



**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 October 2019, 6:00 PM
City Hall—Hooker Conference Room 245, North Morton Street

1. Call to order and quorum confirmation
2. Introductions
 - Present: Andrew Guenther, Mike Litwin, Chris Ericson, Lindsey Hummel, Matt Caldie, David Parkhurst, Kate Corcoran (SPEA fellow), Linda Thompson (liaison), Suzannah Evans Comfort, Jesus Rivera-Nasser (intern), Andrea Webster Kristina Lindborg, representing the League of Women Voters of Bloomington-Monroe County
 - Absent: Erica Walker, Ryan Clemens, Don Eggert, Angel Nathan (new commissioner)
 - Jesus Rivera-Nasser: new EC intern, SPEA student getting MPA in Policy Analysis, currently working in Planning and Transportation on Bike Ped.
3. Approval of minutes
 - Chris moved to approve September minutes, Mike seconded. Unanimous voice vote in favor of approving September minutes. Minutes approved.
4. Public comment: Limit 5 minutes per person
 - None
5. Reports from TC, MoCo EC, BCOS, ERAC, & MPO-CAC
 - TC: Lindsey: Lindsey sent out TC minutes in an email to commissioners. A second round of the advertisement for the Urban Forester position was sent out and got many responses, and the City will schedule interviews with 10 candidates. TC also discussed updating the Tree Care Manual and creating a 5 year plan for the city's urban forest. Linda: I looked through the Davey tree report for an inventory that included number of trees by species but didn't find it and it would be useful for me when reviewing landscape plans - where do we find this? Lindsey will follow up.
 - MoCo: Andrew: Did not attend but has report from chair. MoCo is monitoring the Houston South logging project on 10,000 acres on Lake Monroe watershed. Want to know how much this will impact municipal watershed. Are also interested in public comments and FOIA for the decision to choose that area within the Hoosier National Forest.
 - BCOS: BCOS representative Don absent from meeting, no report.
 - ERAC: David: Long meeting, I forwarded everyone the minutes and a summary of the meeting you can refer to to see what ERAC has been doing.

- MPO-CAC: Ryan absent from meeting to give updates. Andrew reports they are still working on traffic patterns regarding the hospital site.

6. Discussion from Environmental Commission working groups: A Cycle

A Cycle

A. ECPC/Planning Commission

- One new case called Bailey Towers. Two apartment buildings going in on 11th and corners of Walnut & College, where Amethyst house is located and Delilah's was previously located. Don't know where Amethyst house will be relocating to. Apartments will be two C-shaped buildings with parking in the middle of the C so you cannot see parking from the street. People will enter the alley to access parking. One building will have 38 beds the other will have 34 beds. Development is seeking level one green incentives. Planning a green roof on part of both buildings with rainwater harvesting. Say they will have a rain garden as well, but it's not on the plans yet and space for this seems limited. This development is being planned by Elliot Lewis, who also developed the apartments on Morton outside City Hall. Will be seeking a height variance and an architectural variance. Will have 36 parking spaces. Small landscape plan due to lack of space. Will need to repave alley behind the building. Linda would like to recommend they build a green alley, possibly to include a pervious surface and green infrastructure designed for water infiltration. Parking will be impervious surface. Will provide recycling.
- We don't know when 4th Street garage is moving forward.

B. Waste/Hazards: none

C. Water: none

B Cycle

~~A. Outreach~~

~~B. ECPC/Planning Commission~~

~~C. Biodiversity~~

7. Old business

A. HT column

- Andrew sent out his column after review from Linda and a shift of focus to PUDs and impervious surfaces in floodplains. Andrew is incorporating email comments now.
- Andrea: Were you meaning to say there should not be roads allowed in the floodplain and call that out in the article?
- Andrew: I think the bar should be higher than roads "as needed for connectivity".
- Andrea: Pinpointing the environmental ramifications of just more roads in floodplains does not seem like the biggest environmental issue we could be talking about. My institute is preparing to release research finding that 73% of land in City of Bloomington floodplains is already developed (which equates to 465 acres). This research comes from the Hoosier Resilience Index (working with ERI).
- Linda: Have had disagreements with how floodplains should be protected in the UDO and how some staff promote limited development in floodplains. The DNR allows it, but our rule has been no development in the floodplain. This would be helpful information for me to have when you release it.
- Andrea: Currently on average Bloomington receives 19 storms that are 2 inches or greater per decade. We are likely to get more. Predicted by 2050 to be between 22-24 per decade. At this level flooding becomes a serious issue.

