



City of Bloomington

Environmental Commission

The mission of the Environmental Commission is to promote the stewardship and preservation of the city's environment and natural resources by seeking out and responding to emerging issues, addressing them with sound long-term policy recommendations, and increasing local environmental awareness and engagement.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION NOTICE and REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES

February 19, 2026, 6:00 PM
Hooker Meeting Room #245
City Hall, 401 N Morton Street Bloomington, IN 47404
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.

Environmental Commission Members

Carrie Albright, Chair

Appointed by Mayor

Term: February 1, 2026 to January 31, 2028

Heidi Brown

Appointed by Mayor

Term: February 1, 2025 to January 31, 2027

Nadia Cain

Appointed by Common Council

Term: February 1, 2024 to January 31, 2026

Matt Caldie, Vice Chair & Treasurer

Appointed by Mayor

Term: February 1, 2025 to January 31, 2027

Adam Fudickar

Appointed by Common Council

Term: February 1, 2025 to January 31, 2027

Shannon Gayk

Appointed by Common Council

Term: February 1, 2026 to January 31, 2028

Adam Martinez, Secretary

Appointed by Common Council

Term: February 1, 2025 to January 31, 2027

Mitchell Owens

Appointed by Common Council

Term: February 1, 2026 to January 31, 2028

Vacancies: 4

1. Call to Order and Quorum Confirmation:

- Carrie Albright motioned for a vote to add eco hero sponsorship to the agenda with Eco Heros Old Business. Matt C. seconded. All present voted yes
- Matt C. moved to approve the January minutes. Nadia C. seconded. All present voted yes.
- Matt C. moved to approve February 4 minutes. All present approved.

2. Introductions and Roll Call

	<u>In Person</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Zoom</u>
Carrie Albright	X		
Heidi Brown	X		
Nadia Cain	X		
Matt Caldie	X		
Adam Fudickar	X		
Shannon Gayk		X	
Adam Martinez	X		
Mitchell Owens	X		

3. Approval of January 15, 2026 minutes*

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Carrie Albright	X		
Heidi Brown	X		
Nadia Cain	X		
Matt Caldie	X		
Adam Fudickar	X		
Shannon Gayk			
Adam Martinez	X		
Mitchell Owens	X		

4. Approval of February 4, 2026 minutes*

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Carrie Albright	X		
Heidi Brown	X		
Nadia Cain	X		
Matt Caldie	X		
Adam Fudickar	X		
Shannon Gayk			
Adam Martinez	X		
Mitchell Owens	X		

5. Public comment

Limit 5 minutes per person, 20 minutes total

- James Ford introduced himself and provided a summary of the most recent Tree Commission meeting. There was not a quorum at the meeting. Discussion primarily focused on the Northgrove Subdivision Project located at 2511 N. Dunn. At the end of the Tree Commission meeting, the INDOT Project at Pete Ellis/ 10th Street was discussed.
- Karl Gaisser introduced himself and announced that he is interviewing for a position on the Environmental Commission.

6. New Business

a. Updates from City of Bloomington Legal Department (Rachael Johnson, Jackie Scanlan, Jennifer Crossley, and Enedina Kassamanian)

- Jennifer Crossley, Deputy Clerk of Communication and Outreach, described the history and purpose of the Novak Report. The Novak Report was completed for the City of Bloomington to outline Bloomington commission processes. For the past year Jennifer has spoken with staff members and legal counsel and has attended and watched commission meetings to understand how they work. Jennifer has heard uncertainty from commissioners about their role, the mission of commissions, and how commissioners contribute and what is expected of them. Jennifer is working with legal counsel to develop standardized training to help new commissioners understand their role. The training is still being developed, and nothing has been finalized yet. Last night at the council meeting the “code of conduct” was discussed and it is expected that it will be released with the training modules. It is expected that the training will occur annually.

Jennifer C. addressed developing policies related to commission working groups. There is currently uncertainty whether staff should be present at working group meetings and whether working group meetings should be recorded. Jennifer invited suggestions from the Environmental Commission related to current policies and future training.

Heidi B. asked if all commissioners would receive training. Jennifer C. said yes.

Jennifer C. said that she would like to include in the training - Code of conduct, expectations, Roberts Rules, an outline of the structure of our city government and the boards and commissions.

Carrie A. asked if Jennifer C. knows how long the training will take. Jennifer C. does not yet know how long the training will take. Jennifer C. said that the city has over 40 boards and commissions and determining the delivery mechanism of the training is not yet clear. She is hoping that the training will only take a couple of hours.

Carrie A. asked if the training would be once every 12 months. Jennifer C. said that the current thought is that it would initially be once annually. However, in the future as new commissioners are brought onboard, then they would be trained in batches (every few months).

Carrie A. suggested that the Environmental Commission could consider replacing a monthly meeting with our training. mentioned that we could use a monthly meeting for our training.

Nadia C. asked if there would be a virtual option and Jennifer C. said that it hasn't been determined yet. Taylor Brown, city lawyer, said that they have been experimenting with accessibility of training. Taylor B. said that most commissions meet after hours so digital training might be most efficient as staff members can't always be available after hours.

