



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 NOTICE and REGULAR SESSION AGENDA

September 19, 2024, 6:00 PM
Hooker Meeting Room #245
Hybrid Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting here:

<https://bloomington.zoom.us/j/8657231124?pwd=mPqboSiD0AhVwKSgkuW2aO7NHixihO.1&omn=81563021562>

Meeting ID: 865 723 1124

Passcode: COBPT

or on Community Access Television Service (CATS): <https://catstv.net/government.php>.

Auxiliary aids are available upon request with adequate notice.

1. Call to order and quorum confirmation:
2. Introductions and Roll Call

	<u>In Person</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Zoom</u>
Carrie Albright			
Nadia Cain			
Matt Caldie			
Shannon Gayk			
Mike Litwin			
Adam Martinez			
Megan Murphy			
Mitchell Owens			
David Parkhurst			
Gabby Robles			

Karenna Tankersley
Rachael Sargent Johnson,
City Liaison
Fiona Kilgore,
Graduate Fellow

3. Approval of August 2024 minutes*

Yes

No

Abstain

Carrie Albright
Nadia Cain
Matt Caldie
Shannon Gayk
Mike Litwin
Adam Martinez
Megan Murphy
Mitchell Owens
David Parkhurst
Gabby Robles
Karenna Tankersley

4. Public comment

Limit 5 minutes per person, 20 minutes total

5. Old Business

- a. WFHB Active! and PSA* (Carrie Albright)
- b. YIMBYana Local Housing Policy Reform - Letter of Support* (Adam Martinez)
- c. Working group updates
 - i. Water Quality
 - ii. Biodiversity

6. New Business

- a. Stormwater Awareness Week (Rachael Johnson)
- b. Title 2 (Carrie Albright, Rachael Johnson)
- c. Priorities for 2025 (Carrie Albright, Matt Caldie, Karenna Tankersley, Rachael Johnson)
- d. Habitat Connectivity Plan (Rachael Johnson)
- e. Riparian Buffer Discussion (Mike Litwin, Rachael Johnson)
- f. Rescheduling of October Meeting (Rachael Johnson)

7. Reports from:

- a. Tree Commission (TC)
- b. Environmental Resource Advisory Council (ERAC)
- c. Friends of Lake Monroe (FOLM)
- d. Bloomington Commission on Sustainability (BCOS)
- e. Monroe County – Identify and Reduce Invasive Species (MC-IRIS)

8. Commissioner announcements

9. Upcoming Meeting

- a. October 17, 2024, 6:00 pm, Hooker Room, Zoom, and CATS – to be rescheduled

10. Adjournment:

** Item to be voted on*

The City is committed to providing equal access to information. However, despite our efforts, at times, portions of our board and commission packets are not accessible for some individuals. If you encounter difficulties accessing material in this packet, please contact Melissa Hirtzel at hirtzelm@bloomington.in.gov and provide your name, contact information, and a link to or description of the document or web page you are having problems with.

As a quorum of the Commission or its committees may be present, this gathering constitutes a meeting under the Indiana Open Door Law (I.C. § 5-14-1.5). For that reason, this statement provides notice that this meeting will occur and is open for the public to attend, observe, and record what transpires.

The Bloomington Environmental Commission (EC) wishes to acknowledge and honor the indigenous communities native to this region, and recognize that the City of Bloomington, Indiana was built on indigenous homelands and resources.



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 AUGUST 2024 MEETING MINUTES

August 15, 2024, 6:00 PM
Hooker Meeting Room # 245
Hybrid meeting

Join Zoom Meeting here:

<https://bloomington.zoom.us/j/6359441221?pwd=bXRYTnNJV2xMbTRLLeE00QW9XWnRjQT09>

Meeting ID: 635 944 1221

Passcode: COBPT

or on Community Access Television Service (CATS): <https://catstv.net/government.php>.

Auxiliary aids are available upon request with adequate notice.

