



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.

AGENDA

16 November 2017
City Hall—McCloskey Room, 401 North Morton Street

1. Introductions (7:00-7:05 p.m.)
Present: Nick Kappas, Linda Thompson, Riley Zipper, Chris Neggers, Dedaimia Whitney, Mike Litwin, David Parkhurst, Chaim Julian, Matt Caldie, Ryan Clemens
Absent: Dave Debikey, Ramsay Harik, Erin Hatch
Guests: Maisie Fiedler, Maddie Waters, Thomas Urban, Sarah Neggers, Diana Neggers, three other guests
2. Approval of minutes (7:05-7:10 p.m.)
Motion to approve the minutes was seconded. The minutes are approved with 6 ayes, 0 nays, and 1 abstention.
3. Public comment (7:10-7:30 p.m.)
Maddie Waters: She's here today because her class in school is doing a project about the environment, specifically the great pacific garbage patch in the ocean. For part of the project, they'll be taking apart plastic bags to make art, then sell it to raise money. She would love to have someone from the EC speak to her class. She also wrote a letter to the mayor about how important it is to support the environment.
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
 - The current outreach proposal is about creating standardized templates for correspondence, outreach materials, and reports.
 - From the last meeting, it seemed like there was consensus around Trebuchet as a font.
 - We still have to decide on the logo, and the colors, either "city blue" (blue like the city logo) or some shade of green.
 - One commissioner who wasn't able to make it tonight had concerns the edges of the logo were too sharp, but the "sharpness" can actually be effective because it sets us apart.
 - The outreach group met and decided that they really liked the logo how it was, so they didn't change it.

- Linda contacted the Mayor’s office about how we can use the logo, specifically, if it was OK for us to alter it, and the meeting’s tomorrow (11/17/17).
- Dedaimia suggests that we have a vote of intent – to vote to approve the logo now, so we don’t have to wait to hear what the Mayor’s office says.
- Nick suggests that we approve the logo, then hold another vote to approve the color, then hold a vote to approve the proposal as a whole.
- The proposal is the EC has (1) a standard font for any external communications and (2) a logo, with sugar maple leaves and butterflies that resemble the City’s logo.
- The proposal as a whole passes unanimously.
- Chris moves that we adopt green as our logo’s color, and this motion passes unanimously.
- The specific shade of green, based on the results of the vote on the swatches that Dedaimia brought, will be Peppermint Leaf Green.

E. ECPC/Planning Commission

ECPC:

- The Planning Department isn’t sure what will be on the next Plan Commission schedule.
- There are seven cases, but they almost certainly won’t all be heard.
- What will be heard for sure is a draft for the Plan Commission of a temporary change in the UDO for the downtown zoning district.
 - A lot of people are unhappy with how it is right now, and to get it changed with all the big UDO changes will take too long, so this is basically a stopgap.
 - The limiting of the height and density downtown is the proposed change.
 - We likely won’t see it until it goes to PC, and from there it’ll go right to the Council, and they’re thinking it may take up the entire PC meeting.
- **Culver’s Restaurant at W. 3rd St., between the American Legion and Master Rental**
 - Steep slopes are on the property, some of them can’t be developed on at all, but others have restrictions where only 50% of them can be developed.
 - Lots of wooded area on the site.
 - We have a rule that says if a lot is covered with vegetation, part of it has to be preserved, and it has to apply to all wooded areas, which has a specific definition in the UDO.
 - There are many issues, but a major one is they want to cover almost all the wooded area with their development.
 - So they’re asking for several variances:
 - To ignore the tree preservation ordinance altogether – they want to follow the regular impervious cover rules, but ignore the tree preservation completely, including a ten-foot conservation easement around it.
 - To the parking lot setback regulations.
 - It’s on the heels of the Crescent Dr. property, and it seems as though, like that case, the city is backing it completely.
 - The total acreage of the two lots are **2.3 acres**.
 - They intend to make **58% impervious**, which falls just under the requirements of the zoning district (max 60%)
 - Wooded area is **1.1 acres**.
 - Protected area is **0.9 acres**, and the conservation easement would add on to it.
 - The total area that could be developed based on the current regulations in the UDO is **1.4 acres**, and they’re going over that by a lot.
 - They completed a tree inventory, identifying the trees and counting them, and concluded that most of them were on our “bad” list

- That leaves **22 trees** that they propose to take down, then plant them somewhere else on the property, in addition to their regular landscaping requirements.
- Not sure where they'll be able to fit all these in – with the exception of one, they're all exotic plants
- Lee and Linda went out there, he identified some trees she wasn't sure about, and he wrote up that he agreed completely with their inventory.
- Chris says that the forest could look denser when you're standing in it, so the inventory seems reasonable, in the opinion of a professional forester.
- Most of the understory is honeysuckle, so this is likely why it looks denser than it is
- The trees they consider "junk" trees include ashes, mulberries, and walnuts.
- Linda also thought there were some basswoods and red elms.
- The application will be submitted next week to the BZA, then it'll go to the PC soon.

