



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

17 January 2019, 7:00 PM  
City Hall—Hooker Room 245, 401 North Morton Street

1. Call to order and quorum confirmation
  - Present: Mike Litwin, Nick Kappas, Andrea Webster, Zoe Need, Matt Caldie, Linda Thompson (Liaison), Chris Erickson, Lindsey Hummel, Ryan Clemens, Erica Walker, Kate Corcoran (SPEA Fellow), Erin Hatch (Intern)
  - Absent: David Parkhurst, Andrew Guenther
2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes
  - Agenda modification:
    - o Addition of EcoHeroes to agenda, and discussion of Environmental Commission meeting timing
    - o Mike moved to approve amended agenda, Zoe seconded. Unanimous voice vote for approval. Amended agenda approved.
  - Approval of December minutes
    - o Mike moved to approve December minutes, Chris seconded. Unanimous voice vote for approval. December minutes approved.
3. Public Comment
  - No public comment.
4. Reports from TC, MoCo EC, BCOS, & ERAC
  - Tree Commission, Zoe: Currently, plantings are not exceeding removals. The commission discussed if it is fair to include some of what they have been removing when evaluating the removal to planting numbers, as they are removing invasives. There is emphasis by TC members to make sure that the city is exceeding the number of removed trees by the number of trees planted. Lee has done a bunch of tree orders. Also, he is working on removing ash trees at Winslow woods, roughly 300 trees, accounting for just one side of the street so likely will be more removed. There are two projects that the city is working on which will include plans to expand roadways, which would lead to tree plantings and removals. Some discussion on Arbor Day plantings but nothing set in stone yet.
    - i. Erin: What is the status of the inventory?
    - ii. Zoe: Davey should be giving a public hearing/presentation around August which will also include hydrology information in addition to regular tree inventory reportig.
5. Coordinate 2019 priority projects discussion (Andrew)
6. Discussion from Environmental Commission working groups **B Cycle**  
A Cycle

- ~~A. ECPC/Planning Commission~~
- ~~B. Waste/Hazards~~
- ~~C. Water~~

## B Cycle

### A. Outreach

- EcoHeroes:
  - o Erin: We brainstormed some taglines for our theme, water.
  - o Kate: Our taglines were “making a splash in water conservation”
  - o Erin: “What is a watershed?”, and “Lakes, rivers oceans and streams”
  - o Linda: We booked a room for April the 27<sup>th</sup>, how about “Lakes, Rivers, Oceans, & Streams, Oh My!” for the tagline.
  - o Nick: Put forward a motion to combine the theme with the tag line “Lakes, Rivers, & Streams. Oh My!”
    - Andrea moved to approve the tagline, Zoe seconded. Unanimous voice vote yes. Tagline for EcoHeroes 2019 approved.
  - o Nick: As a rider to that Kate and Erin can make a flyer. I will entertain a motion to allow Erin and Kate to develop flyer and send out the flyer via email and then have an email approval with an official approval in February.
    - Matt moved, Ryan seconded. Unanimous voice vote yes. Motion moved for an email vote followed by official approval of flyer in February to streamline process.
  - o Lindsey: As per our last meeting, we did discuss using more sustainable materials, such as printing on recycled paper.

### B. ECPC/Planning Commission

- Linda: Lots of things to discuss tonight, Plan Commission agenda quite full for next month.
  - o Morton North Case: Previously called Water Stone, this is the project on 11<sup>th</sup> St. that is planning to build a hotel and apartments. Hasn't had revisions since our last discussion and is still in negotiations about approval, and if it should be apartments or commercial.
  - o Curry Urban Properties: Project located on Pete Ellis drive. Have made verbal commitments to shrink building size and to add more greenspace on the north side.
  - o Tri-North Middle School: MCCSC is going to demolish and build a new football field and middle school to swap their current locations. Issues are tree preservation and location of detention basins which are yet to be worked out.
  - o Bell Tire: Project located near West 2<sup>nd</sup> St. past Liberty Drive. Used to be a big box store (Furrows building supply) near El Ranchero Mexican restaurant. Just plans to sell tires and do minor repairs. Right now the plans do not meet the impervious surface requirement, and are exceeding the amount of allowable impervious surface. The landscape plan is not acceptable yet. Not taking out enough concrete to create new pervious surface.
  - o Kinser Flats: Project ECPC talked about it a year ago. Located on the corner of Kinser Pike and Gourley Pike, across from Marathon gas station. This is two acres of vacant property right now, some is cleared and some is wooded. The wooded portion is a steep slope going down into a stream. Plan is to put an apartment building up

with 51 apartments, and will be affordable. The wooded part will stay wooded and turn into a conservation easement. They will keep forest preservation, riparian buffer, and steep slopes per code. This project is being discussed again because this is a new company, and will be higher and bigger than the last owner's proposal. The footprint of the disturbed area is the same as the previous proposal.