1. Call to order and quorum confirmation: 6:02 pm

2. Introductions and Roll Call

	<u>In person</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Zoom</u>
Carrie Albright	X		
Megan Bankowski			X
Nadia Cain		X	
Matt Caldie	X		
Shannon Gayk	X		
Mike Litwin	X		
Adam Martinez	X		
Megan Murphy	X		
Mitchell Owens	X		
David Parkhurst	X		
Gabby Robles			X
Karena Tankersley	X		
Rachael Sargent, City Liaison	X		
TBD, Graduate Fellow			

Matt motioned to move new business in front of old business, Karena seconded. All present voted yes.

3. Approval of July 2024 minutes:*	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Carrie Albright	X		
Megan Bankowski	X		
Nadia Cain			X
Matt Caldie	X		
Shannon Gayk	X		
Mike Litwin	X		
Adam Martinez	X		
Megan Murphy	X		
Mitchell Owens	X		
David Parkhurst	X		
Gabby Robles	X		
Karena Tankersley	X		

David moved, Matt seconded. All present voted yes.

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

No public comments were made.

5. New business

- A. YIMBYana Local Housing Policy Reform - Letter of Support* (Adam Martinez)
- B. Terrestrial Invasive Plant Rule Amendment - Letter of Support* (Rachael Sargent)

A. YIMBYana

A representative, Matt Gleason, from YIMBYana expressed that the organization is interested in removing parking mandates, reducing lot size, increasing density per lot, increasing mixed use zoning, and improving mobility infrastructure for public transport, among other things.

David asked about parking mandates, and the representative clarified that currently businesses are required to have a certain number of parking spaces, and YIMBYana is not in favor of this requirement.

Shannon and Megan M asked about the logistics of advocating for additional criteria beyond what was outlined in the letter, and the representative explained that support for more specific policies down the line would be welcome, but that the letter was kept broad intentionally.

Adam, who helped draft the letter, clarified that signatures are intended to display support of the general outline, and that more specific policies would be advocated for on a case by case basis down the line.

Carrie commented that it is important to be thinking about access for people with disabilities, who may not have bike-riding options, or access to other traditionally environmentalist alternatives.

Shannon asked for more information about the organization YIMBYana. Our guest explained that they are a new organization with focus on advocating for increasing density, housing equity, and affordability.

Matt said that upon second look of the packet, it appears that the EC is being asked to sign support for the first sentence and the first sentence of the last paragraph, and not every single detail laid out in the letter. It was agreed that signing the letter would indicate support for the spirit of the organization's goals in congruence with environmental issues, and not any specifics beyond that. Matt stated that he was comfortable with signing the letter as is.

Carrie asked what groups have been asked for support so far, and the guest answered that individuals from city council and the affiliate national organization were looking to discuss further opportunities for finding support.

Shannon suggested that some of the language could be cut so that it does not appear that the EC is endorsing every individual policy goal.

Megan M motioned to postpone voting on the letter until next month. David seconded the motion. All present voted yes. The motion passed.

B. Invasive Amendment

Rachael provided background on the letter and offered to answer questions. David motioned to approve the letter as is, Matt seconded the motion. All present voted yes. The motion passed.

6. Old business:

- A. WFHB PSA (Carrie Albright)
- B. Bug Fest 2024 (Megan Murphy)
- C. Working group updates

A. WFHB Public Service Announcement

WFHB suggested the EC be involved in the activate program for a 5 minute segment. Matt suggested Mitchell would be a good candidate for speaking, though Matt volunteered that he would be willing to talk if it wasn't solo. Karenna expressed interest in talking about the BDWG. Megan M suggested that our call to action could be asking people to bring their concerns to the EC. Mike asked about the timeline and suggested getting input via email. Carrie agreed that she would look for input via email.

B. Bug Fest

Megan M mentioned that the EC booth will be a stamp-carrying station this year, and that Nadia had made a nice draft for bug bingo. The EC table was set to have resources on natural plantings and native pollinators. Matt asked about having a laptop for the HCP map, which was agreed to have logistical challenges. Megan M collected volunteer information.

C. Working Group

Matt mentioned that he went out with Shawn to place some of the monitors for air quality. Rachael asked about working group meeting logistics, and requested to be updated by email.

