



**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 February 2019, 7:00 PM  
City Hall—McCloskey Room 245, 401 North Morton Street

1. Call to order and quorum confirmation
  - Present: Mike Litwin, Andrea Webb, Matt Caldie, Andrew Guenther (Chair), Dave Parkhurst, Don Eggers, Ryan Clemens, Lindsey Hummel, Zoe Need, Chris Erickson, Kate Corcoran (SPEA Fellow), Linda Thompson (Liaison), Erin Hatch (Intern)
  - Absent: Erica Walker
2. Introductions
  - Don Eggert: Former coal geologist and then worked in urban seismic hazards. Currently track international media for science and public policy.
3. Approval of minutes
  - Ryan moved to approve January minutes, Zoe seconded, Andrew and Dave abstained. Vote to approve minutes: approve 8, abstain 2. January Minutes approved.
4. Public comment: Limit 5 minutes per person
  - No public comment.
5. Presentations:  
Kelsey Thetonia, MS4 Program Coordinator, CBU. Green Infrastructure Grant (15 min)
  - Kelsey: The City of Bloomington Utilities is currently in a draft stage of their new green infrastructure grants program. Recently started as MS4 coordinator in January, previously working at IDEM with non-point source grant administration. Working on this mini-grants program through the CBU, which would provide funds to private land owners for projects that the city doesn't cover. Have 35k for the program this year, which will primarily go to single family residential properties. Since this is the first year of the program, unsure of what to expect and funds will probably go pretty quickly. These grants would go to fund projects addressing drainage or erosion issues that are outside of the City's purview. The projects can also be multiple homeowners that agree to work together on a project, such as a project addressing a shared drainage ditch. The timeline for this program is pretty condensed this year, and we want projects awarded by early summer. Hope to have a public information meeting on March 18<sup>th</sup> with applications due May 1<sup>st</sup> and projects awarded June 10<sup>th</sup>. Those who are awarded funds have 12 months to complete their projects. Project examples include addressing drainage issue, significant erosion, construction of rain gardens, maintenance of

detention ponds, etc. This year just administering the program in-house, and may develop a full program as years progress. This program will have a review committee, but members have not been selected yet. In awarding funds, consideration of projects include location of projects, proximity to waterways, impact on water quality, and other additional factors. We hope to have a press release out soon regarding this new program.

- o Dave: Last year I participated in the master gardeners' class which worked with Childs Elementary to create rain gardens. To advertise this program, it may be good to have some publicity in the Herald Times to show that a large scale project has been done already and this could be implemented in individuals' backyards.
- o Kelsey: We hope to get more rain gardens, as they are a good feature.
- o Eric: Are these grants 100% funding, or is there a match?
- o Kelsey: Currently we are leaving cost share design open, based on who is applying to it this year. We haven't put a minimum or maximum amount for cost sharing. We want to spend all the money we have in this first year.
- o Mike: I assume that people who apply for hard armoring their ditch won't get these grant funds.
- o Kelsey: If there is a ditch issue that needs to be fixed and if you can demonstrate that there are drainage or erosion issues it wouldn't be out of the question. If they can convert a drainage ditch to a vegetative swale the project proposal would rank higher.
- o Andrew: If you are looking for people to serve on the review committee, we would be a great resource to help with that.

Citizen's Climate Lobby (CCL), Richard Durisen & David Mann (30 Min)

- Richard Durisen and David Mann
  - o Richard: I am a retired professor of astronomy from Indiana University. I became involved with this group as I thought that this plan had a political chance and scale to address the problem of climate change. CCL was founded in 2007, and now there are >100,000 members globally with most chapters in the U.S. and Canada. The efforts to have a carbon tax policy in Canada is largely due to the activity of CCL. We have 6 CCL chapters in Indiana, with the goal to have a chapter in every district in Indiana. We have a carbon tax/fee policy called the "carbon fee and dividend legislation". We have hope that this policy could be implemented in a fairly republican dominated government, as this policy is revenue neutral and based on free market economics. As a group, CCL does outreach, endorsements, media, conduct tabling, and lobby members of congress. We work to get people to write and call into offices.
  - o David: I felt like the carbon fee and dividend policy seemed like a big enough effort to have an effect for what is needed to impact climate change. Impressed with the progress we have made nationally and within the state of Indiana. We have spoken to the last 6 years worth of senators and congress members. When we are presenting the program to members of congress or legislative aides, we like to show this is a moderate and mainstream policy. The policy has something to appeal to both conservative and liberal minds. Our goal is to build long term relationships with members of Congress and to build a long lasting bipartisan and legislative solution. As citizen lobbyists, we feel that if we are persistent and consistent we can help legislator see the worth of the policy.

