

Bloomington Common Council-Regular Session Minutes
Bloomington Council Chambers, City Hall, 401 North Morton, Bloomington, Indiana
Wednesday, May 06, 2026 at 6:30pm

Call to Order [6:30pm]

Council Vice President Sydney Zulich called the meeting to order.

1. Roll Call: (*indicates participation via Zoom) [6:31pm]

Council Members:	
Isak Nti Asare	At-Large, Council President
Courtney Daily	District 5, Council Parliamentarian
Matt Flaherty	At-Large
Isabel Piedmont-Smith	District 1
Dave Rollo	District 4
Kate Rosenbarger	District 2
Andy Ruff	At-Large
Hopi Stosberg* (On Zoom from 6:50-6:59pm, arrived at 7:01pm)	District 3
Sydney Zulich	District 6, Council Vice President

City staff, officials, and guests present:	
Nicole Bolden	City Clerk
Anna Killion-Hanson	Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND), Director
Geoff McKim	Redevelopment Commission, Treasurer (and City Controller)
Kerry Thomson	Mayor
Dana Kerr	Legal, Assistant City Attorney
Noah Sandweiss	HAND, Program Manager

2. Agenda Summation [6:32pm]

Daily moved and Asare seconded to amend the agenda to hear Ordinance 2026-06 before legislation for first readings. The motion was approved by voice vote.

Council Vice President Zulich summarized the agenda.

3. Approval of Minutes [6:34pm]

Daily moved and Asare seconded to approve the minutes of January 22, 2025. The motion was approved by voice vote.

4. Reports [6:35pm]

4.1. Councilmembers:

Rosenbarger reported on new Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs) at stoplights giving pedestrians a few seconds head start before cars proceed. She thanked Public Works, Engineering, and Council.

4.2. The Mayor, City Clerk, City Offices, and City Boards and Commissions:

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Ava Hartman, CanopyBloomington, Executive Director, introduced Philippa Guthrie, President; Sarah Mincey, Vice President; and John Vickers, outgoing Community Engagement Director. She spoke about community engagement in 2025 including planting trees, tree giveaways to residents, and educational programs. She discussed partnerships such as the Youth Tree Tender, Cool Corridor Planting, and Partner Tree Plantings. The importance of growing the urban forest, volunteers, and community partnerships were discussed.

4.3. Council Committees:

There were no council committee reports.

4.4. Public:

Zac Muller discussed problems with drivers running the stop signs at the intersection of Morningside and Smith roads and the accidents that have happened there. Paul Rosseau referenced Avi Lewis’s election speech to the Democratic Party in Canada. Lewis was the husband of author Naomi Klein.

5. Appointments to Boards and Commissions [6:48pm]

There were no appointments to boards and commissions.

6. Ordinance 2026-06

To Amend the City of Bloomington Zoning Maps by Rezoning a 6.3 Acre Property from Residential Urban Lot (R4) and Residential Multifamily (RM) within the Transform Redevelopment Overlay (TRO) to Planned Unit Development (PUD) and to Approve a District Ordinance and Preliminary Plan

Daily moved and Asare seconded that Ordinance 2026-06 be introduced and read by title and synopsis only. The motion was approved by voice vote. Clerk Nicole Bolden read the legislation by title and synopsis.

Daily moved and Asare seconded to adopt Ordinance 2026-06. There was brief discussion on consideration of Reasonable Conditions (RCs).

Flaherty moved and Piedmont-Smith seconded to reconsider RC 06. The motion was approved by voice vote. Flaherty presented RC 06 and noted it was better to have it as a written commitment.

There were no council questions. There was no public comment. There were no council comments.

Flaherty moved and Piedmont-Smith seconded to withdraw RC 06. The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 9, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0.

Flaherty moved and Piedmont-Smith seconded to adopt Written Commitment 01. Flaherty presented Written Commitment 01 noting that it was primarily written by Anna Killion-Hanson, Housing and Neighborhood Development Director. He discussed standards for building energy code, and possible updates to the energy incentives in the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and more. In Indiana, the standards were from 2018. There was clarification on the Home Energy Ratings System (HERS) and code. Killion-Hanson provided information on how HERS was calculated and how that would apply to the housing types in Hopewell. There was additional discussion on building energy code, ratings, and compliance as well as cost impacts with Written Commitment 01.

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Written Commitment 01 Synopsis: This is a written acknowledgment from the Bloomington Redevelopment Commission that memorializes the City’s intent to utilize the Home Energy Ratings System (HERS) and to incorporate best practices for energy efficiency in design and construction documents.

There was no public comment.

Flaherty said his goal was to have healthy, affordable homes that were long term, and good infrastructure. Efficiency and electrification was necessary and the city could set an example.

The motion to adopt Written Commitment 01 to Ordinance 2026-06 received a roll call vote of Ayes: 9, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0.