Carrie A. asked the commission if there were any other questions for legal counsel.

Matt C. asked, since there would be a quorum, if the training would have to be posted publicly. Taylor B. said that there is an exception for training.

Carrie A. said that, since the Environmental Commission has subcommittees with a quorum of two, that two members could not both be in city council chambers because the quorum would be met and the meeting would have to be publicly posted 48 hours in advance. Environmental Commission members were told that two commissioners could not be in the city council chambers at the same time, even if they were attending the meeting for different agenda items. One individual was at the meeting to present an Environmental Commission memo. Matt C. and Carrie A. asked for clarification on that scenario from legal. Rachael J. added additional context – the bi laws of the commission say that 2 members of a working group makes a quorum. Matt C. mentioned that he looked through the handbook of Indiana public access laws for exemptions on open door laws and could not find any references to our situation. Matt C. said that he was advised that two people from the Environmental Commission should not attend the city council meeting at the same time.

Taylor Brown said that the city encourages civic engagement. However, the state legislature is concerned with people circumventing open door laws. He believes that there is a stipulation where, if two people believe that they could be in the same meeting then they could post a notice that there "could be" a quorum. State law requires there to be a notice that a quorum could be met. The state wants to avoid a quorum occurring at a council meeting and a working group could decide, on the spot, that they have a quorum and vote on an issue without public notice.

- The meeting stopped due to a tornado warning.

- The meeting commenced again at 7:23 PM.
- Carrie A. asked if commissioners had any closing thoughts or suggestions to provide Jennifer C. and legal counsel.
- Matt C. invited legal to attend the next Environmental Commission meeting.

b. Environmental Commission Handbook Discussion (Carrie Albright)

- Carrie A. introduced the topic of the approval process for ECPC memos. It can be difficult to meet quorum for final approval of a memo prior to a tight deadline. Heidi B. asked if any other commission writes memos related to variances. Carrie A. said that she doesn't think so. Carrie A. asked the Environmental Commission if they have thoughts on approving a draft of a memo instead of the final version. Adam F. supported the idea of approving drafts if the nature of the document is not expected to change. Carrie A. indicated that it could be beneficial to include draft outlines/bulletheaded drafts. Legal agreed that there has to be a vote from the Environmental Commission on a working groups report.

Matt C. pointed out that it is the Environmental Commission Handbook that stipulates that the commission votes to approve memos, not in the Bloomington Powers and Duties documentation.

Taylor B. agreed that there has to be a "vote of some sort". Taylor B. said that an Environmental Commission vote to approve a working group to write a memo is sufficient and that the vote can be "in advance" of writing the memo/recommendation.

Carrie A. suggested that the Environmental Commission should clarify language in the Environmental Commission handbook to state that the commission can vote to approve a working group to write a memo/recommendation. Matt C. asked Taylor B. for recommended language for a handbook change. Taylor B. requested time to think about it.

Carrie A. proposed that the Environmental Commission add the amendment to the next Environmental Commission meeting agenda.

c. Environmental Commission Handbook Update* (Matt Caldie)

- Matt C. proposed an amendment to the handbook to change quorum determination from 6 to 5. Matt C. motioned and Mitchell O. seconded. All present approved.

d. Elections* (Carrie Albright)

- Carrie A. motioned for a vote to change election dates from February to June. Matt C. seconded the motion. All present approved.

e. Tree Commission Appointment* (Rachael Johnson)

- Rachael H. presented a Tree Commission application by James Ford. James F. left the meeting. Carrie A. asked Rachael H. if a Tree Commission member has served as liaison with the Environmental Commission without being a member of the Environmental Commission and what their term would be. Rachael H. read the policy which indicates that one member of the Tree Commission is appointed by the Environmental Commission but does not have to be a member of the Environmental Commission. Nadia C. spoke to support the application. Matt C. also spoke in support of the application. Rachael H. informed the Environmental Commission that they have the power to rescind the appointment. Adam M. said that he thinks that, in the future, if there is an Environmental Commission member that wants to be on the Tree Commission, then we should support them. Matt C. moved to appoint James F. to the Tree Commission. Nadia C. seconded the motion. All present approved.
- Carrie A. motioned to extend the meeting by 15 minutes. Matt C. seconded. All present approved.

7. Old Business

a. Sustainable Energy Utility Project – Update

- Rachel H. presented a BCOS memorandum and statement of work and asked for feedback via email.

b. Working group updates

i. Biodiversity

1. Mayor's Monarch Pledge

- Carrie A. announced that the biodiversity working group has not met. Carrie A. shared an opportunity for the Environmental Commission to be a part of the Mayor's Monarch Pledge. Rachel H. said that the administration has decided to not pursue the certification at this time.

ii. Eco-Heroes

- Carrie A. presented the Eco-Heroes sponsorship memo and flyers for approval. Mitchell O. motioned to approve the Eco-Heros letter and flyers. Matt C. seconded. All present approved.
- Carrie A. announced that Eco-Hero judging will take place April 9.

iii. ECPC

1. Previously submitted to Council: "Recommendations Regarding Amendments to Unified Development Ordinance Memorandum"

- Rachael H. discussed a late January meeting of the ECPC including a letter sent to City Council after the meeting and the reading of the letter by Matt C. at the a City Council meeting. ECPC has not met in February but the next meeting is scheduled in March.