7. Reports from:

- Tree Commission (TC)
- Environmental Resource Advisory Council (ERAC)
- Friends of Lake Monroe (FOLM)

- Bloomington Commission on Sustainability (BCOS)
- Monroe County-Identify and Reduce Invasive Species (MC-IRIS)

Dave

- Tree Commission: No report.
- ERAC: Millers Shows Park pond maintenance was discussed. Callery Pears have been removed, and EcoLogic will be restoring a part of the park. They discussed outreach materials, BugFest, and Nature Days for school children. They discussed Swifts entering Prairie View school, a Resilience Plan for storms and natural disasters, a still grass vegetation management plan, and the status of a few parks and trails around town.
- FoLM: No report.

Matt

- BCOS: BCOS had several new members, and discussed how they would share materials. They discussed HOAs and how to change methods for HOA enforcement of sustainability related issues.

Rachael

- MCIRIS: They talked about an award, weed wrangles, and the native plant sale. More information about the weed wrangles can be found at the websites: <https://www.mc-iris.org/volunteering.html>. Rachael committed to passing along their meeting minutes.

8. Commissioner announcements:

Mike: Discussed the Plan Commission meeting on September 9th considering UDO changes - specifically surrounding developer incentives to protect steep slopes. Rachael mentioned that steep slopes code proposal will likely be finalized in October because Bloomington's law currently does not align with IN state law, due to recent change at the state level.

Rachael: Passed along Linda's kind regards.

Carrie: Promoted many tree planting opportunities through September.

Matt motioned the EC adjourn and Megan M seconded.

9. Adjournment: 7:09 pm

* Item to be voted on

Next EC meeting: September 19, 2024, 6:00 p.m., Hooker Room, Zoom, and CATS

-The City is committed to providing equal access to information. However, despite our efforts, at times, portions of our board and commission packets are not accessible for some individuals. If you encounter difficulties accessing material in this packet, please contact Melissa Hirtzel at hirtzelm@bloomington.in.gov and provide your name, contact information, and a link to or description of the document or web page you are having problems with.

-As a quorum of the Commission or its committees may be present, this gathering constitutes a meeting under the Indiana Open Door Law (I.C. § 5-14-1.5). For that reason, this statement provides notice that this meeting will occur and is open for the public to attend, observe, and record what transpires.

-The Bloomington Environmental Commission (EC) wishes to acknowledge and honor the indigenous communities native to this region, and recognize that the City of Bloomington, Indiana was built on indigenous homelands and resources.

Environmental Commission on WFHB's Activate! and Public Service Announcement

WFHB PSA → Chad Corrothers, **October 3 at 6:15, WFHB station (108 W. 4th St.)**

Details from Chad:

- 20 minutes
- Two guests is the limit for Activate!
- No written answers, please. Guests should speak from the heart on what they do, know, and want to share.
- Prompts that may help participants prepare:
 - ORGANIZATION: Tell us about the organization and its mission - what needs it addresses and how it tries to do that. How does one support the work or get involved? Ask the listener to help and tell them how to do that.
 - PERSONAL: Why did YOU get involved? Why is this work inspirational for you personally? How has the experience changed you?
 - IMPACT: How do you feel that your service has made a difference? How do you know that it's important and appreciated? Can you share a story/example that illustrates the work of the organization?

To be decided:

Potential participants → Carrie, Matt, Karenna, Mitchell (max 2)

ORGANIZATION: Snapshot of what the EC is, what purpose it serves, and how it tries to fulfill that through our priorities & goals

PERSONAL: Maybe each Commissioner has their own origin comment ready and we'll just see what they use.

IMPACT: Describe in what ways EC has made a difference (Weighing in on Planning projects, sharing reports with the Council, engaging the community in environmentally friendly practices). Give examples of how we know the EC is valuable and appreciated (Eco-heroes supported by the City and community)

CALL TO ACTION: Attend our meetings, find us at a public event, participate in Eco-Heroes; If you have issues you'd like us to hear about (virtual and onsite, by email: environment@bloomington.in.gov)

Themes →

✓ Reports

Habitat Connectivity Plan → Where/how do we want to include this, knowing it's a work in progress?

