



**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.

# **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES**

24 June 2021, 6:00 PM

## **1. Call to order and quorum confirmation**

Called to order at 6:01 PM on June 24th

Andrew Guenther  
Matt Caldie  
Dedaimia Whitney  
Mike Litwin  
Dave Parkhurst  
Matthias Benko  
Sam Armstrong  
Don Eggert  
Daniel Gonzalez

## **2. Introductions**

New member Matthias Benko is a rising Junior at IU and is majoring in Environmental and Sustainability Studies and Geography. This summer he is working on a project related to updating Indiana's municipal vegetation codes.

## **3. Approval of minutes**

Andrew moves minutes. Dedaimia makes a motion to approve. Don Seconds

Sam Approved  
Mathias Approved  
Matt Approved  
Don Approved  
Daniel Approved  
Andrew Approved  
Mike Approved  
Dave Approved  
Dedaimia Approved

Minutes are approved unanimously

#### 4. Public comment: Limit 5 minutes per person, 20 minutes total

No Public Comment

#### 5. Reports from TC, MoCo EC, BCOS, ERAC, MPO-CAC, FOLM, & MC-IRIS (update only on previous meeting of that group)

**TC:** It was a short meeting. Erin Hatch gave a monthly report. She gave suggestions on rules of how to protect trees during construction. Erin also mentioned the cicada damage to mostly smaller trees. Mia Williams gave a report from IU about the trees on campus. It was also discussed what is happening with Bachelor Forest once the new library goes up. This Sunday is the annual meeting for the Friends Of The Library and maybe they will discuss the plans with preserving the forest.

**MoCo EC:** They met earlier this month. They discussed the House Enrolled Act 1437. This discusses the new state rule for hybrid meetings. They received an update from Maggie Sullivan on Lake Monroe's management process. Andrea Webster from the Environmental Resiliency Institute also discussed the Monroe County 2022 resilience cohort participation. Peter Iverson a representative from district ones county council gave a report on sustainability issues. No new business.

**BCOS:** Alex Crowley filled in for Lauren at the monthly meeting. Alex talked about the solar energy audit. They are working with 10 nonprofits, and it is going well. They hope to expand this to July to get residential support. Alex brought up the American Rescue Plan. Now that the city owns the old hospital it will be easier to figure out what to do with it. Some of the discussion was also around housing equity. They hope to model the Bloomington Plan after the Cleveland plan. They also hope the trial of composting leaves is successful, so that the curbside pick-up of leaves can be discontinued.

**ERAC:** At the June 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting Algal Blooms at Meadow wood Pond and Griffy Lake were discussed. At Cascades Park, stream stabilizations and trail work will continue after July 4<sup>th</sup>. The road going through Cascades Park will be opened with speedbumps. The Griffy-loop trail will go out to bid soon. A nature park shelter is being built at Leonard Springs. Loop brushes will be installed at all the natural trails. MC-IRIS will make trail signs this year. Weed wrangles on Saturdays were discussed.

**MPO-CAC:** Mainly discussed the 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Plan. A public comment period will occur soon on the plan.

**FOLM:** Hasn't met recently. Dave has been plotting graphs of the data. The research part is finished. They are now trying to figure out how much money will be needed to be granted by the city to implement a plan.

**MC-IRIS:** Don will send the minutes. Things are moving along with the expansion of the weed wrangles. They are also trying to get more publicity around HAND Grants. Maybe an HT column could help out with spreading the word on increasing the biodiversity in Bloomington.

#### 6. Discussion from active working groups:

##### A. ECPC/Plan Commission Linda Thompson, staff liaison

##### i. The District at Latimer Square

We discussed this proposal the previous month. The plan was continued from last month because they were working on a Memorandum of understanding with Utilities regarding Utilities. They have also made some changes with the architecture of the building. They are also now planning a "cool roof" on the property, and they hope to have pollinator gardens at all 5 buildings. Only development on the Plan Commissions agenda this month. Some buildings will be designed for students and others for multi-family residential buildings. There will be 542 spaces with 22 EV stations and 182 bike spaces.

## **B. Biodiversity update Ben Sharaf and Organizer**

This Sunday we are having a meeting with possible future partners. We invited people from all walks of life to join in on the meeting to hopefully give some insight and wisdom on how we should go about with the process of publicizing the plan. We also hope they will give us some good comments on the plan itself. A total of 17 people were invited.

## **C. Outreach update Ben Sharaf and Organizer**

We have narrowed the dates to 4 Saturdays in September. We have discussed two possible venues Switchyard Park and City Hall as venues. Ben will send out a doodle poll with what dates to do and which venue to pick. A lot of things are going on in September, so we will need to work around that. Ben will write out a calendar of what is going on in September. We also discussed how we were going to advertise certain events. Advertisements in Bloom magazine and the HT are expensive but might get a discount. We also discussed a Facebook boost. Ben will look at availability for the venues we want. We want to invite environmental groups to set up a table at these events. Linda will look into the legality of it.

# **7. Old business**

## **A. Outreach working group whole Commission discussion**

We encourage everyone to respond to ideas when we ask for input.

# **8. New business**

## **A. Parking minimums, Andrew Guenther**

Andrew gave a presentation on parking minimums. He will send the presentation to everyone. Things that were discussed in the presentation were the following: other cities that have accepted this new legislation, giving developers the freedom to decide how many parking spaces they actually need, creating more space to eliminate urban sprawl, encouraging less miles travelled by internal combustion engines, it can save developers and renters money, how to move forward with this policy. It is important to note that it is not forcing people not to build parking spaces. A concern is that if you take away spaces in these developments it will put more pressure on the city to provide parking. The assumption is that developers will build only the number of spaces that are needed. This has been brought to a few council members and planning staff. It has been received positively but needs to be brought to more council members.

## **B. Resolution regarding electronic meeting policy**

The policy was sent to the EC beforehand and was voted on tonight. It can be changed afterwards. Matt moved and Sam seconded.

Sam  
Matt  
Don  
Daniel  
Andrew  
Mike  
Dave

## **C. City Budget discussion**

The question was posed “how can we use the recovery money?” It would just be a suggestion. Andrew will send along the rules on how much money can be spent on certain things. The controller might have insight on this and what we can ask for. We should generally encourage environmental spending. Hopefully we can get this done before the July meeting.

## 9. Commissioner announcements

Open windows in the morning and then close them when the temperature rises to the temperature you desire. It helps the air conditioner work less.

Matt has been selected as one of the people that will receive a storm water grant.

## 10. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8 PM

Next EC meeting: 15 July, 2021, 6:00 p.m., Zoom