

AGENDA

Parks, Arts & Culture Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 13, 2020, 5:30 – 7:30pm

MEETING CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM

Approval of agenda - 5:30

Approval of draft minutes from March 4, 2020

Public Forum – 5:35 – Members of the public may address the committee.

Agenda Items – 5:45

1. 5:45pm BCA – Doreen Kraft
 - a. BCA Update (current happenings, plans for summer programming, major initiatives, and construction projects)
 - b. Church Street Mural
2. 6:15pm Fletcher Free Library – Mary Danko
 - a. FFL Update (current happenings, plans for summer programming, major initiatives, and construction projects)
3. 6:45pm BPRW – Cindi Wight
 - a. BPRW Update (current happenings, plans for summer programming, major initiatives, and construction projects)
4. 7:15pm CEDO – Luke McGowan
 - a. CEDO Update (current happenings, plans for summer programming, major initiatives, and construction projects)

Schedule next meeting

Adjournment

Non-Discrimination The City of Burlington will not tolerate unlawful harassment or discrimination on the basis of political or religious affiliation, race, color, national origin, place of birth, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, veteran status, disability, HIV positive status or genetic information. The City is also committed to providing proper access to services, facilities, and employment opportunities. For accessibility information or alternative formats, please contact Human Resources Department at 865-7145.



JUSTICE DELAYED IS JUSTICE DENIED

Delay in removing the parade mural compounds the hurt of exclusion and leads to compounding of the original error, like this NEA grant submitted by BCA Foundation, after the mural task force called for removal of the mural and rejected the separate but equal artwork option:

Applicant Information: Tracking Number: GRANT12916945, Application #: 1863168 Date: 08-19-2019

Category: Our Town / Name: Burlington City Arts Foundation / Primary Partner: **Department of Public Works.**

The City of Burlington's Department of Public Works will provide the location for the permanent public art work, input for the Call to Artists, access to the site for art creation, and local match for this grant. [p2]

Project Description

To support the creation of a new public art work in the heart of Burlington's downtown in the aftermath of community conflict surrounding a controversial mural. ... **The new work will connect a downtown parking structure to the Church Street Marketplace, Burlington's pedestrian marketplace. [p4]**

Major Project Activities (This serves as the project narrative) * Funding is requested to support arts-based engagement that will contribute to a **permanent public artwork installed on and within the Marketplace Garage. [p5]**

3) **Commission a lead artist/artist team for the Marketplace Parking Garage** ... The RFP will encourage applicants to consider and incorporate content from engagement sessions in the work, as well as include **a form of public participation into the creation/installation of the work in the Marketplace Garage. [p5]**

Improving the physical and aesthetic experience in the Marketplace Garage [p6]

Have the intended beneficiaries been consulted in the development of this project?
Yes No **[p7]**

...benefit the underserved community by ensuring that their voices and stories are expressed and symbolized in a permanent work of art. [p8]

This project will be installed in proximity to an existing mural, Everyone Loves a Parade, commissioned by the Church St Marketplace in 2009. The location is also a pedestrian entrance to the Marketplace Garage and gateway to the Church Street Marketplace. [p9]

COMPOUNDING ERROR: Foundations were responsible for the controversial parade mural with a colonist, racist narrative and for that NEA grant to put multicultural art in the parking garage in response to community conflict surrounding the controversial parade mural. These foundations have no public oversight, and do not have the same public transparency and record-keeping requirements as City. In the future, Council must require that **any grant application that obligates City property, staff, ongoing maintenance, or matching funds MUST be warned for public hearing and approved by City Council.**



Regarding the parade mural: there is no signed contract with the artists, but the RFP clearly states that City has no obligation to display the mural in Leahy Alley. Council must cease delays, remove the mural now, and put it in storage until City decides what to do with it. DPW has pledged \$40,00 in kind and matching funds - we don't need the NEA grant to follow through with that, now. DPW staff, tools, and truck -- and surely they can do it for much less than \$25,000! Storage, there is space in Memorial Auditorium, or maybe the airport has an empty hangar.

But the problem is that the parade mural has a racist narrative wherever it goes. Schools are raising the **BLM flag**; **I Am Vermont Too** will be in Burlington soon; **White Caucus of BLM** is meeting monthly; **Toxic Whiteness** meets monthly; **Off the Wall** is a member of a growing activists' alliance. **It's only a matter of time before the parade mural is driven out, wherever you put it.** But

singly, the panels are kitschy, and dispersed among donors' restaurants, stores, and offices they would make a fun geocache game. If artist objects, give him 90 days notice to remove the mural, at his expense.

