



City of Bloomington Environmental Commission

The mission of the Environmental Commission is to advise the City of Bloomington on how its actions and policies may preserve and enhance the quality of Bloomington's environment, including the life-supporting processes that natural ecological systems provide to humans and other organisms.

MINUTES

20 August 2015

City Hall McCloskey Room, 401 North Morton Street

1. Introductions (7:00-7:05 p.m.)

Present: Dedaimia Whitney, Linda Thompson, Nick Kappas, Chad Roeder, David Cohen, Chaim Julian, Dave Debikey, Mike Litwin, David Parkhurst, Andy Marrs

Absent: Kriste Lindberg, Alicia Reinersman

Guests: Kathy Spiaga, concerned citizen; Julia Rogers, Duncan Campbell; Jana McGee, Bloomington Commission on Sustainability (BCOS)

2. Approval of minutes (7:05-7:10 p.m.)

- Approval postponed until next month

3. Public comment (7:10-7:15 p.m.)

4. Presentation: "Cultural Performance: Leveraging Embodied Energy", Duncan Campbell. The talk will address the role of preservation (the recovery of embodied energy in existing buildings) in economic and social performance. (7:15-7:30 p.m.)

"Embodied energy" refers to the energy used in raw material acquisition, material production, and building assemblage. Every building begins with an environmental debt. For instance, a typical 50,000ft² building embodies about 80 million BTUs of energy even when unused. Newer, "efficient" buildings still cause environmental debts that, on average, take between 35 and 50 years to pay off before becoming truly efficient. Rather than demolishing and reconstructing, developers should renovate buildings to limit further environmental debts. Existing buildings currently outnumber new buildings in the US by more than 100 to 1. Greening these buildings can reduce GHG emissions and bring cultural improvements (e.g., new schools, community art projects, festivals, etc.).

5. Committee reports & discussions (7:30-8:15 p.m.)

A. Planning Committee & Sr. Environmental Planner (15 min: Linda)

The ECPC discussed two cases relevant to the EC:

1. Echo Park

- The Echo Park plan is going to the second hearing.
- Echo Park made no major plan modifications after the last meeting.
 - i. Echo Park removed the dog park and trail proposed for the nearby protected land from its plans.
 - ii. Echo Park is considering incorporating stormwater management, tree preservation, and light pollution measures into their plan.

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2. Elmore-Orego

- They plan to build a 4-story building between 5th and 6th Street, adjacent to the B-Line Trail.
 - i. The first story will be used for parking and commercial purposes.
 - ii. The 2nd and 3rd stories will have apartments.
 - iii. The 4th story will have penthouse suites.
 - iv. This building will have a limestone exterior.
- The petition was originally approved in 2013, but the permission lapsed. Since Elmore-Orego plans to build soon, they requested permission again.
- The ECPC already sent Elmore-Orego a memo, requesting green building features and recycling facilities.

B. L4L Natural Landscaping (5 min: Diane)

- Diane has not attended the Farmers' Market for the last two weeks.
- About 50 of the new L4L signs have been given away already.
- Members of the Unitarian Universalist Church asked the EC to write a letter to the church, demanding a Roundup ban.
 - The church members wrote their own letter.

C. Tree Commission (5 min: David P. and Dedaimia)

- Historic houses were moved on East 8th Street to make way for new fraternity housing.
 - 13 mature trees were removed to facilitate this transition.
- There will be new, angled parking on 10th Street and College Avenue.
 - New parking construction necessitated street tree removal.
- The City treats between 20 and 30% of its ash trees, protecting against the Emerald Ash Borer.
 - Some of these trees were treated for free by Chris Sadoff from Purdue University.
- The Tree Care Manual got updated.

D. ERAC (5 min: David Parkhurst)

- ERAC held its last meeting on August 12th at Griffy Lake. In this meeting, participants discussed water quality data prior to draining and refilling the lake. The person sampling the lake measured high nutrient levels, likely coming from a connecting stream. That person also observed large quantities of milfoil and pondweed in the lake.
 - 2,4-D, an herbicide, might be used to control pondweed growth.
- ERAC discussed invasive plant reduction needs, especially in the Butler, Ferguson, and Miller-Showers parks.
- The Warner Dam near the Wapahani River is hazardous.
 - The Department of Natural Resources worries about it breaking and flooding. The City is under pressure to repair or remove the dam.
 - Nick will report on the dam's status in the next EC meeting.

