

Burlington Conservation Board

149 Church Street
Burlington, VT 05401
<http://www.ci.burlington.vt.us/planning/>
Telephone: (802) 865-7189
(802) 865-7195 (FAX)

*Matt Moore, Chair
Will Flender, Vice Chair
Scott Mapes
Don Meals
Jeff Severson
Miles Waite
Damon Lane
Zoe Richards
Stephanie Young*



Conservation Board Meeting Minutes Monday, June 6, 2016 – 5:30 pm Burlington Electric Department Auditorium 585 Pine Street

Attendance

- **Board Members:** Scott Mapes (SM), Don Meals (DM), Matt Moore (MM), Zoe Richards (ZR), Jeff Severson (JS), Miles Waite (MW), Will Flender (WF), Stephanie Young (SY)
- **Absent:** Damon Lane (DL)
- **Public:** Eric Farrell, Charlie Puche, Owiso Makuku, Kurt Muller, Peter Smiar (311-375 North Avenue); David Marshall, Michael Bischer, Michael Fellows, Kevin Worden, Brian Dunkiel, Paul Boisvert, Ed Seraydarian, Donald Sinex (49 Church Street)
- **Staff:** Jay Appleton (Planning & Zoning)

MM, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

Minutes

Minutes of the May 2, 2016 meeting.

A MOTION was made by JS and SECONDED by DM:

Accept the May 2, 2016 meeting minutes with a name spelling correction.

Vote: 6-0-2.

Board Comment

MW announced a June 8 conference sponsored by the Vermont Environmental Consortium.

Public Comment

None.

Open Space Subcommittee

MM reported. The committee continued to discuss promotion of public awareness of natural areas and recreation trails in the City, an initiative of ZR. One means to do this would be to publish a map of natural areas and trails. The subcommittee also discussed closing costs associated with the City's purchase of 12 acres of Catholic Diocese land at 351-375 North Avenue.

Project Review

16-1183SP: 311-375 North Avenue (RM-W, Ward 4N) 375 North Avenue, LLC

Sketch Plan Review of 700+ unit planned unit development with mixed commercial and residential uses, related buildings, and infrastructure

The following Board members recused themselves from participating in discussion of the item: JS (consulting work for the applicant), MW (consulting work for the applicant), and MM (employer is a co-applicant).

WF chaired the board for the item.

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).

Eric Farrell (Farrell Real Estate) gave an overview of the project, to be named "Cambrian Rise". As part of the redevelopment of the Catholic Diocese property, the project proposes to build 700 residential units in 13 buildings; two buildings for institutional, retail, office and other commercial uses; a health and fitness center building; and a greenhouse. The development will be served by three City streets forming a rectangular ring road from and to North Avenue. Also proposed are 1,100 parking spaces in surface lots and underground garages; a handicapped accessible path through the development from North Avenue to the Waterfront Bike Path; bike wash, repair, and storage facilities; a new CCTA bus shelter on North Avenue; and a dog park.

Dave Marshall (Civil Engineering Associates) reviewed the stormwater management system for the project. All stormwater will be treated on-site. Soils on the site become less permeable as one moves west from North Avenue down to the bike path. Treatment practices employ green street design such as curb side rain gardens, bio-retention such as planting areas within parking lots, and sub-grade storage chambers which allow soil infiltration.

DM commended the use of rain gardens without underdrainment. He also hoped that the retail component would serve the needs of residents and reduce vehicular trips.

SM asked if the 12-acre City-owned lot would be included to meet zoning coverage requirements. EF answered no, it is unnecessary. SM also commended the proposed stormwater practices, including any on the City-owned lot.

ZR followed up asking what stormwater measures would be on the City lot. Dave Marshall responded saying that while the exact design has not been determined, they are looking non-structural temporary ponds from which water would slowly drain.

SY asked for information about anticipated bus transit use by residents. Eric Farrell replied the North Avenue (#7) route receives heavy use currently and that a large bus shelter is proposed to serve the development. Owiso Makuku added that CCTA is planning to double the frequency at which #7 runs, from every 30 minutes to every 15 minutes.

WF expressed his support for the proposed stormwater management measures, noting that almost all treatment would be done on the development portion of the site, and not on the City-owned lot.

DM stated that he wants to see the stormwater management practices remain in the proposal as costs become clearer.

SM asked if the waterfront access path would be suitable for bikes. Eric Farrell answered that it will be a multi-use path for pedestrians and bicyclists alike. He pointed out that there will also be a path connecting to the Waterfront Bike Path from the western end of the southern street. Bicyclists may prefer that route instead of riding the access path which winds back and forth to minimize grade change.

Project Review

16-1258SP: 49 Church Street (D, Ward 3C) BTC Mall Associates, LLC

Sketch Plan Review of mixed use redevelopment (retail, office, residential and parking garage) of the Burlington Town Center Mall property.

MW recused himself from participating in discussion of the item citing his representation of a property abutter.

William Fellows (PKSB Architects) gave an overview of the proposed redevelopment of the Burlington Town Center Mall.

