



**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 May 2021, 6:00 PM

1. Call to order and quorum confirmation

Call to order on May 20th, 2021 at 6:03 PM

Matt Caldie
Cory Ray
Daniel Gonzalez
Sam Armstrong
Andrew Guenther
David Parkhurst
Mike Litwin
Don Eggert
Dedaimia Whitney

2. Introductions

Everyone from the EC was introduced

3. Approval of minutes

Minutes moved

Matt Approved
Cory Approved
Daniel Approved
Sam Approved
Andrew Approved
David Approved
Mike Approved
Dedaimia Approved

Minutes were approved unanimously

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

No Public comment this evening

5. Presentations:

A. Sherry Mitchell-Bruker, Chair of Friends of Lake Monroe: grant recommendation by EC

Sherry updated us on the current Watershed Management Plan. This is a 27-month project that is federally funded under the 319 program. So far, they have completed about 70% of the work. The intention of the plan is to update the public about lake Monroe. This will be done with intensive water quality monitoring and to come up with an action plan to improve the watershed. Education and outreach will be done this summer. All of the data has been collected by volunteers that looked over 100 different sites. This summer they will look at the water quality samples to see how healthy the water is. After they look at the data, the action plan will be developed. The plan will discuss what needs to be done and how it will get done. Volunteers will contribute to the action plan. The plan will include addressing how Lake Monroe's watershed water impacts all land uses, how to create a measurable impact, and how to educate and train the public. They hope to finish the draft of the action plan by August and then apply for a 319 implementation grant in September. In January they hope to publish the Watershed Management Plan. Finally, in November 2022 the grant will hopefully be awarded. Some of the work they would like to do is at the Amy Weingartner Branigan Peninsula which is suffering from erosion. They hope to partner with the Sycamore Land Trust on this area. Another potential project is in the Charles Deam Wilderness Peninsula and they hope to partner with the USFS. This area is also experiencing erosion. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources leases land around the lake to farmers. Farmers haven't been able to farm in a few of the parcels of land in recent years because of flooding. The DNR is now interested in converting these areas into plots of riparian forest or forested wetland. The grant could contribute to this project as well. Another project is Brown County fairgrounds where they have had issues of E. coli. This is due to horse manure. This project would include a riparian buffer and livestock inclusion fencing. These are all potential projects. Sherry is most concerned about getting community support. She needs funding between Feb 2022 and Nov 2022 for a watershed coordinator. That is 9 months for 37,197 dollars. She hopes the city of Bloomington will share this cost. She also hopes Bloomington and the county will be able to match the 319 grant. She hopes she can count on the ECs support. The cash match shows local commitment to the project and will help secure the grant. Maggie Sullivan is doing a very good job and if the funding is secured, she will be able to give a full-time commitment. The ECs support is vital to friends of Lake Monroe's success and their success is vital to the community. They are looking for a letter to the mayor and the city council in support of the grant proposal that would go to the city council.

B. Lauren Travis, Assistant Director of Sustainability: Climate Action Plan

In the past year the city has been developing a Climate Action Plan. Resolution 21-08 (The Climate Action Plan) was accepted by the City of Bloomington as an advisory document, which is intended to guide city activities and funding priorities. It doesn't obligate the city to enact any of the provisions as law. The community had been pushing for actual target goals to reduce emissions and this document was able to provide these goals. 75% of the public is concerned about climate change. There is a recording on CATS that shows the City of Bloomington's Climate Action Plan presentation to the city council. The first intention of the plan is to set a vision for sustainability in Bloomington. Next, measure emission sources and climate impacts. After that, look into more climate solutions that target a reduction of emissions and create a resilient infrastructure. The main goal of the plan is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25% below 2018 levels by 2030 and reach carbon neutrality by 2050. This is in compliance with the international panel on climate change and the Paris Agreement targets. Since 2008 there has been little reduction in emissions. Bloomington is still above the national average because of its fuel sources.

Structural improvements from the Climate Action Plan must be initiated in order to make steps toward carbon neutrality. Increased carpooling is key for lowering travel emissions. However, a majority of our emissions of CO2 comes from the built environment because the fuel sources to power these areas are mostly coal based. The best way to make an impact will be changing to a cleaner fuel source. We want to increase clean energy usage, increase energy efficiency, support decarbonization of the local electricity grid, and increase finance options for energy efficiency and renewable energy. The best strategy for energy usage is to install on-site solar photovoltaics citywide. The best strategy for transportation is to reduce single occupancy automobiles by 8% of 2018 values. For waste management it is to reduce solid waste production and compost at home. For water, decreasing potable water consumption and maintaining drinking water quality will be the priority. There will be a new grower-owned farm stop opening next week. The climate action page has the slides of the presentation.