- o Carbon Fee and Dividend (CFD) Policy
  - David: This policy is based on placing a price on carbon, this price starts at \$15 per ton of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. This price would go up annually \$10 per ton until emissions reach 10% of 1990 emissions level. This fee would be levied at the point of extraction (e.g. mine, etc.). The associated dividend would be returned to households every month in the form of a check. That monthly check would show the public program is being implemented as designed. There are border adjustments included, so that if companies are dealing with foreign governments without comparable programs they would receive credits so they wouldn't be disadvantaged. Additionally, there would be tariffs on imports from countries with out similar carbon pricing. This is a revenue neutral and market based policy. Proposing regulatory policies tend to be politically unsafe, and are often rejected by the party who didn't introduce the legislation. This policy has progressive features such as the dividend, effective mitigation of climate catastrophe, and social justice. The dividend is meant to protect households from increased costs of highly carbonized products. This policy also has conservative features.
  - Richard: There was a letter recently in the Wall Street Journal signed by around 3,300 economists supporting a carbon tax. CCL has talked to a tax economists and there is a strong consensus that a carbon tax of some sort is the way to go to address climate change. I thought I would never see the day that a bill would be introduced with our policy in it. However, a bill was introduced called HR 763: The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act. In this bill the dividend is returned to people on a per capita basis rather than a household basis, and everyone gets the same amount of money. The dividend goes to all citizens and legal residents of the U.S., with the dividends starting before the fees. Currently, there is only one republican that that has cosponsored the bill. Does include some regulatory roll back, excluding agricultural and military industries. This version has emission reduction targets and provisions for review of how well it is working. It has enforcement clauses to raise the rate of fees if the targets are not met. The emission reductions are not as strong as IPCC wants for avoiding a 2 degree raise, but not bad. Reductions targets would be 10% of 2016 levels by 2050 and 50% of 2016 levels by 2035. Commissioned a study of the CFD policy by the Regional Economic Models Inc. (REMI). This 2014 REMI Report found the policy would boost the economy slightly, and the bottom 2/3 of income bracket would benefit. Another proposal for a similar carbon dividend policy was modeled by the Energy Modeling Forum 32 and would get CO<sub>2</sub> reduction of >50% in 20 years, since more aggressive than the original CFD CCL policy. None of these economic models include money saved by mitigating climate change. There was a 2018 bipartisan house climate solutions caucus, which has not been reconvened yet. Previous conservative carbon tax initiatives have been pushed, which wanted to have a group for people with conservative political views. Many states, cities, and municipalities have

been endorsing carbon taxes as a solution. Bloomington was the 33<sup>rd</sup> city to endorse a carbon fee and dividend.

- Richard: In regard to the Green New Deal, the CCL has no official position on the resolution but welcomes all large scale comprehensive approaches to mitigate climate change. This is a nonbinding resolution, so presents a vision for what we should be doing. This is not a free market and/or revenue neutral oriented proposal. This resolution doesn't talk about carbon pricing at all, but would suggest a lot of government intervention.
- Dave: The five levers for building political will are lobbying and conferences, media, grassroots, grass-tops, and chapter development. Our goal is to visit every member of congress or their staff. Richard is a liaison to Trey Hollingsworth. We are seeking support and endorsements, and are asking for the EC to support the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019.
  - Andrea: Is there an estimate on costs to residents for this district as a result of our energy grid makeup?
    - o Richard: There is tool to plug in household and income level that will compute your monthly dividend. That was from an impact study done by CCL, it just looked at impact in the first year of implementation and is broken down at the congressional district level. So, it can give you numbers for the 9<sup>th</sup> district. That was a one year one shot look, and not super dynamic. So it doesn't take into account how people react to the implementation of the carbon fee in terms of habit changes and doesn't include reaction of the market to increasing fees on fossil fuels.
  - Don: Looking at Australia, it has been interesting to see how the private sector has responded to the high electric cost. How will a more rapid change in the market effect carbon taxation?
    - o Richard: Some people are using it as an excuse to not to do more. Yes, it is true that renewables are turning out more favorable, but that is a limited part of the economy and we have to address carbon emissions across the economy. The whole point of the carbon tax is to correct the market and drive a shift away from fossil fuel usage.
  - Andrew: What would the projected tariffs be?
    - o Richard: The tariffs are meant to account for the difference between U.S. prices of fossil fuel based products based on emissions they produce and whether the country of origin has any comparable fees. I recommend that you read the section of the Energy Innovation Act on tariffs.