- Lindsey: Are all 51 apartments affordable?
- Linda: Unsure what level of affordable, and don't know how many will be affordable. They are probably still in negotiations with the City about how many, how long, and what level of affordability.
- o IU Credit Union:
  - Nick: This project is a winged building with the ability to extend even further but south. It's just office space. Near Mr. Hibachi.
  - Linda: Don't think they will be asking for any variances, and they have a nice landscape plan.
- o Use variance for business Spaah!, which there are no environmental elements to discuss. They want to move to a nearby corner, but the new location is still zoned medical.
  - Chris: Do you know when that zoning will change?
  - Linda: The city doesn't know how they want to change it yet, so not sure the timeline of the hospital task force.
  - Nick: I think the zoning change will come after the UDO is adopted and redefine each of the districts. Then it will go to the maps and rezone. Anything that is there already will be grandfathered.
  - Erica: Is the purpose of the task force just there to figure out what to do with the land?
  - Linda: Yes. The suggestions on what to do with the land is everywhere currently.
  - Erica: Do you expect environmental concerns when they decide what to do with that space (medical waste)?
  - Linda: Yes, as they had a medical incinerator there for a while.
  - Nick: Yes, especially with dust and other movement due to construction
  - Linda: They have already talked about probable clean up.

#### ~~C. Biodiversity~~



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7. New business

- Time of meetings
  - o Nick: We talked about moving meetings to 5:30pm. At that time of discussion not all members were present. Morgan has resigned from the EC as she is going into active duty into the navy. Dave wasn't there as well and he would prefer to keep it at 7pm. I open up the floor to discussion and vote.
  - o Zoe: I thought we talked about 6pm previously.
  - o Andrea: I think if Dave prefers 7pm, so 6pm may be a good compromise.
  - o Linda: We can't get the McCloskey due to another committee having that room at 5:30 and 6pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday. I would have to check on general room availability.
  - o Nick: Can't get Chambers either as the BZA often overlaps.
  - o Nick: What does this do for you Erica?
  - o Erica: I work from home now half the week, so I would just not go into the office for that day.
  - o Zoe: It looks like the Hooker and McCloskey rooms are busy on other Thursdays of the month. So maybe another day of the week.
  - o Nick: It seems members would be available Mondays, Thursday and Fridays.
  - o Zoe: Looks like the Hooker room is available in the evenings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month.
  - o Andrea: Either 6pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday or 6pm on 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month. Let's keep both open as an option until we figure out rooms.
  - o Matt: I would feel bad deciding this without Dave or Andrew present.
  - o Nick: Let's decide next meeting on either the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday or Thursday at 6pm. Linda then will book the rooms and make sure everything is revised/updated online for the public.
- 2019 priority projects
  - o Nick: in the past we have used these bucket list meetings to decide what would the members of the commission would like to see done in Bloomington before the member dies or what is a 1-year project that they would like to see done. Each member will present their idea, then we will rank choice vote on them. 1<sup>st</sup> choice gets 3 points, 2<sup>nd</sup> choice gets 2 points, and 3<sup>rd</sup> choice gets 1 point. The main project is whatever gets the most points.
  - o Nick: We had the BEAP and the BHCP come out of this. Sometime they are big papers sometimes they are educational campaigns, or updating the BEAP for example.
  - o Linda: Main focus should stay on the UDO, which will use up all spring at least. After we should conduct a green infrastructure project which would be an expansion/continuation of connectivity plan and the greenspaces inventory and could be water related.