E. BCOS (5 min: Jana McGee)

- Jana, the co-chair of BCOS, will be the EC's new BCOS representative.
- The Hoosier to Hoosier sale will be in the warehouse on Rogers Street on Saturday, August 22nd.
- BCOS is making progress on the Star Communities update. The intern working on the project made a useful presentation, which can be obtained from either Jacqui Bauer or Jana.

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- There will be a Timebank meeting at the Monroe County Public Library in Room 2c on August, 22nd at 11am.
 - Timebank is a skill-sharing group.
 - The meeting will be an informational potluck.
- IU will hold a sustainability panel on September 24th at 5:00pm in the IMU.
- The IU Research and Teach Preserve offers classes for environmental educators. Go to <http://www.indiana.edu/~preserve/events.shtml> for more information.

F. MCSWMD (5 min: Chaim & Chad)

- The board voted against constructing the proper footing beneath the concrete slab of a pre-existing building for the materials recovery facility (MRF).
- Executive Director, Larry Barker, is retiring from the board.
- The CAC will write a letter supporting Bring Your Bag Bloomington.

G. Recycling Subcommittee (5 min: Dave Debikey)

- The last meeting focused on fine-tuning the details of Justin Ross's SPEA environmental economics course.
- Dave contacted Adam Wasson about the recycling survey. Adam wanted to make sure the survey questions would provide relevant recycling data.

6. Old business (8:15-8:30 p.m.)

A. Bloomington Environmental Action Plan (BEAP) (5 min: Alicia)

- Alicia is on vacation. Dedaimia wants her to send an electronic copy of the BEAP draft to the commissioners.
 - Commissioners should focus on higher-order, content-related concerns while reading the draft.

B. Letter to CDC update (5 min: David Parkhurst & Linda)

- The letter to the CDC is in final form.
- The letters to the 4 other people, requesting their endorsements, are finalized, but they need to go through the City's legal system again prior to being mailed.

7. New business (8:30-8:45 p.m.)

A. BEC web page content (Linda)

- The City will launch a new website soon.
- The City will also impose stricter rules about the content boards and commissions can post on their webpages.
 - The EC needs to evaluate its webpage to determine which content to remove.

8. Commissioner announcements (8:45-9:00 p.m.)

David P.: The Monroe County Library has a copy of the documentary, *Merchants of Doubt*, which is based on the book by Naomi Oreskes. This documentary discusses how prominent, Cold War Era scientists got the impression that government regulation was a slippery slope to communism.

Dave D.: The Downtown Bloomington Inc. Board met at the ballroom on Fountain Square and spoke with Ron Walker, the vice president of the CFC. Ron will help the recycling subcommittee reach out to his tenants, who represent a large portion of the downtown area.

The documentary, *True Cost*, is on Netflix. This film discusses the environmental effects of the fashion industry. The fashion industry is second to the oil industry as the world's largest pollutant.

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David C.: David's internship with the EC has concluded. IU hired him as a teaching assistant for a risk management course.

Chad: The Downtown Recycling Center helped the City recycle numerous materials resulting from Council Chamber renovations.

Nick: Nick just received his Hoosier River Watch certification.

Dedaimia: Bloomingfoods is hiring a new general manager. Contact Dedaimia with any recommendations for this position.

Andy: Andy enrolled in the Citizens Academy.

9. Adjournment

Meeting times

- A. Environmental Commission: 17 September, 7:00 p.m., McCloskey Room, City Hall
- B. Planning Committee: 2 September, & 17 September, 4:00 p.m., Lemon Room, City Hall
- C. Tree Commission: 19 August, 9:30 a.m., Bryan Park
- D. BCOS meeting: 8 September, 6:00 p.m., McCloskey Room
- E. MoCo Environmental Quality & Sus. Com.: 9 Sept., 5:30 p.m., Nat Hill III Room, Courthouse
- F. ERAC: 7 October, 4:30 p.m., Bryan Park, Henderson Shelter
- G. MPO CAC: 23 September, 6:30 p.m., McCloskey Room
- H. MCSWMD Board: 10 September, 4:00 p.m., Nat Hill III room, Courthouse