#### 6. Reports from TC, MoCo EC, BCOS, & ERAC

- Zoe, Tree Commission (TC): The commission met on Wednesday. The main items discussed were the tree inventory and there were individuals from Davey who came to discuss it. Inventorying 14,000 trees and planting sites.

Right now 3,800 planting sites have been identified, but Lee thinks that number will be more. Davey will be out in the neighborhoods for the next coupled of months. Lee is hoping to do a public presentation in August included in the in state of city address. Also doing a canopy assessment with LIDAR to be completed in June, but Lee thinks that will take longer based on data collection. There will be an Arbor Day event open to public May 4<sup>th</sup> at the farmers market. Also there are various tree removals occurring across Bloomington, such as Bradford pears. Lee talked about his progress doing tree order for this year. I don't have those numbers or species currently, but can get those.

- o Andrew: When is Lee Huss leaving?
- o Zoe: In October.
- Andrew, Monroe County Environmental Commission (MoCo EC): The commission was planning on moving their green savings fund into the Sophia Travis Fund. However, the county council cancelled that action since the fund is not meant to deal with climate change. They are looking at restructuring that with MoCo EC. MoCo EC had their elections.
- Erin, Bloomington Commission on Sustainability (BCOS): BCOS co-sponsored a viewing of "Wasted!: The Story of Food Waste" at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater. Currently reviewing action items assigned to BCOS as part of the Sustainability Action Plan (SAP). The City is still in the process of filling the position of Value Chain Coordinator funded by a grant with Purdue. The City through the Economic and Sustainability Department is looking to conduct a waste characterization study of a sample neighborhood with Public Works. Will conduct a community Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory this summer with help from an extern with IU Sustainability Development program that will be part of an ICLEI resilience cohort.
- Dave, Environmental Resources Advisory Council (ERAC): Sent last meeting's minutes. Discussed plans on making a trail that goes all the way around Griffy Lake, however there are places that get pretty steep and may need stairs or go onto private property. Talked about the deer cull at Griffy Lake. Instead of using a sharpshooter program with White Buffalo like in the past, they will be running a community hunting program and attracting local hunters. This program will include training and oversight by a member of the White Buffalo staff. Wapehani Dam has now been removed completely. Talked about Switchyard Park progress, which is going well.
- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO): The EC wants a representative at the MPO Citizen's Advisory Council (CAC). Andrew will be attending the MPO CAC started next week, anyone else is welcome as well. After three consecutive months of attendance, members gain voting privileges.

## 7. Discussion from Environmental Commission working groups A Cycle

### A Cycle

#### A. ECPC/Planning Commission

- Two projects that I will skip over since there has been no progress or changes since we last discussed them. These projects are the Morton North development and Curry Urban properties on Pete Ellis Drive.
- IU Credit Union:
  - o Since we last looked at this project, the proposal has simply added more parking. The ECPC decided that there is nothing more to talk about in regard to this project. Their landscape plan exceeds the number of plants required, and they are not asking for anything out of the ordinary.

- Eric: How do these folks come up with estimates of parking needs?
  - Linda: They are required to tell the Planning Department how many employees per shift, then in the UDO there are different categories based on number of employees and square feet which determine the number of parking spaces.
  - David: This is just an office building, not where people will go to conduct bank activities, so there is additionally customer parking.
- New proposed project located on McIntire Dr. off of Tapp Rd., where there are a lot of medical buildings. Property is located at the back of the lot, at the bottom of a slope. A construction company is the business requesting the project, and they want to locate their offices and storage place there. The property is part of an existing PUD, so much of the property details have been hashed out previously. There is already a riparian buffer and wooded conservation area set aside. Right now don't have too many details, and no initial red flags. However, want to make sure that there will not be a bunch of outdoor storage, but looks like they have a covered garage and place to bring in and park construction vehicles. Likely, we will talk about green building elements.
  - o Dave: Where is this from a big three story medical building?
  - o Linda: This is right next door.
- We previously talked about this project. Sherwin Williams is going to have a small paint shop on west side right behind Lowe's. Since we talked about case before, they have moved the building to the other ends of the lot. In the PUD Lowe's was given authority to approve other businesses coming into the PUD, since they were the first business to be established in the PUD.
- Andrew: In regard to the MCCSC project, they adopted a lot of green practices before we went to discuss them. They are leaving the proposed outdoor green area for the teachers to design. Bell Tire was approved with most of our positions included, other than the setback for parking for which they received a waiver. This was due to proposed placement of trees that will be hide the parking/loading area.
  - o Linda: They had shown a lot of vegetation along this driveway next to building initially, whose purpose was for a loading truck. However, I was told they will just put in a bare minimum that will be required.