Plan Commission:

- The 5-story condo next to the CVS is coming in December.
 - It's 100% impervious and takes up the entire lot.
 - It's also two stories higher than the regulations allow for.
 - No environmentally "special" features.
- Temporary change to the UDO involves:
 - Decreasing the maximum height requirements for the downtown zoning district and raising the minimum height.
 - Green development incentives can be used to raise the height back up.

F. Biodiversity

- Riley presented the habitat network plan to the city council last night (11/15/17).
- Most of the Council received it pretty well, especially when he showed the slide with practical implementation actions, and they asked three questions:
 - One about invasive species (Cm. Volan).
 - One about a clarification of the second map with the three priority areas highlighted in green (Cm. Piedmont-Smith).
 - One about if the priority greenspace areas were going to expand if we were to enhance and add a corridor (Cm. Sims).
- Lots of the EC was there to support him, and Nick and Chris even spoke in response to Council's questions.
- It definitely looks good to the Council that so many commissioners were there.
- Water is probably our most important resource now, which we alluded to in the habitat plan report, so we could work with Friends of Lake Monroe and others in this area.
- Water security is an important term to think about here (and definitions in the handbook).

5. Old business (7:50-8:30 p.m.)

A. Environmental chapter of CMP for council review

- Cms. Dave Rollo and Isabel Piedmonth-Smith offered some amendments that Nick agreed with
- There was a lot of talk about economics, future development and livability in our city, and Nick wanted them to realize the environment is critically important for economic growth, especially when it comes to livability – the cleaner and more efficient we are, the more people will want to live here and the economy will grow from that.

B. Bloomington Habitat Connectivity Plan presentation (see biodiversity working group above)

C. Mayor's Monarch Pledge update

- Linda and Ryan met last week about the Monarch Pledge.
 - Ryan is currently drafting a letter to Mayor Hamilton to set a date to have the plan adopted.
 - The best time to make the proclamation in Ryan's opinion would be near the beginning of the planting season, around March or April.
 - Linda's asked about what the City is doing for the bicentennial, so it's possible we could line the proclamation up with it.
 - Someone at MC-IRIS made a monarch butterfly to put your head through and take photos, and it would be great to have when the Mayor makes the proclamation.
- D. Nomination slate committee appointments
- Nick has appointed Chris and Mike to the nomination committee.
6. New business (8:30-8:50 p.m.)
- A. Presenter for December
- No presenter in December, but we'll likely will have speakers in the first quarter of 2018 from Friends of Lake Monroe or Green Camino
- B. Committee reports for Annual Report
- Each committee chair should write up a paragraph of what they've done in the past year, by the next meeting
- C. Bucket list meeting
- Unfortunately, we can't have a meeting where the EC buys food for commissioners, like in years past.
 - We can have it off-site, as long as we pay for our own meals (if applicable) and make sure the public can easily access it, meaning it *must* be ADA-compliant.
- D. Other considerations for next meeting
- We'll have to talk about officer nominations, recruitment, and the budget for next year.
 - The handbook should also be revised, and Erin has already started looking into doing this, and Riley will help also.
7. Commissioner announcements and adjournment (8:50-9:00 p.m.)
- Matt: No announcements
- Chaim: No announcements
- David: When South Dakota gets 200 years old they should have a "bison-tenial".
- Mike: Went to the Venue the other day, and there were some beautiful nature photographs on one wall, and the photographer was former EC commissioner, Kriste Lindberg.
- Ryan: No announcements
- Maddie: Her school's cool project! And the river at lower Cascades needs to be cleaned up.
- Dedaimia: The EC sponsors an art contest each year in April called Eco-Heroes, and would encourage Maddie and others to submit art to the contest.
- Chris: Last night was very exciting, the most government thing he's ever done.
- Riley: No announcements.
- Linda: Reminder for tomorrow night for the reception for new boards and commissioner members at Fountain Square.
- Nick: He shared an event called Blue Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, where you find a local coastline and clean up trash. The event is being promoted by a company called United by Blue that cleans a pound of trash from the ocean for every product they sell.

Meeting times

- A. EC: (tentatively) 21 December, 7:00 p.m., McCloskey Room, City Hall
- B. EC Planning Committee: 29 November, 4:00 p.m., Lemon Room, City Hall
- C. Tree Commission: January 2018, 9:30 a.m., Rose Hill office
- D. BCOS meeting: 12 December, 6:00 p.m., McCloskey Room
- E. MCEC Com.: 13 December, 5:30 p.m., Nat U Hill Room, Courthouse

- F. ERAC: 13 December, 4:30 p.m., Parks
- G. MPO CAC: January 2018, 6:30 p.m., McCloskey
- H. MCSWMD Board: 14 December, 4:00 p.m., Nat Hill III Room, Courthouse