Honor the love and courage of the **Edmunds students**, acknowledge the pride of **I Am Vermont Too**, demonstrate the growing awareness of **White Caucus** and **Toxic Whiteness**, and join **Off the Wall** in calling for the City to remove the parade mural, now. Nothing trumps racism as the primary concern of council here -- no obligation to a commissioned artist with no contract, no anecdotal promises to donors, and no imagined fear of angry white supremacists marching on City Hall. You have an opportunity to deconstruct racism in our city, literally, sending a signal to everyone in our multicultural community and beyond, that **WE ALL BELONG.**

Lea Terhune, 63 Appletree Point Lane, Ward 4, North District. City Council. 2.18.20.





Staff: Holli Bushnell, Office Assistant
Lakeview Cemetery
hbushnell@burlingtonvt.gov

Minutes

Parks, Arts & Culture Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 13, 2020, 5:30 pm

MEETING CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM

Attendance:

Committee Members: Chair Karen Paul, Councilor Ali Dieng, Councilor Joan Shannon

Doreen Kraft – BCA, Sara Katz – BCA, Mary Danko – FFL, Cindi Wight – BPRW, Luke McGowan - CEDO, Cindi Wight – BPRW, Tyeastia Green – Director of Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging, Lea Terhune – community member

Meeting called to order at 5:43pm by Councilor Paul

Approval of agenda

Councilor Shannon moved to approve the agenda. Councilor Dieng seconded. All were in favor.

Approval of draft minutes from March 4, 2020

Dieng moved to approve the minutes. Shannon seconded. All were in favor

Public Forum

Public forum was opened at 5:45pm. Lea Terhune requested to speak following the Church Street Mural update, and the committee agreed to this request. As no one else from the public wished to speak, public forum was also closed at 5:46pm.

Agenda Items

1. BCA

a. BCA Update

Doreen Kraft provided the committee with a presentation detailing BCAs current happens on multiple fronts. Much of their education and exhibition work has moved to digital platforms. This includes online clay studio demonstrations, artist home studio tours, Family Art Saturdays, and an online exhibition of the 33rd Annual Children's Art Exhibit. Summer art camps and member studio access are being

restructured to follow city, state, and federal guidelines. The hope is to be able to offer these services in the safest possible way with the assistance of the research and analytics team. They are also coordinating the summer Artist Market with the Farmer's Market organization, continuing the art sales and leasing program as situations allow, and creating art kits for hospital staff and patients.

BCA is continuing to work with sponsors, donors, and underwriters and intends to put forth a spring appeal for donations. Though major events such as the Festival of Fools have been cancelled, they are planning a smaller scale concert series on Church St in July. Additionally, BCA staff has been working on the community mask initiative along with other RRC (Resource & Recovery Center) initiatives. The first draft of the Public Art Policy has been sent to the city attorney's office and BCA is awaiting revisions.

The BCA Foundation has created an artist's relief fund that has raised \$44,000 and provided grants to 71 artists who have lost income due to contract cancellations.

Dieng asked how the pieces for the Children's Art Exhibition were selected. Kraft responded that BCA collaborates with schools, art teachers, and principals, and art teachers ultimately select the work to be displayed. The BCA education team helps to mount the exhibition. Though the event that usually accompanies the exhibition was cancelled students will be sent their awards at a later date.

Paul asked about the criteria and application process for the artist's relief fund as well as the average grant the fund provided to artists. Sara Katz responded that that any artists who contribute to arts and culture in Burlington were eligible for grants. They had to provide BCA with information on their loss of income (generally cancelled contracts). The highest amount awarded for any grant was \$500.

b. Church Street Mural

Kraft recapped the work that BCA has done to satisfy the City Council resolution concerning the Everyone Loves a Parade mural on Church St. The requests detailed in the resolution have been completed with the exception of the relocation of the mural. BCA has made recommendations for relocation options and awaits a response from the council. Kraft reiterated that, while ELAP was not a BCA project, they have done their best to work with all parties involved.

Kraft did have an opportunity to speak with Lake Champlain Maritime Museum in regards to taking the piece. Unfortunately, it is not part of their mission and they currently do not have the funds to move, maintain, or research the piece. Moving the mural to LCMM where it might be interpreted in greater depth is not an option.