B. Waste/Hazards

- No updates.

C. Water

- Mike: No meetings recently. However, I attended the Friends of Lake Monroe (FOLM) meeting on January 4<sup>th</sup>. New meeting schedule will be the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of every month. IDEM would like to fund their proposed 319 grant, but they are waiting on EPA approval. They need a complete bathymetric study of the lake since the last one is from when the lake was originally built. Still working on the water fund project, on the steering committee they discussed various funding options. They presented an update of water quality of the lake. They found elevated levels of copper in tail waters. Right now they have a SPEA capstone doing an economic valuation of the lake.
  - o Linda: Where would the copper come from?
    - Mike: Sometimes used on paint on boats and copper sulfide as well.

- o Don: How much sediment is accumulating in the lake?
- o Mike: A couple years ago they had to do a dredging study.

B Cycle

~~A. Outreach~~

~~B. ECPC/Planning Commission~~

~~C. Biodiversity~~



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8. Old business

A. Eco Heroes update

- Erin: We have emailed teachers and organizations to solicit submissions for the contest. We send out letters to local businesses to solicit donations. We have received \$490 in value of donations so far.

B. UDO

- Linda: The Consolidated Draft of the UDO comes out in early March. Staff received two weeks to review the consolidated draft, this is the entire UDO rather than just modules. Right now just short of 500 pages, but the actual version will be less as this draft also includes notes on the changes. Some elements, like the landscape plant list, will be in a guidance document rather than the UDO itself. They just announced meeting dates for public. Which are during the first part of March.
  - o Mike: Stakeholder and public meetings are March 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. I am going in Dedaimia's place as part of the steering committee.
  - o Eric: We had previously discussed incentives for green buildings, was wondering if we have looked at if those have actually offset costs. And why they had not been taken up.
  - o Linda: Not that I know of.
  - o Dave: Just for the record in regard to the Monroe County UDO update process, there was a discussion on Tuesday night, mostly revolving around parking.
  - o Linda: They don't have their whole UDO done, correct?
  - o Dave: They do not, this was just about the chapter regarding zoning.
- Matt: Wanted to bring back up moving of meeting dates. Previously discussed moving the meetings to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday or 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month at 6pm.
  - o Andrea moved to change the EC meeting times, Matt seconded. Unanimous voice vote yes. Approved pending room availability for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month at 6pm.

9. New business

A. 2019 priority project, Green Infrastructure specific project discussion

- Linda: I want to remind you of what Kelsey discussed with CBU green infrastructure mini-grants program that city wants to start administering this year. Also, there is a larger grant that IU is attempting to get. However, we really need to concentrate on the UDO before we jump in on a new project.
- Mike: Maybe we should try to define what kind of green infrastructure projects we are talking about. Whether it could be counter parts to grey infrastructure or something bigger like corridors to wildlife or biodiversity.
- Linda: The BHCP was always meant to have a part two. The first part was the plan to identify areas that had the best fit of habitat connectivity. One of the thing that was suggested was make an overlay area but the UDO consultant wasn't found of that