✓ Eco-Heroes

✓ Priorities & Goals

✓ Call to Action is to be engaged in the Community (emphasize how much the community can get involved).

Dear Environmental Commission,

I would like to ask you on behalf of YIMBYana to endorse this letter in favor of zoning and building code reforms that would improve the environmental profile of the city. We are a housing advocacy group focused on housing affordability, alongside issues relating to the urban environment, like transit access, walkability, and environmental sustainability.

Higher housing density allows for better walkability, bikeability, and more efficient public transit which reduces greenhouse gas emissions and the need for paved surfaces. Moreover, density discourages sprawl, therefore preserving the abundance of natural habitat surrounding our city.

In signing this letter, the Environmental Commission acknowledges the beneficial effects of density on the environment and encourages the city to take steps towards that end. On behalf of YIMBYana, thank you for your consideration of this letter, and the work you do to improve the environment in Bloomington.

Signed,

Matt Gleason

Adam Martinez

EC President: _____

MS4 Program: Water Quality

Liz Carter,
MS4 Program Coordinator





Overview of MS4 Program

- MS4 General Permit, issued by IDEM
- 5 MCMs
 - Education and Outreach
 - Illicit Discharge Control
 - Construction Site Runoff
 - Post-Construction
 - Municipal Ops and Housekeeping

Progress on Water Quality Items

- Title 13: Stormwater Management Ordinance implementation
- Street Sweeping
- Clear Creek water quality project: O'Neill Fellowship
- Hoosier Riverwatch
- Illicit discharge reporting/enforcement increase
- Post-construction BMP inspections and their impacts
- Green Infrastructure Crew



Title 13

- GI requirement – 50% of water quality treatment
- Focus on parking lot water quality
- Requirement to treat first 1”
- Lowers threshold for water quality and detention
- O&M requirement
- Responsibility for compliance of City-lead/owned projects
- Post-construction inspections every 5 years





Street Sweeping

- Routes have been identified and are being driven/tested
- RouteSmart is being implemented for the sweepers
- First full year of new program will be 2025

Clear Creek Sampling

- O'Neill fellow Eveline Gordon is captaining this project.
- Goal is to maximize portions of Clear Creek removed from 303d list
- Impaired parameters:
 - E. coli
 - PCBs in fish tissue
 - Biological integrity
- Work with IDEM's Office of Water Quality to de-list and report





Hoosier Riverwatch

- CBU's Environmental Division adopted a section of Clear Creek
- Entire staff Hoosier Riverwatch-trained
- Monthly sampling
- 2 – 3 creek clean up events per year

Hoosier Riverwatch



Illicit Discharge Uptick

- Better communication with City Departments – more reports
- Utility strikes throughout the City
- 10 discharges in 2023, 34 in 2024 *so far*
- Enforcement, especially on repeat violators, has escalated





Post-Construction Inspections

- IDEM requires that all post-construction BMPs be inspected every 5 years.
- Bloomington has aging stormwater infrastructure – not functioning well
- The challenge: compliance for privately-owned infrastructure (HOAs, citizen-owned)



Green Infrastructure Crew

- Maintain green and grey infrastructure that is City-owned
 - Rain gardens
 - Hydrodynamic separators
- Dredging project at Miller Showers and maintenance activities for the 6 hydrodynamic separators
- 2 new rain gardens in 2024, additional proposed in future



Goals Going Forward

- Implement full street sweeping plan in 2025
- Begin system-wide assessment of all storm infrastructure
- Complete design manual that is a companion to Title 13
- Continue to educate designers, developers, landscapers, HOAs, and homeowners on water quality best practices