BCA also did receive the grant for which they applied regarding new public art in ELAPs current location.

At this point in time, Director of Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Tyeastia Green read a prepared statement in regards to ELAP (see attached documents).

Following Green's statement, Dieng asked if Kraft could remind the committee of the relocation options as well as provide them with a rough idea of when the recommendations will come before the council. The locations suggested were either the airport or a place where the work could be reinterpreted such as LCMM. It seems unlikely that there will be an acceptable spot in the city to relocate the mural. Green restated her stance that, as a symbol of racism, the mural must be removed.

Dieng asked of BCA had reached out to the business who originally contributed to the mural to see if they would like to take their panels and display them in their stores. BCA has not contacted businesses. Kraft was impacted by Green's statement and will take her ideas into consideration moving forward. She agreed that a creative solution may be in order, but that solution also needs to be legal.

Shannon was also enthused by Green's statement. She commented that, while ELAP may not be able to be the financial priority that it was before the COVID-19 Pandemic, it is still a priority, and the city should look for ways to address the issue that are fiscally responsible.

Paul commented that there is a resolution concerning ELAP coming before the full council at the next meeting, and Councilor Brian Pine has ideas for a removal plan. She also hopes that Green will attend the next council meet. She asked Kraft to provide more information to the council at the next meeting.

At this time Lea Terhune was given her opportunity to speak. Terhune expressed her frustration with the entire mural removal and review process. She feels the grant which was not approved was inappropriate and not properly vetted. She also reminded the committee that there is a mural underneath ELAP that was gifted to the city by local artist Gina Carrera. ELAP artist Pierre Hardy purposefully preserved this original mural when creating his own work. Terhune feels that ELAP should be removed, stored, and the original mural be restored (also see attachments for statement provided by Terhune before meeting).

2. Fletcher Free Library

- a.** Mary Danko took the committee through how FFL handled closing and what they have done to continue their work during the shutdown while their 46,000sqft

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building closed and their 27 staffers working from home. Changes have been made to the FFL website, specifically directing patrons to new online resources and providing users with a web chat feature for immediate assistance. Staffers have created a large amount of new online content and virtual events and activities are shown on their virtual calendar (these are either vetted or in-house produced events/activities). FFL has created a YouTube channel, they are holding Zoom classes, and are doing lots of work and promotion on social media (Gnomes!) in an effort to connect with the community. As with most city departments, some staff has been reassigned temporarily to the EOC or RRC. FFL has teamed up with BSD and staffers travel to meal pick-up sites to provide families and children with books. They have also worked hard to promote the census.

Pick up services have been reinstated and returns will start to be accepted again in a week or two. Books need to be quarantined for four days before they can be processed by staff and go back into circulation. Currently there is no consensus on when they will re-open. They are also waiting for guidelines from the state concerning summer programing.

Danko concluded by stating that Libraries are a much needed resource, and critical when times get tough.

Shannon asked if presenters from outside the department have the equipment they need (such as webcams). Danko confirmed that they do – online events are mixed between city employees and artists.

Dieng asked what the library is doing for seniors at this time. Danko spoke about Alyssa Pierce who is the outreach librarian. She has lost a lot of her patrons in the last two months and it has been a difficult, painful time. The city has started a senior task force (Alyssa is part of the task force), and they are looking for more ways to serve our senior population. The goal is to improve the quality of life for seniors in isolation. Dieng also asked how often the Friends of FFL meet and if their meetings are open to the public. Danko responded that, while the group is a 501C3, their meetings are usually fairly open and they meet monthly.

Paul asked that Danko reach out if FFL needs anything from the city council and thanked Danko and Assistant Director Emer Pond Feeney for their hard work. Danko returned that it feels great when the council or city leadership acknowledges hard work. She stated that, though everything is taking longer than it used to, she's grateful for everyone's patience.

3. BPRW

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- a. Cindi Wight provided the committee with a presentation detailing the new and different efforts BPRW has been making during the pandemic shutdown. Though Kids Day was cancelled, events planner Emma Allen headed the move to a digital Kids Week instead. Activities and videos were shared on the Kids Week Facebook Event page, and a youth talent show was conducted via video as well.

