Commissioner's Items & Volunteer Hours

Boehm had 1 hour of volunteering to report.

Davis didn't have any hours to report.

Bergmann didn't have any hours to report.

Lantieri had 6 hours of volunteering to report.

Mobley had 6 hours of volunteering to report.

Johnson didn't have any hours to report, but said that he would be at the Book Fair this upcoming Saturday.

Lantieri noted all of the upcoming opportunities with the Department for Commissioners to plug into for volunteering!

6. Adjournment

6.1 Motion to Adjourn

Davis made a motion to adjourn. Mobley seconded. All were in favor, none opposed. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40pm.