- o Erica: I want a water modeling project to determine what areas are vulnerable and what are areas could benefit from green infrastructure. This could be a SPEA capstone, and the EC could take the capstone and turn it into a policy ask for the City.
  - Nick: So it would be a fall capstone, so we would have to get together to submit an RFP. Are there past examples of RFPs?
  - Linda: Don't think we had to submit an RFP last time, but it was through Melissa Laney's BMPs course.
  - Zoe: On the general capstone website it just says to contact SPEA for more information.
  - Andrea: If they were to create a map of the typical flood areas of the city that could be added to the urban green infrastructure map.
  - Linda: There was a consulting firm that was hired to do the flooding portion of our emergency management plan, and had several meetings with different stakeholders to identify localized flooding.
- o Lindsey: I would like to see some sort of educational campaign for the public to reduce greenhouse gas emissions rather than simply a turning off the lights type of campaign.
- o Mike: I would like to see us have a periodic, maybe monthly, editorial in the Herald Times, and EC members could take turns doing writing.
- o Zoe: I would propose looking into its feasible of mandatory recycling in Bloomington, and if so, would it be better for the City to manage it or someone else to manage it.
  - Lindsey: There was a SPEA capstone a couple years ago about that.
  - Lindsey: Council had a study too, but because of preemption they don't know if they want to do it.
  - Nick: With that previous SPEA research project, the EC didn't go and advocate for recycling.
  - Linda: At the end of the definition of recycling on the state level it includes incineration. So, in talking to the companies previously that recycle, some of those companies used incineration for all their recycling. So that put a damper on the conversation. So, we could say we are recycling, but really we aren't, we are incinerating.
  - Andrea: If the research has been done then we can have an advocacy focus instead.
  - Nick: Yes, it is in our bylaws that we can go to the statehouse to lobby.
- o Ryan: It would be cool to have some green infrastructure zoning overlays for the city, where we are using requirements, standards or incentives for green infrastructure projects.
- o Erin: Some sort of natural capital accounting project, where we take stock and value all of the existing natural resources in Bloomington.
- o Kate: In general, to just do more community outreach about what the EC does and what we have done.
- o Matt: Was blown away by the BEAP facts on food waste, so I propose finding a project to impact food waste.
  - Erin: Is there a compost study happening by the City right now?
  - Lindsey: There is a survey out to the public to get an idea about composting.
  - Linda: A new program is that the City will put out a survey every couple of months for the community to fill out.
- o Chris: A project involving green drains. Some way to get greenery between where water hits the ground and its end water body, which will provide pre-treatment to the water.

- o Nick: My idea is to conduct a full water infrastructure plotting project to review and illustrate where are greatest infrastructure weaknesses are so that the City can go and replace the piping.
    - Erica: The IFA did a statewide water loss assessment, but they didn't call out any individual water utility by name.
    - Linda: I wonder how much of the information CBU has and if they would give that to us.
    - Andrea: In the SAP that is a goal to inventory and improve the water infrastructure.
  - o Andrea: The SAP identifies that the EC should develop an educational program and hands-on demonstrations to teach residence about managing storm water on site. It would be cool if we launched a program to help homeowners and business owners manage their storm water on site. This could include education and assisting property owners get grants. Additionally, the SAP calls us out by name to develop a coordinated community campaign encouraging removal of invasives, communicate benefits of native plants, and encourage reporting on the green spots website.
    - Erin: What is the green spots website?
    - Linda: Green spots is a program by SWEET, a group of stormwater stakeholders, which is meant to educate individuals and allow mapping of these gardens. It hasn't been used much.
    - Lindsey: West Lafayette and their Go Greener commission has a lawn of the month program, and it has to be an all native yard.
    - Chris: That might be something that the biodiversity working group could take on too.
  - o Nick: On behalf of David I will add the goal of 1/2 of all urban lots converted into gardens which can sell produce.
  - o Voting occurred, with 1<sup>st</sup> place going to the green infrastructure project, 2<sup>nd</sup> place to writing regular editorials in the Herald Times, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place to the water capstone project.
  - o Nick: Can say that this list is one that we can be proud of. Realistically if you are looking at 2019, the green infrastructure project would be very heavy spring, the water capstone would be very heavy fall and then the editorials in Herald Times would be all year round.
8. Commissioner announcements
- Zoe: I have accepted a job for the GAO office in DC starting in July.
  - Kate: No announcements.
  - Lindsey: There's an event on February 26<sup>th</sup> hosted by EcoLogic focusing on ecologic restoration.
  - Chris: No announcements.
  - Erin: No announcements.
  - Andrea: There is a great documentary published on PBS by the Indianapolis affiliate. I'm in it, they featured my organization. Tells about the great environmental initiatives going on around the state. Hosted by former Indiana First Lady Judy O'Bannon.
  - Ryan: I have started a new position as the MPO transportation planner with the City of Bloomington. There is now an opening for an Environmental Health Specialist at the County.
  - Matt: No announcements.
  - Mike: No announcements.
  - Erica: Just a thanks to Nick for being our fearless leader.
  - Nick: As my last commissioner announcement, I want to send out a sincere thank you to all of you. I feel elated with how this commission is right now, not only from the breadth of experience but from diversity of thought the current membership possesses. I can't

wait to continue to support environmental regulations through my role on the Plan Commission and the BZA.

9. Adjournment

- Adjourned 9:05pm

Next EC meeting

A. Environmental Commission: 21 February, 7:00 p.m., McCloskey Room, City

Hall