6. Reports from TC, MoCo EC, BCOS, ERAC, MPO-CAC, FOLM, & MC-IRIS

TC: A short meeting. A long-time member retired, and a new member came on to the commission. 3 of 4 superfund sites in Bloomington are about to be taken off the list as superfund sites. The full report of the Tree Commissions meeting was sent by email.

MoCo EC: Met with Maggie Sullivan from the FOLM. They discussed watershed management and received a similar presentation as Sherry's. The Bloomington Hoosiers Resilience index was also presented to them by Lauren Travis. They discussed a Monroe County Hoosiers Resilience Index update that will engage the whole county not just Bloomington.

BCOS: A member of the city council spoke. There was discussion about the annexation of Bloomington and if the annexation goes through, then there will need to be an expansion of services. Kriste Lindburg and Angela Avon Roy discussed their mitigation efforts. There was also discussion about transitional housing equity. There has been an increase in poverty in Bloomington since 2015.

MPO-CAC: They heard reports from MPO staff on 2022-26 Transportation Improvement Program and the American Job Plan. Also, how much money Indiana will get from the passage of that bill. They also discussed the 2022-2024 TIP amendments. They are possibly adding in bus stops in two locations. Also, they are looking at the acquisition of four 35-foot replacement battery electric buses. This was last month's meeting.

MC-IRIS: Will send meeting notes over email

7. Discussion from Environmental Commission working groups:

A. Active working groups

i. ECPC/Plan Commission (Linda Thompson, staff liaison)

There are 3 cases this month that will be heard at the Plan Commission on June 14th. The District at Latimer Square at the old K-mart site. Another called The Aspen Heights on Gurley Pike. And the last is Tyler Curry on Pete Ellis drive. The Latimer Square site has not stated any revisions from the previous month, but they may because it is questionable if they will be on the agenda or if they will continue again onto next month (Please see details on last month's minutes). The Aspen Heights currently has multiple apartment buildings on 12 and a half acres, and the plan is to demolish all of those for three new multifamily buildings. It will be for students and there will be 235 units with 653 bedrooms and each of the 3 buildings will have a surface parking lot with 435 spaces. The issue is there are no green building practices involved. The ECPC will suggest construction and demolish salvage. Unknown impervious surface

percentage proposed. There is a wooded riparian buffer that will be next to the parking lot. They can't build the parking lot without encroaching on the riparian buffer. Tyler Curry on Pete Ellis Drive was approved in 2020, but they want to make a few changes to the district ordinance. This is on 3 acres. They plan to wrap the whole parking garage with units. It will allow them to make a larger courtyard. They agreed to a green wall before but are now planning on doing a cool roof. They also are planning on having it certified as a Fitwell building.

ii. Outreach (Cory Ray, Organizer)

We decided on a panel discussion which will have a topic of what we want Bloomington to look like in the future. It will most likely be an in-person event, but also be videotaped for the public to see at home. We wanted to open it up to 4 speakers. We want members of the commission to submit speakers to the EC with a short bio explaining why they would be good for the panel discussion. The commission would then vote on their top choices. If two of the speakers were too similar, we would discuss that in further detail to ensure we have a diverse group of speakers. We plan to have this event after July. Please submit speakers in the next two weeks.

iii. Biodiversity (Andrew Guenther, Organizer)

The biodiversity working group had no further edits with the plan. We mainly discussed how we were going to distribute the plan to the public. We plan to forward the information to all of Bloomington, but to focus on the neighborhoods that can provide the connectivity between the main areas of greenspace. We will contact businesses by email. Members agreed to going door to door with flyers in different neighborhoods. Possibly even putting up yard signs. Everyone seemed willing to dedicate time to this. We also hope to attend other community events this summer educating people about the plan. It was discussed in great detail getting other groups involved in this plan (including MC-IRIS and the Sustainability Commission). At the next meeting we will narrow down dates and a specific list of community partners that we hope will help distribute the plan. Our official meetings will occur every other Sunday at 7PM.

8. Old business

Dave moved that Andrew would write a letter to the mayor and give a copy to the city council in support of the coordinator and for the grants and matching funding. Matt seconded. This will support Friends of Lake Monroe

Sam Approved
Matt Approved
Daniel Approved
Andrew Approved
Mike Approved
Dave Approved
Cory Approved
Dedaimia Approved

9. New business

No new business

10. Commissioner announcements

Ben is finding information that needs to be updated in the BEQI. He is then researching the updated information. He also wrote a new outline that he will send out to the EC to look at.

Next Thursday Andrew will be speaking at the Parking Commission as a private citizen to urge the Commission to get rid of parking minimums for residential developments in Bloomington. Currently residential developments

have a required amount of parking spaces they must have on their property. Student housing developments are required to have at least half as many parking spaces as they have apartments. Andrew's proposal would eliminate the parking spaces. This would allow them to build more densely, which would lower housing costs and development costs. It also encourages a vehicle free way of life. The presentation will occur next Thursday.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:24 PM

Next EC meeting: 17 June, 2021, 6:00 p.m., ZOOM