



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

20 January 2022, 6:00 PM

1. Call to order and quorum confirmation:

Call to order at 6:06 PM.

Matt Caldie Present
Mike Litwin Present
Don Eggert Present
Dedaimia Whitney Present
Sam Armstrong Present
Scott Shackelford Present
David Parkhurst Present
Mathias Benko Present

3. Approval of minutes: *

Sam moved the minutes. Scott seconded.

Matt Approved
Mike Approved
David Approved
Don Approved
Dedaimia Approved
Sam Approved
Scott Approved
Mathias Approved

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

Beth Rosenbarger works for the Planning and Transportation Department. She wanted to educate herself more on what the EC does. Since Linda shifted to the long-range side of the Planning and Transportation Department recently, she wanted to show the EC who she will

be working with and give some more information on what their team does. They work mainly on topics related to the built environment and transportation. They follow the guidelines in the Comprehensive Plan and try to initiate working on the goals that were outlined in the plan.

5. Reports from: Tree Commission (TC), Monroe County Environmental Commission (MCEC), Bloomington Commission on Sustainability (BCOS), Environmental Resource Advisory Council (ERAC), Metropolitan Planning Organizing-Citizens Advisory Council (MPOCAC), Friends of Lake Monroe (FOLM), & Monroe County-Identify and Reduce Invasive Species (MC-IRIS).

TC: The minutes have been sent to the EC. They discussed the 17th St project, which goes from Monroe to Grant. It involved 11 trees being removed and 21 being put in. The urban forestry report was also sent out. The bicentennial tree planting was looked at, which will involve planting 300 trees in 4 different project areas. Mia discussed the tree issues at IU. 149 trees were put into the ground by the north quad and the geology building.

MCEC: This meeting was not attended and there were no minutes posted. Sam will attend the next meeting on February 9th.

BCOS: The highlight of the meeting was councilman Flaherty's summation of what is happening in the city council. The majority of the city council is trying to reduce the number of their commissions. Councilman Flaherty is worried about the climate committee group. He is hoping that it will be continued. Other activities were pushed to a later date to accommodate for the new members of the commission.

MPOCAC: We need a new commissioner to take up the duty of attending these meetings. If you are interested please contact Ben.

FOLM: The final steering committee meeting for the research grant around lake Monroe was conducted. Maggie Sullivan gave a 20-minute summary of what had been accomplished over the 2 years and what still needed to be done. She will be attending our February EC meeting to give the same report.

MC-IRIS: There was a lot of discussion around removing Callery pears. They discussed mechanisms to help support people who had Callery pears on their property and wanted to remove them with replacement trees. They are hoping to create a program to help the lower income houses with replacement trees. The plant sale for this fall was also discussed. They wanted to make sure that they provided the people that were growing the seeds with enough resources.

6. Discussion from active working groups:

**A. Environmental Commission Planning Committee (ECPC):
February Plan Commission agenda**

On the Plan Commission agenda is the following: South of Second St, west of Rogers St, North of 1st and east Morton St, there is a primary Platt approval to plat 7 lots and a right of way and is being brought up by the redevelopment commission. At 424 Walnut LCC, the petitioner is requesting a site plan approval for a 34 unit family development. The last plan on the list is Trinitoss ventures. It is on Arlington Park Dr. off 17th St. It is an amendment to the district ordinance and a preliminary plat for an approval of a planned unit development.

B. Biodiversity:

i. Habitat Connectivity Plan

We decided we would hold a meeting on Sunday, February 6th at 4 PM with the heads of the neighborhood associations. We will introduce them to the map, brochure, and pledge. The invitations have already gone out and we have seen some interest. Look out for the zoom link sometime this week. We also discussed making yard signs for the Habitat Connectivity Plan. In addition, we eventually want to write to HAND to allocate more money to individuals to help fund native planting on private property. It was also discussed buying native trees from the DNR. They are fairly cheap.

7. Old business:

A. Confront the Climate Crisis group & sign letter of support*

David proposed that we don't do anything because the proposal favors business and development people more than environmental scientists. Dedaimia and Linda agreed. Sam discussed the other organizations that already support the bill. This includes the Indiana Forest alliance, Indiana beyond coal, FOLM, etc. Sam made the point that this might be the best chance that Indiana gets at a legitimate climate plan. Linda also doesn't want to support a plan that could initiate circumstances that we won't like in the long run. Dedaimia suggested a compromise of writing a letter that supports the plan but expresses concern over the lack of environmental scientists on the committee. Don has little faith in the supermajority. Mike mentioned that the groups Sam mentioned, deal more with state legislature than we do and probably understand what is more realistic and beneficial. David decided to abstain from the motion due to the supporting groups that Sam mention earlier. It was suggested to table the vote for next month to allow commissioners to read more about the Bill.

