



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.

## MINUTES

21 September 2017  
City Hall—McCloskey Room, 401 North Morton Street

1. Introductions (7:00-7:05 p.m.)

Present: Nick Kappas, Matt Caldie, Chris Negggers, David Parkhurst, Mike Litwin, Riley Zipper, Dave Debikey, Linda Thompson, Ramsay Harik

Absent: Dedaimia Whitney, Chaim Julian, Andy Marrs

Guests: Three guests

2. Approval of minutes (7:05-7:10 p.m.)

A motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded. 6 ayes, one abstention, no nays, so the minutes are approved.

3. Public comment (7:10-7:30 p.m.)

No public comment.

4. Discussion from Environmental Commission working groups (B cycle) (7:30-7:50 p.m.)

A Cycle

~~A. ECPC/Planning Commission~~

~~B. Waste/Hazards~~

~~C. Water~~

B Cycle

D. Outreach

- One meeting since last time, but didn't talk much about outreach
- One thing that the Commission had discussed re outreach was to create a brand for the EC, which outreach is making headway on
- They had ideas for a logo, and Dedaimia was going to work on a mock-up to show everyone
- They wanted it to look similar to the City's logo, but make the snowflakes look like leaves, or have another element that looked "environmental" but to distinguish us from the Tree Commission
- Had discussed colors and fonts, but still don't have too much yet, maybe next month
- Consistency is important so people know that it's the Environmental Commission as soon as they see it

E. ECPC/Planning Commission  
ECPC

- All urban sites that we've already talked about
- HM Mac
  - Urban Station 2, located south of the downtown bus station, where Rhino's is
  - Plan to build a mixed-use development, with Rhino's being able to come back
  - Four stories high
  - Still in negotiations with the city about affordable housing but nothing in terms of green building practices
  - Urban Station 1 was a nightmare for the city - haven't been following regulations and have put residents in dangerous situations
- Yellow Cab site
  - The plan is to remodel the building and build a few more stories
  - Between the alley and the building where there's a parking lot now, they will build another building, with the first floor being live-work studios
  - For the Yellow Cab building, there will be commercial space on the first floor, with apartments on the other floors except for the fourth, where there will be a restaurant
  - Planning a number of green building practices, including solar panels
  - Seems like a good spot for downtown, and they *may* make a long-term commitment for affordable housing, up to 99 years
- Mara Jade
  - Attempting level 1 green development incentives
  - These are something the EC needs to look at before the UDO is updated – because they were awarded the incentive just because they're close to downtown and bus stations and have sidewalks
  - Nick asked what about heat island effects
  - Linda said it's possible it will worsen it, which is why she wrote a letter on behalf of the EC asking for reflective roofs and other green development practices
- Life Designs
  - 1105 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> St, where an old church is currently
  - Plan is to remodel the church as community/workout space, a couple universally designed apartments, and another complex next to it, which will be designated affordable and for homeless people
  - Nothing on green building at the moment
  - Though developing affordable housing is a laudable and important goal, it doesn't mean they can't also address environmental concerns

#### Plan Commission

- Nick went to the City Council meeting that took place on Aug. 30 on behalf of the EC to request denial of the N Crescent Rd. apartments
- Issue is that they're building on 8 undisturbed acres, with 18% slopes, two sinkholes, and a creek head
- The structure was originally in the riparian buffer and the sinkholes
- Because of the EC's advocacy, they got rid of parking in the sinkhole, but they made the buildings a story taller and they're still in the buffer
- At the Council meeting, Nick said that the project was within our habitat corridor plan that we would be presenting soon
- He emphasized that affordable housing and environmental concerns will always be butting heads and that we need to get out ahead of this by enacting strong environmental protections like the habitat plan recommends
- We need to get the Council's support for the habitat plan but also the support of Planning and the Plan Commission
- Third street project
  - City and petitioner are exploring putting in a bike path that cuts through an alley
  - They're planning on cleaning up the alley and lighting it up

- Convention Center
  - Will be coming down the pipeline quickly
  - The project will involve a huge amount of construction, fugitive dust, and debris
- Annex project
  - Denied by Plan Commission 6-2
  - The denial was for many reasons: the property was located next to 4<sup>th</sup> Street Historical District so it didn't flow with the area, there were traffic concerns, the developer didn't have a well-articulated plan for a green roof, and they asked for height variances – just not a good plan overall

F. Biodiversity

- Met briefly after last EC meeting, talked about getting approval for the plan and the presentation, then formulating our ask of City Council