2. Public Comment Received: "Objections to the proposed subdivision at 2511 N. Dunn St."

- Rachael H. presented an email from the public to the Environmental Commission about the 2511 N Dunn variance request. There was a request for the Environmental Commission to support a petition opposing the variance request. Matt C. mentioned that the ECPC had already decided not to write a memo regarding the project. Matt C. proposed to put the petition item on the March agenda so that members have a chance to read the petition before voting.

iv. Light Pollution

- The Light Pollution Working Group has not met but is trying to schedule a meeting for March. Adam M. asked if one person from the light pollution group could meet with city parks staff to discuss light pollution without posting the meeting publicly. Rachael H. indicated that it would not have to be posted.

v. Outreach & Education

- The Outreach & Education Working Group met and has emailed questions to Rachael H. related to the website and documents that Fiona is working on. They are currently working on updating outreach and education items on the Environmental Commission website.

vi. Special Projects

- The Special Projects Working Group has not met since the last meeting of the Environmental Commission.

vii. Water Quality

- The Water Quality Working Group has not met since the last meeting of the Environmental Commission.

8. Staff Update

a. Unified Development Ordinance Environmental Amendments

a. Landscape Amendments

- Rachael H. spoke about UDO environmental amendments to landscaping requirements. Parking Perimeter landscaping requirements are being adjusted to reflect what is feasible in parking lots and to match Monroe County requirements. Jackie S. described the current and amended requirements. Currently one tree is required for every four spaces (total). The current tree requirement does not accurately reflect perimeter. The proposed includes one regulation for the perimeter and a separate regulation for the interior.
- Jackie S. reported that all subdivisions and all major site plans will be required to report easements in environmentally sensitive areas. Previously, all subdivision and all projects (not just major projects) were required to report.

b. 2026 Monroe County Master Gardener Garden Fair

a. Registration & Fee*

- Carrie A. motioned to the Environmental Commission to register for a single indoor table at the garden fair (\$125). If a single indoor table is not available, then we will register for an outdoor table. Nadia seconded. All voted to approve.
- Matt C. motioned to extend the meeting by up to 15 minutes. Nadia C. seconded. All present voted to approve.

c. Grandview Elementary STEM Night 2026

a. Registration*

- Carrie A. asked the Environmental Commission if they would like to table at the Grand View Elementary School STEM Night. Matt C. voiced his concern that it occurs on the same night as an Environmental Commission meeting. Nadia C. and Adam M. said that they would be interested in attending. Matt C. motioned to vote on registration. Nadia C. seconded. Matt C. voted no. All other Environmental Commission members in attendance voted yes.

d. Earth Day

a. Table Registration*

- Matt C. motioned to register a table at the Earth Day event. Carrie A. seconded. All in attendance voted to approve.

9. Reports from:

- a. Tree Commission (TC)
 - Rachael H. said that the TC discussed the 2511 N. Dunn project and the Pete Ellis project.
- b. Environmental Resource Advisory Council (ERAC)
 - Adam F. will provide ERAC updates at the next Environmental Commission meeting.
- c. Friends of Lake Monroe (FOLM)
 - There were no Environmental Commission members in attendance at the FOLM meeting.
- d. Bloomington Commission on Sustainability (BCOS)
 - Matt C. reported that the BCOS meeting was packed. They had a presentation on the Grandview Hills pollinator garden. There was a capstone presentation. They passed a resolution to thank the city and the council for stepping up when snap benefits lapsed. They also advanced to a second reading a resolution aimed at disabling Flock cameras and surveillance.
- e. Monroe County – Identify and Reduce Invasive Species (MC-IRIS)
 - Rachael H. discussed a conversation about how to incorporate proper remediation methods for ground cover removal.
- f. Clean Community Program
 - No announcements.

10. Commissioner Announcements

- Mitchell O. asked for materials to promote the Habitat Connectivity Project.
- No additional commissioner announcements.

11. Upcoming Events

- a. 2026 Monroe County Master Gardener Garden Fair – Saturday, April 11, 2026
- b. Eco-Heroes Judging – week of April 6 to April 10, 2026
- c. Earth Day – Saturday, April 18, 2026

12. Upcoming Meeting

- a. March 26, 2026, 6:00 pm, Hooker Room, Zoom, and CATS

13. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:26PM

** Item to be voted on*

The views expressed here are solely those of the Environmental Commission as approved in their public meetings, and do not necessarily reflect the views, policies, or positions of the City of Bloomington. Only the Office of the Mayor has the authority to issue policy statements on behalf of the Executive Branch of the City of Bloomington.

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 City offers virtual options, including CATS public access television (live and tape delayed) found at <https://catstv.net/>. Working group meetings may be found at <https://bton.in/ECWGreco>.

Commission appointments may serve up to 90 days after a term has expired.