Stosberg moved and Asare seconded to discuss the three RCs related to affordability as a whole. The motion was approved by voice vote.

Zulich passed the gavel to Daily.

Stosberg briefly discussed RC 4 which had not substantially changed because the sponsors had not received the information in time for the packet. Piedmont-Smith spoke about RC 16 which dealt with permanent affordability.

RC 16 Synopsis: This Reasonable Condition 16 is sponsored by Councilmember Piedmont-Smith. It offers an alternative to the previously-discussed Reasonable Condition 4. Like RC 4, it requires a higher percentage of permanently affordable (PA) housing units in the Hopewell South PUD than the minimum required and requires 15% of total units to be permanently affordable for residents earning 90% or less of AMI. However, RC 15 does not prescribe the method of attaining permanent affordability and sets the total percentage of PA units at 35% instead of 50%. It also adds a reporting requirement. *Clerk’s note: The synopsis incorrectly references RC 15 instead of RC 16.*

Asare presented RC 15 which was an effort to have many mechanisms for affordability. He stated that approaches for affordability in other RCs made more sense and Zulich concurred.

Piedmont-Smith noted there was a requirement for the petitioner to report to the Common Council every six months, for five years, on the permanent affordability mechanisms. Killion-Hanson was concerned about not being able to build housing in Hopewell for the target sale cost of the home. Rosenbarger spoke about changes to RC 15; she believed the target goal of 50% for permanent affordability was ideal and if that was not feasible, the PUD could be amended. She noted the importance of having an effective definition of permanent affordability. Stosberg appreciated RCs 15 and 16 and aiming to have 50% affordability. She noted good components in the RCs. There was discussion on combining RCs and ways to do so. Larry Allen, Council Administrator/Attorney, gave guidance on actions the council could take. Council had a robust discussion on affordability and language to be used in an amended RC. Geoff McKim, Redevelopment Commission (RDC), Treasurer, noted that the RDC was almost entirely funded by Tax Increment Financing (TIF) revenues which were finite and declining; some TIF districts were sunseting. There were prior commitments on projects, which brought the RDC close to its practical bonding capacity. Council opted to have a recess in order to draft a new RC.

Daily called a 10-minute recess. **[7:44-7:55pm]**

Piedmont-Smith explained RC 17 which had used RC 16 as the basis with added language. There was not an updated synopsis. Stosberg discussed the portion of RC 17 about reporting on the affordable mechanisms to council. Mayor Kerry Thomson expressed concerns about fair housing and cautioned

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having council approve the sale of a unit to a particular person. Asare clarified the intention was to have clarity on the mechanism used for affordability. Allen stated that the administration could provide a general report on the types of mechanisms to be used without identifying the individual attempting to purchase the unit. Stosberg reiterated that the intent was to have detailed information on how the mechanisms would work; who would hold the silent second mortgages, et cetera, and not based on the individual. There was discussion on the combination of affordability mechanisms that could be used. Thomson noted there was not an intent to use land trusts. She explained how a silent second mortgage, and a combination of affordability mechanisms, would work. Flaherty agreed that with good financial definitions, as well as definitions in the UDO, there were satisfactory options for affordability. Rosenbarger concurred. Stosberg questioned where the funding for subsidizing the units would come from, specifically any funding from the city. There was discussion on future actions council could take to amend the PUD, and enforcement of permanent affordability.

Piedmont-Smith moved and Asare seconded to adopt RC 17.

Rollo said that since the city owned the property at Hopewell, it was crucial to focus on affordability. He talked about Area Median Income (AMI) and workforce housing. There was discussion on the units reserved for households earning 120%, or another percentage, of the AMI. Dana Kerr, Assistant City Attorney, added that the RDC could only speak to the proposal and any substantive changes would be considered as amendments, which the administration believed were not allowed. Allen restated state code that allowed RCs, including the one on the table.

John Zody, CDFI Friendly Bloomington, spoke about the administrative burden for staff, problems with mortgage lending with things like deed restrictions, and he encouraged allowing flexibility. Deborah Myerson, RDC, President, spoke as a resident and not the RDC. She appreciated council's efforts and encouraged streamlining the process and allowing flexibility. Christopher Emge, Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce, commented on the RCs and the discussion that evening. Paul Rosseau said the affordability component was imperative and spoke about land trusts and equity. Steve Volan spoke about the conditions to the parking garages being built, including raising rates. He said council was making a decision that would impact the next one hundred years. Council was allowed to take the time necessary to make the best decision. Cody Toothman, Program Manager, Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND) department, supported a range of affordability mechanisms.