5. Old business (7:50-8:15 p.m.)

A. Mayors' Monarch Pledge

- Action items are finished, which have been circulated
- Ryan is planning on making a table of contents and an introduction, then put it in a three-ring binder for the staff-person who will be in charge of keeping accounts
- David moves that we approve the Monarch Pledge, which is seconded
- 7 ayes, none opposed or abstaining, so the Mayors' Monarch Pledge passes unanimously

B. Habitat Network Plan approval

- It's gone through many rounds of revision, so we could just vote on it
- Possibly the only thing it needs is larger maps in the back as an appendix that you can fold out to see more detail
- Everyone has provided their input, and have said it looks good
- A table of contents would be helpful

C. Habitat Network Plan slide presentation to City Council

- Maybe browns and greens as a background to make it more habitat-esque
- Mike makes a movement to approve the plan and slides, Dave seconds it
- 7 ayes, no opposed or abstentions, so the Bloomington Habitat Conservation Plan passes unanimously
- We should present the plan to the Plan Commission, as well as the Council
  - i. A resolution could serve as some weight at this step, so it is a good ask still
- What is our "ask" to the Council?
  - i. Consideration of this plan during the review of each chapter of the CMP
  - ii. That they have this with them as a guiding document, especially during the upcoming conversation of the Environmental chapter
  - iii. That they take the connectivity plan into consideration when they're reviewing a PUD – its location, its environmentally sensitive attributes, etc
  - iv. To add this as an addendum to the CMP, or at the very least, mention it by name in the text of the Environmental chapter
  - v. A big ask - but it would be good to ask that the Mayor mandate that this document be considered when any development touches these areas in any way
  - vi. At the *very* least, a formal resolution that will look good to the Plan Commission
- Over the next year, we will have to take language from this, and language from the BEAP, and draft ordinances to be incorporated into the UDO
- What will the Council ask?
  - i. How is this better than the conservation laws we have now?
  - ii. How exactly will greenspace conservation be mandated?
- Riley will be presenting the habitat plan to the **City Council on November 15 at 6:30 PM in the Chambers**

6. New business (8:15-8:50 p.m.)
  - A. Environmental Chapter City Council review October 10<sup>th</sup>
    - Linda proposes that an ad-hoc committee be formed to come up with any last minute proposed changes
    - But logistically, this would be difficult, because the entire commission would have to vote on any changes they came up with
  - B. Update on commission vacancies
    - Dani is no longer in town, so we have two vacancies now, both of them to be appointed by City Council
7. Commissioner announcements and adjournment (8:50-8:55 p.m.)

**Matt:** No announcements

**Chris:** Very excited about habitat network plan.

**Dave P.:** Went to MCEC meeting in September and only three people were in attendance. The commission mostly discussed the County's energy and the next meeting is at a different location (see below), where a guest speaker will be speaking about global climate change.

**Mike:** Water working group had discussed producing a stormwater brochure, but CBU beat them to it. Friends of Lake Monroe will be having a meeting in October, as well as a water sampling field trip (10/3) and a shoreline cleanup (10/8).

**Riley:** Excited about habitat plan, and hopes to see people at the **Oct. 18** Council meeting.

**Dave D.:** No announcements

**Linda:** CBU's storm drain marking brochure was originally Mike's idea, and they did it a long time ago. Linda has interviewed a few people to replace Ryan as an intern, including a couple of really good candidates.

**Ramsay:** MC-IRIS is sponsoring an exciting initiative that takes advantage of an IN grant that provides money to homeowners to remove invasives and replace them with natives. Deep Roots is working with MC-IRIS (Gillian Field) and if anybody is interested in connecting their neighborhood association into this process they should come by Deep Roots or talk to Ramsay

**Nick:** Planning a hiking trip to Knobstone Trail in southern IN, and got a map from the DNR which was very helpful

#### Meeting times

- A. Environmental Commission: 19 October, 7:00 p.m., McCloskey Room, City Hall
- B. EC Planning Committee: 12 October, 4:00 p.m., Lemon Room, City Hall
- C. Tree Commission: 18 October, 9:30 a.m., Rose Hill office
- D. BCOS: 10 October, 6:00 p.m., McCloskey Room
- E. MCEC Com.: 11 October, 5:30 p.m., Pat Haley Room 1B, Courthouse
- F. ERAC: 13 December, 4:30 p.m., Parks
- G. MPO CAC: 27 September, 6:30 p.m., McCloskey
- H. MCSWMD Board: 12 October, 4:00 p.m., Nat Hill III Room, Courthouse
- I. Habitat Plan Presentation at City Council: 15 November, 6:30 PM, Council Chambers