

Burlington Conservation Board

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Ryan Crehan
Hannah Brislin
Miles Waite
Caryn Connolly
Kyle Tansley
Lina Swislocki
Elizabeth Cunningham, Student



Conservation Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, August 1, 2022 – 5:30 pm
Remote & In-Person Meeting

Attendance

- **Board Members:** Zoe Richards (ZR), Miles Waite (MW), Caryn Connolly (CC), Elizabeth Cunningham (EC), Don Meals (DM), Kyle Tansley (KT), Hannah Brislin (HB), Lina Swislocki (LS)
- **Absent:** Rebecca Roman (RR), Ryan Crehan (RC)
- **Public:** Jack Millbank, Michael Koch (505 Lake St), William De Vos (136 Sunset Cliff), Sharon Bushor
- **Staff:** Scott Gustin (Permitting & Inspections)

ZR, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

Board members introduced themselves to new member, Lina Swislocki.

Minutes

A MOTION was made by MW and SECONDED by DM:

Adopt the minutes of May 2, 2022 as written.

Vote: 7-0-0, motion carried.

Board Comment

SG mentioned the steep slopes zoning amendment is effective now, warned for CC PH 8/15/22.

ZR said she spoke with Bob Popp at ANR. There's still interest in having a field trip to the Killarney beach to check out the rare plants.

Public Comment

Sharon Bushor said that the Zoom link required authentication. SG confirmed the Zoom info on the agenda and invite match.

Open Space Subcommittee

SG recapped the Open Space Subcommittee's discussion. The Subcommittee talked about moving forward with the Urban Forest Plan and also talked about presenting at BTV Stat in September.

The Urban Forest Plan effort will be led by Parks in partnership with the Conservation Board and the Office of City Planning. A firm outline of content and associated RFP are anticipated this coming fall. Citywide applicability is anticipated rather than an exclusive on public woodlands and street trees.

The September BTV Stat meeting is an opportunity to share the nature based climate solutions analysis being done in partnership with TPL, NBCS, and U Colorado Masters of Environmental Science program.

The programs and services of the Dept. of Permitting & Inspections are accessible to people with disabilities. For accessibility information call 865-7188.

Its an opportunity to present some of the major goals of the Open Space Addendum adopted this past February, metrics associated with implementation of some of the measures, and solicitation of support for broader implementation of the goals articulated in the Addendum.

Project Review

1. **ZP-22-443; 505 Lake Street (Ward 3C, DW-PT) City of Burlington / LCCSC** Proposed waterfront improvements to the existing Community Sailing Center

Jack Millbank and Michael Koch appeared.

Jack Millbank overviewed the existing conditions photos. SG noted the property is in the downtown waterfront and is not affected by the lakeshore buffer. This is a courtesy review. Michael Koch noted much of the construction is intended to improve public access to the lake by users of the sailing center. Mr. Millbank said most of the work is on the lake. He pointed out that the pier will be handicap accessible. The proposed improvements will enable boats to enter and leave concurrently. Mr. Koch said most of the pier will be on pilings to enable continued water flow underneath. ZR, is the benefit of rip rap wave attenuation? Mr. Millbank said, yes. The proposed pier won't exacerbate wave action. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and VT Lakes are reviewing this project. ZR mentioned VT's new bio-engineering manual. Mr. Millbank noted that no cutting is included in this proposal. MW asked about project timeline. Mr. Millbank said it needs to be done in the winter.

DM asked if expansion of the facility could be possible in 10 years or so. Mr. Millbank said the sailing center is limited in area by their lease. He doesn't know the answer to DM's hypothetical question.

MW noted that Board appreciates the applicants presenting to the Board.

2. **ZP-22-403; 136 Sunset Cliff Rd (Ward 4N, RL-W) William de Vos / 136 Sunset Cliff Camp, LLC** Tree clearing within riparian & littoral conservation zone

William de Vos appeared.

Mr. de Vos overviewed the application. The trees to be cut are angled towards the house in a threatening posture. In the wind, at least one of the trees actually touches the home. A couple of the trees to be removed are dead or dying.

MW, are any of those tree roots holding the lakeshore slope in place? Mr. de Vos, there are many other trees on the bank holding the soil in place. MW, have you considered replacement trees? Mr. de Vos, new trees could be planted on the bank – such as new cedars. HB asked if any of the trees were cottonwoods. ZR, asked if the new house was pulled back from the shore as compared to the prior home. Mr. de Vos noted that he is just the arborist. He said that the leaning trees to be cut have been leaning for years.

ZR requested seeing photos from the site a year ago with the prior home. LS asked why cut the trees if they are starting to right their angle. ZR noted that the home is tight into the lakeshore buffer. She would like to see a solution that includes revegetation consistent with the natural community along this portion of the lakeshore. Viewshed is not a top conservation value. DM concurs with significance of the viewshed. At least a 1-for-1 tree replacement should be implemented. MW, cedar is quite resilient. Lots of lakeshore camps have implemented selective pruning of cedars.

Mr. de Vos reiterated that some of the trees to be cut are, in fact, threatening the house. He suggested that Board members visit the site. HB asked if the same trees are in the photos

between this year and last year. Has the ground shifted recently to affect the trees? A site visit may be warranted. DM said if the ground has shifted, someone needs to find out why. Its not just from the wind.

ZR noted that a year ago, the Board heard that the house would be pulled back a bit from the lakeshore. She feels like she needs to understand why the trees not endangering the house need to be removed.

A MOTION was made by DM and SECONDED by MW:

Postpone action on this application until the next Board meeting and a site visit is made.

Discussion: HB, we should set timeline for doing the site visit and making a recommendation. MW suggested that the owner should be present and pointed out that the owner may want an engineer to look at the site for slumping.

Vote: 7-0-0

(Aim for first week in September for site visit.)

Update & Discussion

1. Outdoor lighting standards

ZR noted the impacts of urban lighting (especially LED's) on insects. DM said he's in favor of dark sky standards, but he's skeptical of moving away from LED's. They are much more efficient than other types. Climate change is a bigger threat than outdoor lighting. ZR said she thinks it comes down to changing the color of the light.

SG noted the outdoor lighting standards in the CDO. They do not pertain to city streetlights – those are handled by BED. SG noted the CDO standards should be updated, and this is an opportunity to consider ways they could be improved.

CC said she is not sure Burlington has the capacity to do some of the measures outlined in the information provided for this agenda item. DM agrees with the notion of dimming lights after a certain hour. MW, its possible to shield lights – to focus them on the roadway for instance. LS mentioned the possibility of putting motion sensors on street lights. CC said she has a motion sensor on her garage and it was triggered so much, its burned out. ZR said we could work to put together information as to possible improvements for our outdoor lighting standards. MW said we mention this to BED. ZR, maybe we should add this to next year's Board's goals.

Adjournment

6:47 PM.