The Rec team has been conducting meal deliveries three times a week in partnership with BSD and Champlain Senior Center. They are also making phone calls to seniors to check in and connect with this isolated population. The hope is to find ways for seniors to get together safely in the near future. The Rec team is also working on plans for summer camps. Recently, allowed group sizes were increased from 10 to 25 as long as physical distancing rules are followed which will make summer camps much easier to produce. They hope to have a final list of offerings available by Monday 5/18. They are also hoping for more guidelines from the state level to help them create safe programming. Wight specifically pointed out the work of Recreation Superintendent Gary Rogers, who has been extremely helpful in multiple ways during the shutdown. She also pointed to the work of new Grounds Manager Paul Morris who has been assisting in improving playground compliance in addition to his regular duties.

The Parks team has planted 2,000 new daffodil bulbs and is working to prepare the parks and public spaces for summer. 265 New trees were also planted over the course of 2 days. Some were planted as future replacements for Ash Trees that we anticipate will be effected by Emerald Ash Borers. 190 trees were planted at our tree farm up at UVM, and 400 additional restoration trees were planted at Oakledge. The marina opening has been delayed, and all prep work that can be done while complying with social distancing guidelines has been completed. The next steps to opening will take place as soon as guidelines relax.

ANEW Place at North Beach is in the process of developing a tent site for individuals who were previously staying in state rented campers. Homeless individuals who were staying in the campers will be returning with their own tents and will be provided with access to bathrooms and support services. The campground will not be opening to tourists this summer, and while it will be a loss of revenue, Wight sees it as a positive – the safety of Burlingtonians is more important. Once this area is completed cars will once again be able to access North Beach (currently people can only walk or bike in). They are also working on exposure control plans for if and when the beaches reopen. There are many other small construction projects that are underway at North Beach as well.

Most waterfront events have been cancelled for this year, and likely the few remaining events will be cancelled as well. Leddy Beach Bites also likely won't happen under the current circumstances, but the organizers are looking at options.

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Wight anticipates that the new dog ordinance will go before the city council in the next month or two.

Due to the city hiring freeze, BPRW will not be able to hire seasonal employees this year. They are looking to the RRC to help recruit volunteers.

Smaller construction projects are now underway. The bike path renovation at Perkins Pier is almost complete. The lake level currently stands at 97.4 (about 1' below average). In order to start work on the barge canal area of the bike path the water level needs to be at 96.5'. As water levels continue to drop Wight is hoping that they will be able to secure permission to start work on that area ahead of schedule. Another small construction project is the development of a new section for burial at Lakeview Cemetery. Lakeview Cemetery Office Assistant Holli Bushnell was particularly enthusiastic about this development.

Dieng thanked Wight and BPRW for all their proactive work. He asked about the possibility of social distancing at beaches and if that's something that could be enforced by the beach patrol. Wight answered that the beaches are currently closed at the state level. Beach Patrol is under BPDs purview, however BPRW is looking to put together a roaming volunteer beach patrol. As with most departments, there is not a lot of revenue coming in. The hope is that some funds will become available when the marina opens and staffing can be supplemented. Currently it is unclear if they will be able to hire lifeguards for the summer season or if the beaches will be reopening any time soon.

Shannon commented that, quite a long time ago, it was suggested that North Beach become a site for homeless individuals. She's glad to see that it's working@

Paul asked about the work on City Hall Park. Wight responded that work is currently a month behind due to the shutdown, and they are hoping to have everything completed by the end of September or early October. On the plus side, the delay means that new plantings will go in at a better time of the year (lower temperatures). Wight is excited for this new, welcoming, wonderful park to open soon. Paul thanked Wight along with Kraft and Danko for their hard work, quick responses, and the tremendous amount of behind the scenes work they have been doing over the last two months.

4. CEDO

- a. Luke McGowan and the CEDO team has spent most of the last two months working on the RRC and other interdepartmental efforts all over the city. That said, he was able to provide updates on a couple of CEDO projects from before the closure.

Consultant Jeff Glassberg has been working with Brookfield Properties to get an update on City Place.

Due to COVID-19, development of Memorial Auditorium has been placed on hold. It is unclear when it will become a priority again, but likely it will be at least a year. That said, McGowan is optimistic that TIF deadlines will be extended at the state and federal level.

Once the construction moratorium was lifted work began on Moran. They are starting with hazard work, water removal, and other critical prep work. The new restrictions have added additional challenges to work on the site, but work is under way. A site walkthrough was scheduled for 5/15/2020. CEDO is working with HUD on timeline compliance requirements. A ceremonial ground breaking will happen at some point in the future.

