



## 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 SEPTEMBER 2024 MEETING MINUTES

September 19, 2024,  
6:00 PM Hooker  
Meeting Room #245  
Hybrid Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting here:

<https://bloomington.zoom.us/j/8657231124?pwd=mPqboSiD0AhVwKSgkuW2aO7NHixihO.1&omn=81563021562>

Meeting ID: 865 723 1124 Passcode: COBPT

or on Community Access Television Service (CATS): <https://catstv.net/government.php>.

Auxiliary aids are available upon request with adequate notice.

1. Call to order and quorum confirmation:
2. Introductions and Roll Call

	<u>In Person</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Zoom</u>
Carrie Albright	X		
Nadia Cain			X
Matt Caldie	X		
Shannon Gayk	X		
Mike Litwin	X		
Adam Martinez	X		
Megan Murphy		X	
Mitchell Owens	X		
David Parkhurst	X		
Gabby Robles		X	
Karenn Tankersley	X		
Rachael Sargent Johnson, City Liaison	X		
Fiona Kilgore, Graduate Fellow	X		

3. Approval of August 2024 minutes\*

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Carrie Albright	X		
Nadia Cain	X		
Matt Caldie	X		
Shannon Gayk	X		
Mike Litwin	X		
Adam Martinez	X		
Megan Murphy			
Mitchell Owens	X		
David Parkhurst	X		
Gabby Robles			
Karenna Tankersley	X		

Matt Caldie moved to approve; David Parkhurst seconded. All present voted yes.

4. Public comment

Limit 5 minutes per person, 20 minutes total

Fiona Kilgore introduced herself, as did Jacqueline Saile, a member of the public.

5. Old Business

a. WFHB Active! and PSA\* (Carrie Albright)

Carrie Albright discussed the opportunity to share about the EC on WFHB, including details about questions that will be asked and how many people can be present. Mitchell Owens and Karenna Tankersley agreed that Matt and Carrie would be the best two representatives. Carrie discussed that they would plan to ask the public to raise their concerns at our meetings, and engage with us when we table at events. She mentioned highlighting the reports we share with the City and the input we give on development plans. Carrie asked for additional input on what to include about the EC's accomplishments. Karenna pointed out that the public may benefit from other resources on the EC's website.

Shannon Gayk motioned to approve; Mitchell Owens seconded. All present voted yes.

b. YIMBYana Local Housing Policy Reform - Letter of Support\* (Adam Martinez)

The EC members discussed that the revised version of the letter better reflects that the EC supports the spirit and mission YIMBYana and does not necessarily call for every specific policy objective.

Matt Caldie motioned to approve the letter as revised; Shannon Gayk seconded. All present voted yes.

- c. Working group updates
  - i. Water Quality

Mitchell discussed the Water Quality WG September meeting. The WG got updates on stormwater ordinances and projects from the MS4 Program Coordinator. The new big push will be implementation and enforcement. Mitchell wants to push for a Clear Creek water monitoring citizen science project due to IDEM's data reflecting poor water quality. Jacqueline commended Mitchell's efforts to pull together data from multiple sources.

- ii. Biodiversity

Karenn mentioned that the BDWG has not met yet this September. She gave context about what the BDWG is working on - namely Bee City USA and Habitat Connectivity Plan updates.

Mitchell asked about the EPA grant working group due in mid-November. Carrie mentioned that we still could work toward that, but we hadn't picked a topic or found a partner yet. Karenn mentioned that the grant did have a large Environmental Justice component and that we should first determine what EJ topic we want to address, and offered to reach out to local nonprofits if we choose to move forward with a specific topic.

## 6. New Business

- a. Stormwater Awareness Week (Rachael Johnson)

Rachael Johnson shared information on Stormwater Awareness Week, including a series of webinars for those interested.

- b. Title 2 (Carrie Albright, Rachael Johnson)

Carrie gave context for why the EC is reimagining the Purpose and Powers and Duties for the commission. David mentioned that the document calls the EC the Environmental Quality and Conservation Commission and suggested changing that to Environmental Commission. Adam Martinez asked if the Council would vote on our draft. Carrie and Rachael mentioned that our draft will go through the legal department, then a special processes group before City Council votes on it.