Questions and Discussion



2.12.050 Environmental Quality and Conservation Commission.

- (1) Purpose. It is declared to be the public policy of the City of Bloomington and the purpose of this section to achieve and maintain such levels of environmental quality as will protect human health and safety, and to the greatest degree practicable, prevent injury to plant and animal life and property, foster the comfort and conveniences of the people, promote the economic and social development of Bloomington and facilitate the enjoyment of the natural attractions of the City of Bloomington.
- (2) Definitions. As used in this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise:
 - (a) "Environment" means the sum total of the physical, chemical and biological factors affecting the populace of the City of Bloomington and the surrounding community.
 - (b) "Pollution" means the presence in the environment of one or more contaminants, or noise, in such quantities, characteristics or duration as is or tends to be injurious to human health or welfare, or property, or would interfere with the enjoyment of life or property.
 - (c) "Commission" means the Bloomington Environmental Quality and Conservation Commission, as created in this section.
 - (d) "Person" means any individual, partnership, co-partnership, firm, company, public or private corporation, association, trust, estate, or any agency, board, department or bureau of the city or any other legal entity.
 - (e) "Bloomington" means the City of Bloomington, its corporate limits, and any areas within its legal purview.
- (3) Appointments. The commission shall consist of twelve members, six appointed by the mayor and six appointed by the common council.
- (4) Qualifications. Preference for appointments shall be given to persons with expertise in one or more areas of physical sciences, biological sciences, engineering, business, sanitation, public health, conservation, and recreation.
- (5) Meetings. The Commission shall meet a minimum of once each month.
- (6) Powers and Duties. The Commission shall have the following powers and duties:
 - (a) To adopt administrative rules and regulations for the conduct of its business.
 - (b) To hold hearings relating to any aspect of or matter in the administration of this section and in cases of non-compliance request the city legal department to take legal action.
 - (c) To retain, employ, provide for, and compensate, within appropriations available thereof, such consultants, assistants, deputies, clerks, technical and other employees, on a full or part-time basis as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this section and prescribe the times at which they shall be appointed, the duration of their appointments and their powers and duties.
 - (d) To secure necessary scientific, technical, administrative and operational services including laboratory facilities, by contract or otherwise with any educational institution, experiment station, or any board, department, or other agency of any subdivision of state or the federal government.
 - (e) To determine by means of field studies and sampling the degree of pollution in Bloomington.
 - (f) To encourage and conduct studies, investigations, and research relating to pollution and its causes, effects, prevention, abatement and control in Bloomington, and make recommendations to the appropriate public and private bodies with respect thereto.

-
- (g) To classify contaminant sources, which in the commission's judgment may cause or contribute to pollution.
 - (h) To prepare and develop a comprehensive plan or plans for the prevention, abatement and control of pollution in Bloomington.
 - (i) To encourage voluntary cooperation by persons and affected groups to achieve the purposes of this section.
 - (j) To collect and disseminate information and conduct educational and training programs relating to pollution and environmental quality and conservation.
 - (k) To advise, consult, contract and cooperate with other agencies of the State and the City of Bloomington, other local governments, industries, other states, interstate or interlocal agencies, and the federal government, and with interested persons or groups.
 - (l) To apply for, accept, receive and administer grants or other funds or gifts from public or private agencies including the state and federal governments for the purpose of carrying out any of the provisions or purposes of this section. Such funds received by the commission pursuant to this subdivision shall be deposited in accordance with the administrative regulations of the commission. The commission is authorized to promulgate such rules and regulations or enter into contracts as it may deem necessary for carrying out the provisions of this subdivision.
 - (m) To make appropriate inquiry into and give constructive consideration to the operations and policies of all departments and governmental branches of the City of Bloomington concerning their adherence to a commitment for environmental quality and the conservation of natural resources.
 - (n) To prepare reports and recommendations to the mayor, common council, board of public works, and the planning commission as needed.

(Ord. 83-6 § 2 (part), 1983).

(Ord. No. 14-11, §§ 20—23, 7-2-2014)

The purpose of this commission is to promote the stewardship and preservation of the city's environment and natural resources by seeking out emerging issues, addressing them with sound long-term policies, and increasing the awareness of the government, citizens, and stakeholders.

BMC 2.12.050(1)

Purpose.

It is declared to be the public policy of the City of Bloomington and the purpose of this section to achieve and maintain such levels of environmental quality as will protect human health and safety, and to the greatest degree practicable, prevent injury to plant and animal life and property, foster the comfort and conveniences of the people, promote the economic and social development of Bloomington and facilitate the enjoyment of the natural attractions of the City of Bloomington.

DRAFT