Dieng was encouraged that work on Moran is moving forward. He also thought putting Memorial on hold was a good decision. He asked where the Language Access Plan stood. McGowan responded that Brian Lowe is heading the project and they hope to bring it before the council soon. The effort on the Language Access Plan has been a collaboration, especially in light of the leadership changes at CEDO in recent years.

The committee thanked McGowan for all the work that he has done during this difficult time.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:55pm. The next meeting will be scheduled as needed.

BCA



CURRENT HAPPENINGS
MAY, 2020

CURRENT HAPPENINGS: **EDUCATION**

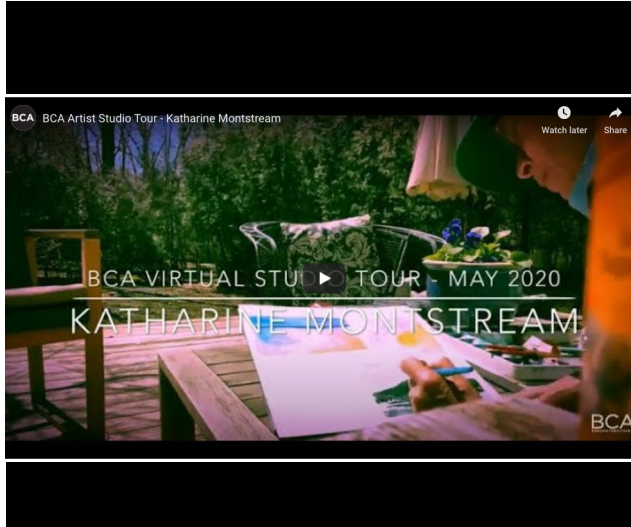


Restructuring summer camps and studio member re-entry to 405 Pine Street

Hosting online clay studio demonstrations

Coordinated virtual exhibition for [33rd Annual Children's Art Exhibition](#)

CURRENT HAPPENINGS: **GALLERY**



Restructuring summer camps and studio member re-entry

Programming virtual artist tours and artist spotlights for [Home Studio](#)

Re-planning summer exhibition to cut costs and focus on local artists

Coordinating Family Art Saturday programming (next one May 24)

Coordinating Artist Market in collaboration with Farmers Market

Continuing Art Sales & Leasing program as situation allows

CURRENT HAPPENINGS: **ART FROM THE HEART**



Maintaining support to patients and staff at hospital through art kits and activities

Adapting focus to mental wellness through virtual channel

Programming wellness activities

CURRENT HAPPENINGS: **DEVELOPMENT**

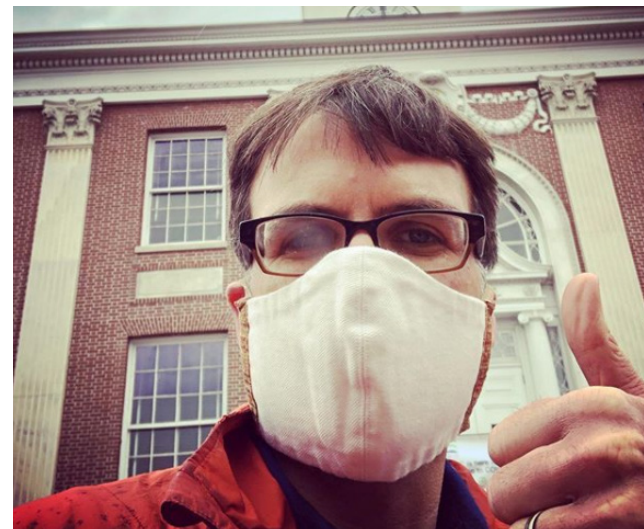


Joyce Cellars

Planning spring appeal

Continued coordination with current and prospective donors, sponsors, and underwriters

CURRENT HAPPENINGS: **EVENTS**



Coordinating Festival of Fools response

Planning Summer Concerts Series

Working with City on mask and other initiatives

CURRENT HAPPENINGS: COMMUNICATIONS



Coordinating strategy, messaging, design, and promotion on each of the previous undertakings

Managing Home Studio

Creating and dispensing social media content

Coordinating with City on COVID-19 branding and assets

Managing BCA website overhaul

Leading City Cultural Services unit

Coordinating with press and community partners

Supporting Re-Discover Jazz Festival and other community arts partners

STATUS OF SUMMER PROGRAMMING

Issued survey to registered summer camp participants on 5/7; currently analyzing responses

In planning phase to adapt summer camps to state and city-issued protocols, with safety and comfort level of kids and instructors top priority

Planning lunchtime Summer Concert Series for July (small events on Church St)

Planning Artist Market

Re-planning summer exhibitions

Continue Home Studio artist spotlights, tours, talks, and Friday activities

MAJOR INITIATIVES

BCA Foundation Artist Relief Fund - Raised \$44,000 and issued 71 grants

405 Campaign - Working on environmental assessment, connecting with major donors and revising campaign plan and time line.