Stosberg said she would vote no because the reporting on affordability mechanisms, to council, was removed. It was also unclear how the subsidies would work in the future. Zulich said there was urgency in homeownership for renters in the city. Piedmont-Smith believed the PUD was in good condition but there were ideological differences with the administration regarding community land trusts. With land trusts, future subsidies would not be needed. Ruff opted for the higher percentage of affordable units. He would not support RC 17 because of the lowered number of affordable units. Rosenbarger said that land trusts were the most effective method of permanent affordability. She was disappointed that land trusts were not planned on being used. She noted that the original proposal had 15% permanent affordability, which was lower than what the UDO required; council had to fight to get it up to 25%, and then 35%. Flaherty commented on the process, and stated that delays happened when proposals were not code-compliant. He noted the differing legal opinions on RCs, and said that if the PUD had been code-compliant, it would have passed without delay. He spoke about permanent affordability, and an impasse with the mayor on using land trusts. Asare talked about options for council to take regarding the concerns raised with RC 17.

The motion received a roll call vote: Ayes: 6 (Flaherty, Piedmont-Smith, Zulich, Asare, Daily, Rosenbarger); Nays: 3 (Rollo, Ruff, Stosberg); Abstain: 0.

Daily passed the gavel back to Zulich.

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There were no council questions. There was no public comment.

Flaherty highlighted two points: first, the structural challenge with the petitioner being the RDC, as part of the city, and city staff deferring to the consultant. That demonstrated the need for council's due diligence. Second, the proposal deviated from city plans and city code, which would not have been allowed with other petitioners. He hoped to avoid that with future proposals. He hoped that updates to the UDO would pass, allowing everything that was proposed by the PUD. Stosberg appreciated Flaherty's comments. She expressed frustration at the misinformation that had been put forth regarding the PUD. She discussed housing types allowed in R4 zones, such as duplexes and more. Rosenbarger said PUDs were more complicated than changing city code, and she hoped no more PUD proposals would be brought before council. She believed they were inferior to city code. The original PUD proposal had been brought to council when it was not ready for approval. Asare thanked everyone for their input and patience. He spoke about issues with council's processes. Rollo discussed whether or not council could use RCs for the PUD.

The motion to adopt Ordinance 2026-06 as amended received a roll call vote of Ayes: 9, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0.

Rollo moved and Ruff seconded to include copies of the legal guidance received from outside counsel in the minutes with the legislation adoption. Several councilmembers expressed concern with revoking client-attorney privilege. Rollo withdrew the motion.

7. Legislation for First Reading [9:25pm]

7.1. Ordinance 2026-07

Ordinance 2026-07 To Amend Title 8 of the Bloomington Municipal Code, Entitled "Historic Preservation and Protection," and to Establish a Conservation District - "Cottage Grove Conservation District"

Daily moved and Asare seconded that Ordinance 2026-07 be introduced and read by title and synopsis only. The motion was approved by voice vote. Bolden read the legislation by title and synopsis.

Daily moved and Asare seconded to discuss Ordinance 2026-07. The motion was approved by voice vote.

Noah Sandweiss, Historic Preservation Program Manager, HAND, gave a background of the proposed district highlighting notable structures. He explained preservation and conservation districts.

Stosberg asked about conservation districts turning into a historic district, and the size of the proposed district. Sandweiss said in Bloomington all conservation districts had turned into historic districts. The proposed district's size was smaller than other districts in the city. Stosberg said only nine properties listed their home with the same address as the property and thirty-five having addresses outside of Bloomington. There was discussion on outreach to property owners. Flaherty asked for clarification on demolition delay for contributing structures and why some were considered non-contributing. Sandweiss said many had been altered significantly or had infill. Flaherty expressed concern with conservation and historic districts because of the slanted process, and the impact on non-contributing structures including difficulty with alterations, high burdens, and costs. Sandweiss explained how non-contributing structures could make alterations and demolish too. There was additional discussion on the details.

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Dr. John Butler spoke in support of the establishment of the conservation district. Elizabeth Cox gave a variety of reasons in favor of historic districts. Paul Ash commented on “absentee homeowners” and the risk of flipping old homes. Jordan Evans, Old Northeast Neighborhood Association, President, asked council to deny the petition for many reasons. Chris Sturbaum commented on the need of protecting neighborhoods with smaller homes. Jan Sorby spoke in favor of conservation districts. Melody Barnett Duesner discussed difficulties with becoming a homeowner and her time on the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). Michael Brahms said he was contacted by the petitioners and supported the conservation district. Paul Rousseau commented on affordable housing and land trusts. Jenny Southern spoke against the demolition of two homes despite being in good condition. Doug Horn discussed issues with homes built long ago and in favor of high density neighborhoods. Karen Duffy, HPC, Commissioner, said the neighborhood had a large number of highly rated houses and was ideal for a conservation district. Amy Butler discussed neighborhood outreach and the process of drafting the proposal. Jeremy Hackerd, HPC, Chair, spoke in favor of the conservation district and noted what the HPC was allowed to consider for preservation. Eric Ost commented in favor of the conservation district and historic preservation, generally. Christopher Emge spoke about land use, redevelopment policy, and the age of some of the homes in the Cottage Grove neighborhood. Jerry Stasny owned multiple homes in the neighborhood and said there were homes that were structurally sound and others that were not.