- Ryan: What didn't consultant like about that?
- Linda: They thought that it would be better to apply rules to the entire city rather than an overlay.
- Ryan: Did they offer suggestions of alternatives?
- Linda: No, we could do something as simple as an enforcement inventory. Erin and Stephen Feely over the summer worked on updating a tracking document of conditions that come along with development approval, and many of those have environmental features to them. Many of the developers never end up actually installing these conditions. An example is that many detention basins were meant to be planted. Now that Erin has a spreadsheet, we can put boots to the ground and see if they actually have followed these conditions.
- Erin: Does the EC have enforcement power for if they haven't?
- Linda: The EC doesn't but the Planning department does.
- Erin: Is there a timeline for how long those conditions stay enforceable?
- Linda: I think into perpetuity.
- Andrew: Is that true of the new draft?
- Linda: I'm not sure, it may have been taken out.
- Matt: The consolidated draft will be available the week of March 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Zoe: Are we anticipating needing separate meetings outside of general meeting for this.
- Andrew: Yes, probably. Propose meeting the week of March 18<sup>th</sup>, with stakeholder meetings on the 21<sup>st</sup>.
- Linda: The stakeholder meetings in the past have been not a discussion but a presentation of what changes the consultants have made.
- Andrew: Then I propose meeting the week of March 25<sup>th</sup>, which gives us 2-3 weeks. Zoe send out a doodle poll to determine times to meet outside of the EC meeting.

#### B. Stormwater fee increase & GI fund discussion

- Andrew: The city has nearly doubled the stormwater fee, in order to do some projects around 3<sup>rd</sup> and Lincoln. These projects didn't discuss any green infrastructure repairs, but this would be used to fund the green infrastructure mini-grant fund. The fee would be up to \$5.70 for a single family per month and a proportional increase for commercial and institutional properties based on impervious surface.

#### 10. Commissioner announcements

- Andrea: The City of Bloomington has been selected to participate in the ERI's resilience cohort to do a community wide GHG inventory.
- Dave: Who can educate me to what extent that methane per pound is potent as a GHG, in the U.S. what is the relative proportion of methane per year to CO2 per year?
  - o Lindsey: Methane has a quicker breakdown time but higher GHG potential.
  - o Don: It's a real wild card, as there are fears that the melting of the tundra will release both CO2 and methane. However, with underground mining and coal mining declining, the emissions will decline, but fracking natural gas production leakage is increasing. A large source of methane is landfills, so some now have flares or biogas collectors.
  - o Dave: Don't think CCL has any attempt to address methane.
- Lindsey: The Transportation Plan failed to pass City Council, so they are in the amendment phase and the Council is going to come out with the amendment schedule soon. This is one of the more important plans in terms of reducing GHGs. Bloomington announced its year of food, and is looking at how Bloomington can make food more accessible and equitable to the city.
- Andrew: The Convention Center just passed allotment of fees to do an environmental assessment. They want to make the center more open to the public, as they getting less conventions than anticipated. In the Waterman neighborhood, just off of west 17<sup>th</sup> is JB

Salvage which is zoned residential. An IUPUI professor tested soil in the neighborhood and the soil came back with high levels of chromium, zinc, lead, and more. CBU is going to look into it and IDEM is looking into it. Hopefully this is going to get a lot more attention.

- o Linda: Did they say because it was zoned residential they didn't have to monitor?
- o Andrew: Vic Kelson and members of the neighborhood had this discussion. Since JB got zoned residential they don't need to do regular testing.
- o Andrea: Sounds like a letter to the editor.
- o Linda: Just because you are zoned residential doesn't mean you are exempt from hazardous waste rules. IDEM has required them to monitor and they have monitored the property multiple times. I think that was water testing, not soil testing. They haven't done some of the monitoring they are supposed to. IDEM is not doing anything about it. Had a meeting with a city attorney about this, as a similar issue has come up before. Since the City has no rules on hazardous waste emissions, it's left up to IDEM. It was the EPA's rule and has given IDEM the authority in Indiana to regular the Clean Water Act. We don't have any authority and not sure where to look in our state code on whether a municipality has authority or not to enforce something like hazardous waste.
  - Eric: Title 13 in Indiana Code, it then is probably going to fall back on the Home Rule if it is not covered.
  - Dave: 10-15 years ago John Hamilton was head of IDEM so maybe go to him.
  - Mike: Sometimes they don't do anything until the site is disturbed or they are going to change the site.
  - Don: Besides water testing, there would be particulate testing needed as well.
  - Eric: This would be more under RCRA as it is what they are storing.
  - Zoe: There is a WFHB article on this with an IDEM memo included.
  - Linda: One of the neighbors has called several times about it.
  - Andrew: The neighborhood members were able to discuss the issue because they have a culvert which is clogged with silt. So they brought it up under commentary about the stormwater fee.

#### 11. Adjournment

- Dave moved to adjourn, Zoe seconded. Unanimous voice vote yes. Meeting adjourned.

Next EC meeting, 21 March, 7:00 p.m., McCloskey Room, City Hall