Public Art Policy - Draft is under review of City Attorney

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

City Hall Park - Public art piece will be installed

Public art - Cattails by Jake Pill and Kyle Sikora installed on St. Paul St.

Current happenings
Summer happenings
Major initiatives
Construction projects



PACC

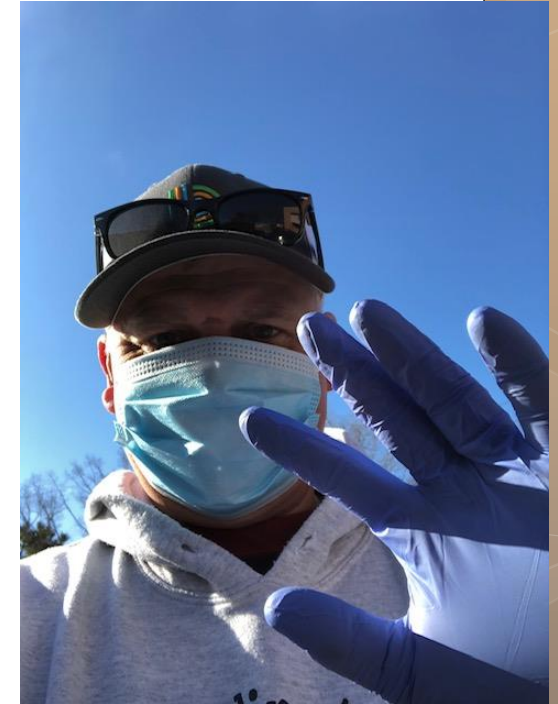
May 13, 2020

**Burlington Parks,
Recreation &
Waterfront**

CURRENT HAPPENINGS



Virtual Kid's Week
Meal delivery 3x per week
Phone calls to seniors
Parks teams in full spring mode
Marina delayed due to COVID-19
Preparing for ANEW at North Beach
Preparing Exposure Control Plans



SUMMER HAPPENINGS

Summer Camp in a COVID-19 world!

Waterfront events
BPRW Events



THE 35TH ANNUAL

Kids Day WEEK
- BTV -

MVP[®]
Presented by HEALTH CARE

Goes Virtual!
May 9 - 16

Produced by

 BURLINGTON
PARKS
RECREATION
WATERFRONT

BTVKIDSDAY.COM

Kids Day WEEK
- BTV -

In partnership with:



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Nature Scavenger Hunt

Burlington is full of **NATURAL TREASURES**! Find at least TWO (2) interesting features in FIVE (5) of the Burlington natural areas listed below. Write in any additional things you find. To be entered to win our Kids Week prizes, tag us in at least one social media with #btvkidsweek, and submit your completed list to us online by May 15. We will choose winners at random. Complete details online: www.btvkidsday.com/activities1

- 14 - Derway Island/Mayes Landing
- ☐ the "Wolf" tree
 - ☐ Silver Maple
 - ☐ Sensitive Fern
 - ☐ Mallards
 - ☐ Hairy or Downy Woodpeckers

- 2 - Mount Calvary
- ☐ Old Fenceline
 - ☐ Paper Birch
 - ☐ Pitch Pine
 - ☐ Red Maple
 - ☐ Blueberry Bush
 - ☐ Cinnamon Fern
 - ☐ the Boardwalks

- 4 - Ethan Allen Park
- ☐ Gray Squirrel
 - ☐ Jack in the Pulpit
 - ☐ Red Oak
 - ☐ Garter Snake
 - ☐ Chestnut Tree
 - ☐ the Pinnacle

- 20 - Intervale
- ☐ Cottonwood Tree
 - ☐ American Crow
 - ☐ Beaver Chewed Trees
 - ☐ Ostrich Ferns
 - ☐ Old cars and trucks

- 21 - Centennial Woods
- ☐ Northern Hemlock
 - ☐ Red Squirrel
 - ☐ Red winged Blackbird
 - ☐ Striped Maple
 - ☐ Powerline cut