There was brief discussion on council submitting additional questions in writing to staff.

Stosberg moved and Piedmont-Smith seconded to postpone Ordinance 2026-07 to the next Regular Session on May 20, 2026. The motion received a roll call vote: Ayes: 5 (Flaherty, Stosberg, Piedmont-Smith, Asare, Rosenbarger); Nays: 4 (Daily, Rollo, Ruff, Zulich); Abstain: 0.

Asare moved and Daily seconded to reconsider the motion to postpone Ordinance 2026-07 to the next regularly scheduled session. After a brief discussion, Asare withdrew the motion.

7.2. Ordinance 2026-08

To Amend and Provide Technical Corrections to Title 20 of the Bloomington Municipal Code, Entitled “Unified Development Ordinance”

Daily moved and Asare seconded that Ordinance 2026-08 be introduced and read by title and synopsis only. The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 9, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Bolden read the legislation by title and synopsis.

7.3. Ordinance 2026-09

To Amend and Provide Technical Corrections to Chapter 4: Development Standards & Incentives of Title 20 of the Bloomington Municipal Code, Entitled “Unified Development Ordinance”

Daily moved and Asare seconded that Ordinance 2026-09 be introduced and read by title and synopsis only. The motion was approved by voice vote. Bolden read the legislation by title and synopsis.

7.4. Ordinance 2026-10

To Amend and Provide Technical Corrections to Chapter 6 Administration & Procedures of Title 20 of the Bloomington Municipal Code, Entitled “Unified Development Ordinance”

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Daily moved and Asare seconded that Ordinance 2026-10 be introduced and read by title and synopsis only. The motion was approved by voice vote. Bolden read the legislation by title and synopsis.

7.5. Ordinance 2026-11

To Amend and Provide Technical Corrections to Chapter 2 Zoning Districts, Chapter 3 Use Regulations, Chapter 5 Subdivision Standards, and Chapter 7 Definitions of Title 20 of the Bloomington Municipal Code, Entitled “Unified Development Ordinance”

Daily moved and Asare seconded that Ordinance 2026-11 be introduced and read by title and synopsis only. The motion was approved by voice vote. Bolden read the legislation by title and synopsis.

8. Legislation for Second Reading and Resolutions [10:41pm]

8.1. Resolution 2026-06

A Resolution Directing the Housing and Neighborhood Development Department to Develop a Framework for Long-Term Housing Affordability

Daily moved that Resolution 2026-06 be introduced and read by title and synopsis only. There was no second. Daily withdrew the motion. There was no further motion to introduce this piece of legislation.

8.2. Resolution 2026-05

A Resolution to Initiate a Proposal to Amend Title 20 (Unified Development Ordinance) of the Bloomington Municipal Code in order to Improve Sustainability and Housing Affordability

Flaherty moved and Asare seconded that Resolution 2026-05 be introduced and read by title and synopsis only. The motion received a roll call vote: Ayes: 3 (Flaherty, Piedmont-Smith, Rosenbarger); Nays: 6 (Stosberg, Zulich, Asare, Daily, Rollo, Ruff); Abstain: 0. FAILED.

9. Additional Public Comment [10:42pm]

Jeff Richardson thanked council for their work on Hopewell.

10. Council Schedule [10:42pm]

Zulich reviewed council’s upcoming schedule including a meeting of the Committee on Council Processes. Stosberg noted a Fiscal Committee meeting and a Deliberative Session. Asare mentioned a plan for a joint meeting with council, the county, and the mayor to discuss the jail. Rosenbarger stated she and Daily were working on an ordinance for a pedestrian-only plan for Kirkwood.

11. Adjournment [10:44pm]

Zulich adjourned the meeting.

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APPROVED by the Common Council of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana, upon this day: 14th of October, 2026.

APPROVE:

Signed by:



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Signature of Isak Nti Asare, Common Council President

ATTEST:

Signed by:



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Signature of City Clerk Nicole Bolden

Clerk’s Note: The above minutes summarize the motions passed and issues discussed rather than providing a verbatim account of every word spoken. Bloomington Common Council meetings can be accessed on the following websites:

- [Community Access Television Services](#)¹ (CATS)
 - [City of Bloomington YouTube](#)²
- [Background materials and packets](#)³ are available on the Common Council website.

¹ <https://catvstv.net>

² <https://youtube.com/@citybloomington>

³ <https://bloomington.in.gov/council/meetings>