



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

September 15, 2022, 6:00 PM

Hybrid meeting

1. Call to order and quorum confirmation:

Call to order at 6:02 PM.

In person

Sam Armstrong (chair) Present

Matt Caldie (vice-chair) Present

Luke Swain Present

Mike Litwin (secretary and treasurer) Present

Megan Murphy Present

Conner Wright Present

David Parkhurst Present

Dedaimia Whitney Present

Scott Shackelford Present

Carrie Albright Present

Elizabeth McCleery Absent

Donald Eggert Absent

The meeting was telecast live by CATS.

Staff present included Linda Thompson (Sr. Environmental Planner) and Alauna Keeley (fellow)

2. Introductions:

The EC welcomed two new Commissioners, Elizabeth McCleery, and Conner Wright, and new O'Neill Fellow, Alauna Keeley.

3. Approval of Minutes:

Sam moved the minutes. Matt seconded.

Luke Approved

Mike Approved

Megan Approved
Conner Approved
David Approved
Dedaimia Approved
Scott Approved
Carrie Approved

The EC moved to approve the July minutes unanimously.

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

None

Motion:

Matt moved to discuss item no.5 reports until after item no.7 new business.

Sam Approved
Luke Approved
Mike Approved
Megan Approved
Conner Approved
David Approved
Dedaimia Approved
Scott Approved
Carrie Approved

5. Old Business:

A. Update from Land Planning Working Group (ECPC)

Mike updated the EC on the ECPC's August minutes. A draft UDO (Unified Development Ordinance) of amendments has been written by the working group and sent to Linda for comments and look over. Mike said that their next step is to request Scott Robinson, Director of the City of Bloomington Department of Planning & Transportation, to incorporate the UDO amendments into the department. Linda offered to speak with Scott. Mike asked if only the working group should finalize the draft, or would the EC want to look at the draft and finalize as a unit. The EC decided to take a look at the draft and to keep in mind the deadline for the UDO amendments by next year.

B. Update regarding website work

Matt, Sam and Carrie met within the past month to discuss the EC's website design and accessibility. The team talked about the idea of moving the EC reports to a more visible section. Overall, the team updated the EC on ideas regarding the organizational structure of the website.

C. Update from the Air Quality Working Group

Matt is skeptical of the use of the Flow 2 air quality monitors. The working group still has not found a way to accurately measure the criteria pollutants the monitor claims to measure. Dave also contributed to this update, remarking on the Flow 2 measurements he was receiving during the EC

meeting. The working group is interested in trying to improve the city's air monitoring in the long-term. Linda mentioned how Alauna is researching what other comparable-sized cities are doing to monitor their air quality. Sam offered that this sort of research and trial run of the Flow 2 could be a valuable chapter for the EC's report. Dave brought up the possibility of scheduling a working group meeting to discuss the how the group could be using the Flow 2.

6. New Business:

A. Discussion of storm water infrastructure improvements based on last year's flood: Linda received information from the City of Bloomington Utilities (CBU) regarding their projects to improve the management of storm water. Mike offered that the EC could write to the CBU emphasizing the absolute need to focus on green infrastructure across the city. Megan tossed around the idea that the EC could possibly advise CBU on what kind of green infrastructure to focus on, and where. Linda mentioned how a city code requires green infrastructure in a parking lot sized for 100+ vehicles, she thinks that number should be greatly reduced. Sam asked Linda if she knew how closely Indiana University and the City of Bloomington are working on addressing storm water infrastructure. Sam passed around a hydrological map analysis of the Bloomington watershed, of which the IU campus encompasses almost entirely. The EC agreed that connecting to someone at IU regarding storm water management is important. Scott offered to reach out to familiar IU staff to establish a connection between campus and the EC.

B. Heat Island Effect (HIE) discussion: Linda talked about the Urban Heat working group that is part of the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability, of which Linda is a part of. BCOS, Red Cross, and Monroe County Emergency Management are focusing more on human health as it relates to the heat island effect and urban heat experienced by the Bloomington population. Dave asked if there was a way to map the temperature around Bloomington to demonstrate where this is occurring and which demographic groups experience it more intensely.

C. Park pools draining & washing water disposal: Sam discussed how he was worried about the disposal of the city pool water after the season ended. He told the EC that the CBU neutralizes the chlorine before it is released.

D. Discussion on updating past documents: Sam, Carrie, and Matt asked if the EC would be interested in updating the published online reports over the next season.

7. 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: Dedaimia asked Dave to step in for her at the next meeting due to scheduling conflicts. A new urban forester was hired, the EC is very ecstatic to hear about the new hire.

MCEC: Megan informed the EC that the meeting was rescheduled. Megan will act as a liaison between the MCEC and the EC in order to collaborate and stay informed of each commission's projects.

BCOS: Don was absent. Linda informed the EC that the BCOS still maintains its urban heat working group.

ERAC: Dave gave a run down on last month's meeting. Dave informed the EC that ERAC is continuing its tree planting program successfully, 10 Callery pear trees are being replaced on the B-line with native trees, and Bugfest is scheduled for October 1st where the EC will have a table.

MPOCAC: Sam told the EC that there is not much to report aside from the project to make High Street into a multiuse street.

FOLM: There was no meeting, nothing to report.

MC-IRIS: Linda exclaimed how successful the 2nd annual native plant sale fundraiser at Switchyard Park was last week. Almost all of the native plants were sold. The plants that did not sell were given to the Parks department.

8. Commissioner Announcements:

Matt asked if the EC will officially table at Bugfest. Linda confirmed that the EC will have a table at the event taking place October 1st. Megan offered to head a working group to plan for the event.

Dave gave an update on invasive species of note. He mentioned the idea of girdling Callery pear trees so as to stop their seeds from spreading, but still allowing for the surrounding eco-life to benefit from the fruits. Dave brought up the growth of bamboo in Bloomington.

Sam announced how he has been working with the Adopt-a-Greenspace program and weed wrangling in Bryan Park to remove invasive species. The City of Bloomington is planning to replace the removed invasive species with native vegetation.

Linda reminded the commission about an upcoming appreciation dinner for the boards and commissioners of Bloomington.

9. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Next EC meeting: October 20, 2022, 6:00 PM, Hooker Room, zoom, and CATS

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 both by electronic means and physically.*
- 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.