



**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

November 17, 2022, 6:00PM

Hybrid meeting

1. Call to order and quorum confirmation:

Call to order at 6:05pm.

The commissioners were not able to vote due to a lack of quorum.

In person

Sam Armstrong (chair) Present
Matt Caldie (vice-chair) Present
Megan Murphy Present
Donald Eggert Present
Conner Wright Present
Betsy McCleery Present

On Zoom

Dedaimia Whitney Present

Mike Litwin (secretary and treasurer) Absent

Luke Swain Absent

Scott Shackelford Absent

David Parkhurst Absent

Carrie Albright Absent

The meeting was telecast live by CATS.

Staff present in person included Ryan Robling (Planning Services Manager) and Alauna Keeley (fellow)

Staff present on Zoom included Linda Thompson (Sr. Environmental Planner)

2. Introductions:

The commissioners and staff present briefly introduced themselves.

3. Approval of Minutes:

There was no vote to approve the October minutes due to lack of a quorum.

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

None

5. Old Business:

A: Update from Land Planning Working Group (ECPC) regarding UDO updates

Mike was absent. Linda gave a quick update to the EC on the drafted UDO (Unified Development Ordinance) amendments. Last week Mike sent out the draft to EC commissioners and staff in order to obtain comments and suggestions. Linda reported that there had been many suggestions given. Mike wants to obtain comments and suggestions before the December EC meeting, hoping that the EC will be prepared to vote on the UDO amendments before the New Year.

B: Update on the Southern IN Sentinel Landscape Project

Sam gave an update to the EC about his meeting with Dr. Christian Freitag. Dr. Freitag is the executive director of the Conservation Law Center (CLC) at the Indiana University Maurer School of Law. The CLC has been selected to manage the Southern IN Sentinel Landscape Project in order to conserve natural resources, protect critical habitats and corridors, and prepare Indiana for the environmental changes accompanied by climate change. This project is partnered with the U.S Department of Agriculture, Department of Defense, and the Department of the Interior. Dr. Freitag's role is to work with rural landowners to implement environmental conservation programs. The biggest challenge is getting the landowners on board to begin with. Most of the owners are rural farmers that do not have access to information that demonstrates and explains the benefits of participating in a program like this. Sam explained that Dr. Freitag is currently working with a GIS business to create a centralized website that contains all of the pertinent information regarding the federal and state programs that southern Indiana properties may be eligible for. At this time, the ultimate goal of the Southern IN Sentinel Landscape Project time is to increase participation.

C: Air Quality Working Group

Matt updated the EC on the Air Quality Working group's quick meeting on Tuesday. The group met via Zoom. The main discussion that took place was the AQ working group wanting to see Indiana take the lead on air quality monitoring, especially given the influx of federal grant money as a result of policies such as the American Rescue Plan Act. The group also discussed what it might look like for Bloomington to take the lead at a local level as it regards air quality monitoring. Matt added that the working group has been thinking of potential spots around Bloomington where a monitor might be best suited. Matt also reached out to an O'Neill professor for advice and actionable steps that the EC could make.

D: Outreach update

Carrie was absent. Linda provided a brief update to the EC about the outreach initiative being led by Carrie. Carrie visited the Office of Planning and Transportation in order to go through old EC fact sheets, brochures, documents, etc. These outreach materials were organized into materials to keep and materials that should be updated or brought up in discussion amongst the EC. Carrie intends to keep the ball rolling on this to be better prepared for the next outreach event. Linda offered that it might be useful for the EC to replace the current tablecloth with a more modern, professional commission logo.

6. New Business:

A: Heat Island Effect work by Keeley and Thompson

Linda reported to the EC about the taskforce that she is a part of. The taskforce wants to develop a Bloomington city plan that accounts for heat mitigation and heat preparedness. The taskforce is composed of members from BCOS, the City, Red Cross, Indiana University and Monroe County Emergency Management. Alana has also been researching the UHI effect, looking at social science reports that focus on UHI, environmental justice, and urban planning. Don added to this discussion, talking about his experience with the UHI and localized thunderstorms that have led to high mortality rates.

7. Reports from: Tree Commission (TC), Monroe County Environmental Commission (MCEC), Blooming Commission of 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 reported to the EC that Tree Commission has not yet met. There is nothing new to report.

MCEC: Megan reported that the MCEC is looking for a new commissioner. MCEC discussed the Heat Island Effect working group, as well.

BCOS: Don attended the BCOS meeting. He reported that it was difficult to hear much of the meeting through Zoom, but that the commission discussed adopting the UN's heat mitigation policies.

ERAC: Dave was absent. Nothing to report.

MPOCAC: Sam reported that there was nothing new to report to the EC.

FOLM: This commission is not currently meeting.

MC-IRIS: Linda reported that the previous MC-IRIS meeting wrapped up discussion on the plant sale that occurred a few months back. The commission is moving forward with assigning the Callery Pear Tree as the invasive species that will be targeted in the upcoming year. MC-IRIS discussed seed gathering and seed starting for the next plant sale. MC-IRIS will not be meeting in December. Don reported that the wildlife corridor at the Winslow Sports Park is not at its best. He told the EC that the Asian Bush Honeysuckle has matured to an incredible density and in extreme amounts. There was also a number of other invasive species found around this area.

8. Commissioner Announcements:

Don recently returned from Europe and noted that he was impressed by the number of actionable steps that EU and non-EU nations are taking in regards to climate change, heat preparedness, etc. He stated that these nations are doing far more than the United States is, as many European

nations are facing questions of staying warm, heat impacts, and consumption of water and energy during the winter season.

9. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:32pm.

Next EC meeting: December 15, 2022, 6:00 p.m., 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.