- 5 - Arms Forest
- ☐ Rock Outcropping of the Dolostone
 - ☐ Maiden Hair Fern
 - ☐ Old Quarry
 - ☐ Mourning Cloak butterfly

- 11 - Oakledge
- ☐ Treehouse/Red Oak
 - ☐ Shagbark Hickory
 - ☐ American Robin
 - ☐ Staghorn Summac
 - ☐ Earth Clock
 - ☐ the oldest tree in Burlington

- 22 - Redstone Quarry
- ☐ Quarry wall
 - ☐ Red Cedar
 - ☐ Frogs
 - ☐ Juncos

- 19 - Rock Point
- ☐ White Cedar
 - ☐ Little Eagle Cove
 - ☐ White Trillium
 - ☐ Raven

- 6 - Arthur Park
- ☐ Yellow warblers
 - ☐ Box Elder Tree
 - ☐ Black Crowned Night Heron
 - ☐ Cattails
 - ☐ Skunk Cabbage

- Bonus Round - Leddy Park
- ☐ White pine
 - ☐ Jewelweed
 - ☐ Red Trillium



MAJOR INITIATIVES

Tree plantings

Dog ordinance

Playground compliance

Grounds Program revamped



Construction Projects

Bike Path	North Beach cottage	North Beach bathroom floor	North Beach pump out station	North Beach Laundry room	North Beach Barn	Crack sealing Calahan
Crack sealing (127 Path)	Section 8 at Lakeview Cemetery	AARP Fitlot @ Miller	Ramp at the Boathouse	Schmanska Barn and walkway	City Hall Park	Tennis court replacement - Leddy

My name is Tyeastia Green and I am the Director of Racial Equity, Inclusion and Belonging for the city of Burlington. I have prepared a written statement regarding the mural on Church Street.

I understand that this mural has been a point of contention for some time. After my position was announced, I received emails asking what my position was on a mural that even til this day I haven't seen in person. I have seen pictures of it. My job here at the city of Burlington is to call out instances of racism, covert and overt. My job here, is to break down longstanding institutions of racism – what that means at a high level, is to change the way we do business. To ensure that race will not be a determining factor in outcomes. I understand that this is a lofty goal, but I am up to the task.

We are in a pandemic right now that is disproportionately affecting BIPOC communities. COVID has put a bright spotlight on the racialized disparities that have been here for centuries. Disparities with basic needs like food, shelter, health, and income to name a few. My priority has always been to keep the spotlight on those disparities and to work with urgency to repair them. Does this mural fall into those priorities of repairing disparities? No. Is this mural racist? Absolutely. My position is that the mural should come down because as a government entity and municipality we should not uphold racist idealism on city property. We have to make it clear that white supremacy culture as an institution will not be tolerated or allowed here, and we have to follow that up with action.

However, this isn't a huge priority for the black and brown communities even though they believe it to be offensive. Most of the people who have made this a priority are white community members. Bringing this mural down is an easy way to say, look at what we did to dismantle racism. But it is not going far enough in dismantling racism. This mural is a symbol of racism. It is a symbol as offensive as the swastika. Covering up that swastika or removing it does not dismantle racism. It puts a cover over offensive idealism and symbolism. There's still so much real work to be done.

With that said, here are my ideas for council to consider as they prepare to vote on this. I understand that business owners have paid to have their likeness and their businesses displayed on the mural. Paying to have your business on a mural that has been deemed to be racist by the BIPOC communities as well as white community members puts some onus on the business owners to pay for its removal. Most of these businesses have diversity statements on their websites, because of that I'm sure they don't want to be associated with racism in any way. If they truly want the mural to stay because of funds used to be included, perhaps there's a way to fix the mural to be more inclusive, and honest about the citizens and history of Burlington. If not, the mural must come down. And we're back to square one of sharing the onus and costs associated with its removal.

When the mural comes down, regardless if it is now or in 2022, it should not be placed elsewhere within our city. It should be returned to the artist. We cannot have racist idealism on any city wall, building or entity.

If none of these ideas are doable at the moment because of the covid crisis, the mural should be covered up with a tarp that is strong enough and durable enough to withstand extreme temperatures and have other art from the community placed on it.

Bottom line, the mural is offensive and promotes racist idealism. We have three options to consider - fixing the problem by adding a true representation of the community, removal the mural and returning it to the artist or covering until removal is possible.