- Kate: Are we still going to submit anything in writing to HT about the density issue?
- Andrew: Still being discussed, and thinking it is best to leave the article as is covering a few issues now and discussing density in a separate article rather than trying to cram too many topics into one article.
- Lindsey: The UDO is being discussed and changed in chunks, and amendments won't be addressed until November. City Council has 90 days from receiving this UDO version to approve it. Therefore I think it would be best to get our articles out sooner rather than later.
- Suzannah: The issues chosen for discussion in the article - how likely are these amendments to be passed/accepted?
- Andrew: Floodplains and PUDs were two of the items that we were especially concerned would not be changed and we wanted to draw public attention to them.
- Savannah: My recommendation is to pump up the volume of it, draw more citizen attention upfront, and help citizens draw the connection between floodplains, flooding, and what is at stake for getting it right in the UDO now.
- Andrew: Linda, how do we go about us approving this column?
- Linda: We resend it out and with the changes, and vote to approve as soon as we can.

B. UDO Adoption Draft

- Linda: EC had 90 something recommendations. PT staff is now trying to write an omnibus amendment for all of our amendments. Linda went through the UDO and made the changes. Now she needs to talk to us about them to clarify what our amendments were and what the language should be. Formatting while editing has frustrated the process.
- We intended to meet on Saturday at 10am, but we will cancel this and put out another poll to set up a meeting for Sunday or Monday or Tuesday of next week, in the early evening. It is still best for us to have those changes sooner rather than later.
- Kate will resend the Adoption Draft comments and letter that we made. Everyone should familiarize themselves with these comments BEFORE the Monday or Tuesday meeting, so we can dive right in to putting our edits into the UDO when we meet. Kate will also send the link to this UDO draft.
- The most updated UDO version is the [September 2019 UDO Common Council Adoption Draft](#), which you can find by googling Bloomington UDO updates. This version incorporated some PC comments/amendments to the Adoption draft.

8. New business

A. Officer Election Discussion

- Usually done in December. In November Andrew will put together the three person nominating committee. If you want to run for an officer position, be thinking about that, and you will let the committee know later on. Elections are by secret ballot unless you are running unopposed.

9. Commissioner announcements

- Lindsey: The Bloomington 2018 [GHG Inventory](#) was released on Tuesday and is available on the sustainability offices website. They are now hoping to do a retroactive inventory for 2005 or 2011 with standardized methodology.
- Andrew: A friend of mine and reporter Dave Askins wrote an article published on [Bsquarebeacon.com](#) that breaks down the GHG Inventory report and compares it to past reports.
- Andrea: The community questions after the presentation were interesting.

Focused on asking why the city was not trying to reduce car transportation and parking in the city.

- Matt: The Sycamore Land Trust purchased 33 acres of hardwood forest to preserve forever in Monroe County.
- Mike: I have two comments and a question. On HT articles, are we still doing those as guest editorials or as regular monthly articles? How do we know they will run monthly?
Andrew: It takes a week to a week and a half for them to run. We are still planning to do monthly articles as guest columns each time. I believe Erica volunteered to do November.
Andrea: Erica volunteered to do October and I volunteered to do November, but we can push this back a month if need be.
Mike: Next City Council meeting is on the 22nd of this month and will focus on Chapter 3 of the UDO, approved uses.
Mike: Attended FLM meeting this month. Discussed the watershed grant and contributions in-kind received for watershed management and study. They have an advertisement out now for a watershed project coordinator. Will have a stakeholders meeting Nov 14th sponsored by the League of Women Voters at the Methodist Church.
- Linda: Has been consumed with UDO. Was in Cincinnati last week for an interesting conference about protecting pollinators in urban environments.
- Andrew: Had a neighbor who shared information with him about a workshop on Nov 2nd on green infrastructure and grants for places of worship. He will email out information for this to all EC members.

10. Adjournment at 7:04 pm.

Next EC meeting, 21 November 6:00 p.m., Hooker Room, City Hall