EC members worked on tweaking the grammar and substance of the purpose statement.

EC members also generally agreed that the definitions section was unnecessary.

The Qualifications section was also discussed, and Shannon pointed out that including business

experience did not necessarily make sense. Matt suggested changing phrasing to “preference for appointments may” be given rather than “preference shall”, and getting rid of the list of disciplines. The EC decided on rephrasing qualifications as “expertise in environmental fields”, instead of the list of disciplines.

The Powers and Duties section was discussed as well. Rachael shared that the legal department has recommended cutting it down and making more broad statements under duties. Carrie recommended moving section (b). The EC members agreed to scratch (c) and (d). Section (e) and (d) were determined to be redundant and needed to be combined. Both pertain to sampling and conducting pollution studies, and also need to be broader than pollution. Sections (g) and (h) were scrapped. Sections (i) and (j) were determined to need replaced by a bullet on education and outreach. Section (k) was agreed to need broadening. Section (l) was re-worded to reflect working through the appropriate city department for finding and applying to grants. Section (m) will be reimagined as an advising section and (n) was folded into (e) and (f) as rewritten. Karennia pointed out that memos and resolutions were missing from the section as well.

Carrie asked about volunteers for rewriting the advising, outreach, and cooperating with other entities. Mitchell volunteered to re-write the advising point, and Carrie volunteered for the other two.

Nadia Cain left the meeting early, during this discussion.

**c. Priorities for 2025 (Carrie Albright, Matt Caldie, Karennia Tankersley, Rachael Johnson)**

Carrie explained that the Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary/Treasurer have discussed having an annual planning meeting in November, rather than a bucket list meeting, before the holidays. Additionally, an onboarding process where new members can learn from the liaison and a volunteer commissioner to learn more about the commission was suggested, as well as a potential yearly meeting where the history and mission of the EC is discussed.

**d. Habitat Connectivity Plan (Rachael Johnson)**

Rachael shared that the city might have the capacity to rework the HCP, and could keep it updated in the future.

**e. Riparian Buffer Discussion (Mike Litwin, Rachael Johnson)**

Mike summarized how the EC had been pushing for the riparian buffer measurement standards to be changed back to the original, which required measuring the stream buffer from the top of the bank, rather than the middle.

Rachael mentioned that the city is not open to changing the measurement standard again, but is open to adding 15 ft of buffer at the middle, and for important streams to have wider buffers.

Matt believed that this will accomplish the EC’s goals. Mike wants that proposal from the city in writing via email. EC feedback will be needed before October 1<sup>st</sup>.

f. Rescheduling of October Meeting (Rachael Johnson)

The October meeting was proposed to be rescheduled one week later. Carrie suggested moving reports to email.

Matt motioned to extend the meeting 5 minutes, David seconded. All present voted yes.

Reports from:

- g. Tree Commission (TC)
- h. Environmental Resource Advisory Council (ERAC)
- i. Friends of Lake Monroe (FOLM)
- j. Bloomington Commission on Sustainability (BCOS)
- k. Monroe County – Identify and Reduce Invasive Species (MC-IRIS)

7. Commissioner announcements

David brought tree care manuals, and gifted bees wax.

Matt shared someone had pitched an ordinance to not allow cats outside if not on a leash or constrained. Shannon shared that it might be a good space for education, rather than ordinance.

Mike shared from a Sycamore Land Trust newsletter: Many plants and animals are moving north, obstructed by lawns, housing, and highways, stressing the need for wildlife corridors.

Mitchell mentioned the book Crossing by Ben Goldfaub and pitched having a book club. Mike shared there is a book called Nomad's Century about people moving north that might be of interest too.

8. Upcoming Meeting

- a. October 17, 2024, 6:00 pm, Hooker Room, Zoom, and CATS – to be rescheduled

9. Adjournment: 8:05 pm.

\* *Item to be voted on*

The City is committed to providing equal access to information. However, despite our efforts, at times, portions of our board and commission packets are not accessible for some individuals.

If you encounter difficulties accessing material in this packet, please contact Melissa Hirtzel at [hirtzelm@bloomington.in.gov](mailto:hirtzelm@bloomington.in.gov) and provide your name, contact information, and a link to or description of the document or web page you are having problems with.

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.