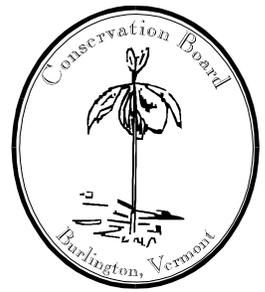


Burlington Conservation Board

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Annual Report of the Burlington Conservation Board

Fiscal Year 2017: June 30, 2016 – July 1, 2017

The Burlington Conservation Board (BCB) acts as the primary entity within the City for comprehensive environmental planning and review. Conservation Board members provide volunteer services in their areas of environmental expertise, which include wetland biology, engineering, water quality, stormwater management, energy efficiency, transportation planning, land conservation and management, and the law. The Board provides thoughtful comment and guidance on all major impact development projects and on those affecting significant natural areas. The Board also conducts field observations when appropriate. Board members make a practice to recuse from project review if he/she has consulted for an applicant in the past, even if not involved in the current application. We strive to develop and sustain effective communication with the Planning Commission, Development Review Board, and other City departments. The BCB has partnered with the Department of Parks and Recreation on open space management and planning through the Conservation Legacy Program. The BCB has also worked with personnel from the Department of Public Works on stormwater management matters in the city. The work of the Conservation Board relies upon the support of the Department of Planning and Zoning, which provides staffing, development review coordination, and planning expertise crucial to Board function.

As in past years, the Board has continued to focus on three primary areas: (1) development review, (2) implementation of Chapter 26: Wastewater, Stormwater, & Pollution Control, and (3) open space planning. Some of our achievements during the last year are described below.

FOCUS AREAS:

1) DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

The BCB reviewed 9 projects this year as opposed to 8 last year. Two of the projects, 329-375 North Ave and 75 Cherry Street, required multiple meetings due to their scope and complexity. In FY 2017, the BCB evaluated the following development proposals and gave advice and specific recommendations to the Development Review Board, Department of Planning and Zoning, and the Department of Public Works:

- **316 Flynn Ave** Review of new mixed use 30-apartment unit / commercial building
- **702 Lake St** Review of winter snow storage for the city
- **80 Colchester Ave** Review of 75-unit residential building
- **329-375 North Ave** Review of 733-unit, 45K sf commercial space mixed use project
- **75 Cherry St** Review of mixed use redevelopment of downtown mall
- **29 Starr Farm Bc** Review of new stone seawall
- **400 Pine St** Review of project to construct new mixed use building

The programs and services of the Dept. of Planning and Zoning are accessible to people with disabilities. For accessibility information call 865-7188 (865-7142 TTY).

- **234 Penny Ln** Review of new marina on downtown waterfront
- **85 North Ave** Review of 43-unit apartment building

In review of these projects, the BCB made specific recommendations pertaining to stormwater management and maintenance and to the minimization of wetland and lakeshore buffer impacts.

2) IMPLEMENTATION OF CHAPTER 26

Chapter 26: Wastewater, Stormwater, & Pollution Control contains the city's stormwater standards and ties into zoning via the Comprehensive Development Ordinance. The Conservation Board continues to work with project applicants and the city's Stormwater Program staff in implementing the stormwater management provisions of this ordinance. The Board has encouraged innovative design and incorporation of functional green spaces into project designs for stormwater retention and infiltration. Particular attention has been paid to unique site sensitivities, receiving waters and city systems, and feasibility within the context of particular development proposals. There has been a consistent push to improve stormwater management practices, particularly on redevelopment sites. In particular, the Board has sought to require developers' stormwater engineers to conduct field testing (test pits, infiltration test) prior to putting together the stormwater design.

Outside of project review, the Board has discussed with Public Works the opportunity for integration of standard stormwater recommendations with approvals issued by Public Works' stormwater program. The Board also commends the progressive stormwater management standards now in place within the recently established Downtown Mixed Use Core overlay.

3) OPEN SPACE PLANNING

The Board played an active role in the conservation of 12 acres of the former Burlington College lands on North Avenue. This conservation was formalized following approval of the related mixed use development on the adjacent acreage. On other matters, the Board worked with the Winooski Valley Park District and the Lake Champlain Land Trust for several smaller conservation efforts within the city. The Board has more recently engaged with Parks & Recreation in a sustained effort targeted at the city's recreational trails network. The effort is intended to bring stakeholders together, to improve trails connectivity, and to better inform the public of their location and accessibility.

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

CONNECTIONS

In the course of these activities, the BCB has maintained and developed important connections with other city departments and organizations during the past year, including:

- Development Review Board (review of individual development proposals)
- Parks & Recreation Department (Conservation Legacy Program, land acquisition, trails initiative, open space planning, urban reserve)
- Planning Commission (Riverside Ave rezone request)
- Long Range Planning Committee (comprehensive planning)
- Department of Public Works (stormwater management)
- Winooski Valley Park District conservation efforts
- Lake Champlain Land Trust conservation efforts

FUTURE PRIORITIES

The Burlington Conservation Board will continue to provide the City and developers with timely review of proposals that have potentially significant environmental impacts. We will continue to work with the DRB on development review issues. Stormwater management will continue to be a high priority, and the BCB will work with Stormwater Program staff to develop stormwater performance standards for future development. The BCB will also work with Parks & Recreation to improve our city's trails system and public awareness and use of it.

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