Devonwood Investors is proposing to redevelop a 4-acre property where a 40-year old retail mall is currently located. The existing 170,000 square foot retail shopping mall would be replaced with a

1,250,000 square foot mixed-use development, containing 274 residential units, office space, parking, retail and services. The sections of Saint Paul Street and Pine Street that were removed to construct the current mall would be returned to the City and restored as functioning city streets with retail and service uses at street level. Currently the site has 575 parking spaces in a structured garage. This garage would be replaced by a new above-ground structured garage with 925 spaces. Roof top space on the buildings will be for tenant use only.

Kevin Worden (Engineering Ventures) presented plans for stormwater management. Currently there is no stormwater management on the site, with water draining into the City's combined storm and sewer system on Cherry and Bank Streets, which flow to the downtown wastewater treatment plant, which in turn discharges into Lake Champlain. The Department of Public Works has requested installation of attenuation practices to slow flows from the property. Mr. Worden stated that their stormwater plans are only in the preliminary stage, and nothing has been designed so far. Under consideration are green streets infrastructure, permeable pavers, and rain gardens.

Kurt Muller (Johnson Company) gave a report on the constraints posed by the soils on the site. Urban soils in Vermont contain contaminants that exceed State standards. As such, all excavated soils must be trucked to a qualified landfill for long-term disposal. However the State allows such soils to be isolated on-site by capping them with buildings, streets, etc. The estimated cost of disposing soil excavated for underground parking is \$53,000,000, which is prohibitive. Therefore the developers have the goal of leaving all soils on the site, which eliminated the option of underground parking construction.

DM asked if the new sections of Saint Paul and Pine Streets will be actual City streets with cars, sidewalks and store fronts. Mr. Fellows answered yes, and the right-of-ways will be deeded to the City.

MM followed up asking if the utilities under the new street sections will be in City ownership. Mr. Fellows said that is under discussion. The development includes an underground concourse crossing under the street sections, which complicates utility installation.

SM recommended designing the stormwater management system to a 1-year 24-hour storm event because discharge is into a combined storm/sewer system. He noted that the College Street stormwater line discharges directly into Burlington Harbor, and advised against utilizing it.

MM asked if there is indeed no stormwater management on the site. Mr. Worden answered, none. MM asked if a State stormwater permit will be required. Mr. Worden replied that a City stormwater permit will be required, and possibly a State permit as well.

JS asked for more information on exactly how cars and bikes would travel the new sections of Saint Paul and Pine Streets. Mr. Fellows described elevation changes going north-south across the site, and noted that the building at 100 Bank Street lies partially in the path of Pine Street. But the streets will be functional City Streets.

WF observed that the new sections of Saint Paul and Pine Streets do not line up exactly with the existing sections. Mr. Fellows confirmed. They do not line up exactly because site constraints like 100 Bank Street do not make it possible. This is an urban environment, and he is confident that drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians will figure it out. He added that an offset on Cherry Street still needs to be negotiated.

MM said that bike and pedestrian continuity is problematic going north-south. Mr. Fellows replied that they are not planning to connect with existing bicycle and pedestrian paths, but the reconnection of the two streets will provide benefits in and of itself.

MM asked if any bicycle support facilities are planned. Mr. Fellows answered that bike storage facilities are proposed at the major entrances to the development and opposite to the new CCTA transit center to the north in Saint Paul Street.

DM opined that 925 parking spaces seems like a lot, and asked for more detail as to why. Mr. Fellows agreed that it is a lot. He said that the City's zoning regulations require a minimum amount of parking, and that the development will be a destination for those from out-of-town, and therefore some amount of parking is needed. Further, retail requires parking to thrive, and that without sufficient parking, financing is difficult to secure for retail uses. Mr. Fellows stated he would prefer less parking. Donald Sinex (Devonwood Investors) stated that by traditional standards the amount of parking proposed is low. He added that they are considering one parking space per residential unit.

MM asked if offering Car Share was planned. Mr. Sinex answered it is under consideration.

DM responded that the availability of Car Share is essential.

MM asked what soil testing has been done on the site. Mr. Sinex answered, none, stating that by EPA standards, all urban soils are contaminated.

MM asked if the site would be used for stormwater infiltration or retention. Mr. Worden replied that they are considering storage opportunities. Design details would need to be worked out in order to offer something concrete.

SM highlighted the College Street stormwater direct discharge as an issue that should be addressed.

As the item was coming to a close, Brian Dunkiel (Dunkiel Saunders representing BTC) summarized that they expect to return to the Conservation Board for a second Sketch Plan Review, but first the Planning Commission and City Council need to complete their work on zoning amendments that will make the project possible.

DM asked more information on the zoning amendments. Mr. Dunkiel reported that an overlay district to increase maximum building height and maximum allowable density is under consideration. Similarly, City voters must approve extension of the Waterfront Tax Increment Financing District in November 2016. This is needed to generate revenue for the City to construct the necessary public infrastructure to support the project.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.