Sam motioned to table the first motion of signing the confront the climate crisis letter and Dedaimia seconded.

Matt Yes
Mike Yes
David Yes
Don Yes
Dedaimia Yes
Sam Yes
Scott Yes
Mathias Yes

We will discuss this further next month.

8. New business:

A. Bucket list discussion of 2022 EC project priorities

David suggested continuing the Planning Committee. He hopes we can continue to influence developments in the city like we have in the past without Linda. Don wants to create new programs on reducing waste. He hopes we can develop quantitative methods to help the sanitation department. Sam wants to petition the city to increase the amount of money they provide the small and simple grant. This will help with the habitat connectivity plan and removing invasives and planting natives. Sam also suggested creating programs to prevent flooding, by promoting green infrastructure and tree plantings. This includes working with IU to decrease water from large rain events from dispersing through the rest of the city. Scott suggested working on a project that incentivizes residential solar considering net metering is running down over the summer. This includes looking at other city's that may have developed some creative ideas. Matt suggested conducting air sampling tests and to monitor air quality indicators in Bloomington. This includes forming a working group. We could go to an IU professor to ask for advice on monitoring air quality. Mathias suggested a program that incentivizes removing invasive plants and replacing them with natives. Mike suggested developing a stream inventory and classification system for the city. This has already been suggested in the city's comprehensive plan, but has never been initiated. Dedaimia suggested developing a plan to reduce fossil fuel use in the city. Don would like to develop a plan that enforces the ban on certain invasive species in shops. Scott suggested going further than the state on incentivizing electric vehicles. For example, waiving registration fees for EVs. Currently new developments need to install a certain amount of charging stations depending on the number of parking spaces they have.

The final list of ideas are below:

- Continue Planning Committee and find ways to contribute to city developments without Linda:
- Enforce bans on invasive species in shops:
- Developing a stream inventory and a classification system:
- Start an air quality working group and start coming up with objectives
- Create reducing waste activities for the city and help the sanitation department with quantitative analysis:
- Petition the city to increase the HAND small and simple grant to help contribute to the Habitat Connectivity Plan:
- Find creative ways to motivate homeowners to adopt residential solar as net metering winds down:

Sam moved to vote now on the bucket list items proposed. Scott seconded the vote.

Matt Yes
Mike No

David No
Don No
Sam Yes
Scott Yes
Mathias Yes

It was decided that we would vote today.

The suggestions that we will be pursuing in the next year are the following (the item with the most points will receive the most attention):

1. Continue Planning Committee and find ways to contribute to city developments without Linda: 15 Points
2. Enforcing bans on invasive species in shops: 6 Points
3. Developing a stream inventory and a classification system: 5 Points

These three items received the most points.

Linda mentioned that developing a stream inventory and classification system would require a large amount of money that the EC does not have. She suggested petitioning the city to hire someone for this process. Mike will draft the letter for next meeting (Mike I am not sure if you are ok with this).

9. Commissioner announcements:

Mathias will be speaking on January 27 on tree and vegetation ordinances in Indiana at 3:30 PM. Ben will post it to the Facebook page if people are interested.

If you are interested in running for chair, vice chair, or secretary treasurer, please let Mike know. There are currently no candidates for secretary treasurer.

10. Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM

* Item to be voted on

Next EC meeting: February 17, 2022, 6:00 p.m., TBD

Statement on public meetings during public health emergency

As a result of Executive Orders issued by the Governor, Eric Holcomb, the Commission and its committees may adjust normal meeting procedures to adhere to guidance provided by state officials. These adjustments may include:

- allowing members of the Commission and its committees to participate in meetings electronically;
- posting notices and agendas for meetings solely by electronic means;

- *using electronic meeting platforms to allow for remote public attendance and participation (when possible);*
- *encouraging the public to watch meetings via Community Access Television Services broadcast or livestream, and encouraging remote substitution of public comment (via email, to environment@bloomington.in.gov).*

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.