



**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

16 January 2020, 6:00 PM
McCloskey Conference Room, Showers City Hall

1. Call to order and quorum confirmation
2. Introductions
 - Present: Andrew Guenther, Mike Litwin, Chris Ericson, Matt Caldie, David Parkhurst, Don Eggert, Ryan Clemens, Linda Thompson (liaison), Jesus Rivera (EC intern), Andrea Webster, Suzannah Evans Comfort, Kate Corcoran (SPEA Fellow), Jacob Selgestad (Planning and Transportation intern)
Kristina Lindborg, representing the League of Women Voters of Bloomington-Monroe County
 - Absent: Angel Nathan, Erica Walker, Lindsey Hummel
3. Approval of minutes
 - Chris moved to approve December minutes, Don seconded. Unanimous voice vote in favor of approving December minutes. Minutes approved.
4. Public comment: Limit 5 minutes per person
 - None
5. Reports from TC, MoCo EC, BCOS, ERAC, MPO-CAC, & FOLM
 - TC: Dave: Erin Hatch, the new city forester, came to TC meeting. TC also talked about what happens with trees during construction. Dave will send them one of our memos about how trees should be handled so they can see what EC does.
 - MOCO EC: Andrew: Nothing new to add, but interested in following climate change tax proposed by the city.
 - BCOS: Don: Interesting meeting. Did not have quorum so could not vote on officers and other business. Dave Rollo attended and had comments about whether city should be on curbside compost pickup or encouraging residential composting support. Discussion of cooperation and outreach. At the end, Dave discussed proposed tax and funding the programs to fight climate change.
 - ERAC: Dave: meet bimonthly so no meeting has happened.
 - MPO: Ryan: There was a December recess and there was no meeting.
 - FOLM: Dave: Has just been appointed to steering committee for the 3 year grant FOLM has just gotten to study the lake. First meeting was cancelled due to rain, so they are meeting again next Monday. Maggie Sullivan is head of FOLM research group.

6. Discussion from Environmental Commission working groups: B Cycle

A Cycle

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

B Cycle

- A. Outreach
- B. ECPC/Planning Commission

Motel 6 site on North Walnut, a site we have looked at before. The zoning has been changed to a PUD, and it now goes to PC for site plan review. 7 stories tall, 745 beds, commercial on first floor as well as amenities and administrative offices. 415 parking spaces for residents. Will be paying for their own bus route. Route will be 5 miles long and will run every half hour. Will pay operational costs for 3 years with Bloomington Transit running the service. Development is for student housing specifically. Also paying for new sidewalk and street trees on part of Walnut and 19th street. Plan to have a small area of roof be green roof with solar panels that produce 20kWh. Plan to build according to Green Building Standards. Will have a pool on the roof as well. Courtyards. With this building, impervious surface coverage of the lot will be reduced from what is there now. ECPC will meet to talk about it next week.

Andrea: Should also have bus options for Saturday and Sunday as well

C. Biodiversity

Mike: I suggest adding stormwater to Biodiversity group, and myself would prefer to be in the Biodiversity group.

Andrea: we should think about doing a Column committee or working group to handle the monthly HT column. This could also be part of outreach.

7. Old business

A. 50th Anniversary of Earth Day & Eco Heroes topic

- April 23rd is Earth Day. Usually we have Eco Heroes Saturday before or after. This year, the city and library are partnering to celebrate the Saturday before Earth Day at Switchyard Park. Last month, we talked about having Eco Heroes in conjunction with the city event. For Eco Heroes we have an audience of up to 100 people so we don't want to be outside in the amphitheater at the city event - instead we will likely move to city hall. The Switchyard Park event will be from 1pm-9pm. Our event is usually at 10am. What time should we do our event, and where?
- Andrea: what about amphitheater, with city hall as a rain location?
- Linda: concern that it might be too confusing
- Mike: will both on the same day cost us some audience since it will take up their morning AND afternoon?
- Andrew: 1pm start time for the city event follows the farmers market. Last year having the ceremony at 10am meant people came from the farmers market to see Eco Heroes as well.
- Suzannah: if event is for winners and families then there is no need to accommodate passersbys
- Andrea: nice to have event during farmers market because it seems both complement each other in celebrating earth day
- Suzannah: having event in council chambers might be nice experience for kids.
- Don: we should have CO₂ data graph and temperatures on display
- **Discussion of the EH 2020 theme:**
- Ryan: Mission: Lower Emissions
- Linda: Join the Movement
- Suzannah: A theme that incorporates time and looking forward
- Discussion about whether the theme of emissions would be too difficult for younger children to understand
- Andrea moved to approve theme for Eco Heroes 2020 be "Mission, Lower Emissions", Dave seconded. Vote in favor by raise of hands.

- Kristina Lindborg: As a teacher of young children for many years, I can tell you that the children will be able to understand what emissions are.
- Andrea moved to have EH at city hall at 10am, Ryan seconded. Unanimous voice vote in favor.

B. Elections

- This year, we don't know who will be on the commission, and usually we would know by now.
- Dave: I propose we vote for probable members, and if they don't get reappointed then we redo the vote.
- Slate Committee: as the slate committee failed to get nominations, Mike will be vice chair and Dave will be secretary and treasurer again, and we keep Andrew as the chair if he is willing.
- Andrew: Happy to serve as chair again if he is reappointed.
- Mike moved to approve the Slate of Mike as vice chair, Dave as secretary and treasurer, and Andrew as chair. Chris seconded. Unanimous voice vote in favor of approving slate committee nominations. Nominations approved.
- Andrew will keep us updated on any reappointment developments as they come through.

8. New business

A. Bucket list discussion

“What would you like to see happen in Bloomington before you die?”

Last year: UDO and Green Infrastructure were chosen as our bucket list items, with the idea of HT articles also accepted

2020 Ideas:

- Andrew: Proposed climate change tax likely going to pass and happen. There is a green ribbon commission that council wants to form to help allocate money collected from the carbon tax to various programs and ideas related to environmental programs and sustainability. Andrew would like to see someone from EC on that commission to contribute to decisions and represent the EC.
- ACTION ITEM - Don and Suzannah still need EC handbooks
- Don: Have Bloomington be model city for the environment, have a city that is truly environmentally doing its part. Through increased outreach and community engagement.
- Andrea: Get Bloomington to be a 2030 district, a designation for cities taking action to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Start by defining an area and get building owners to agree to lower emissions.
- Susannah: Increase public transportation in the city
- Matt: Works at IU in the athletic department and sees a lot of buildings that have really old lighting. This inspired him to propose working with utilities and energy companies to make energy efficiency updates to cut emissions - such as new lighting. These changes would likely save them money on their energy costs. At the University of Iowa, a light updating project like this that was expensive paid for itself in three years in lowered utilities fees. The city got a start last year with GHG emissions inventory from last year.
- Dave: Doing more about climate
- Mike: Green Infrastructure and HT articles are ongoing. Also want to develop outreach material to the public describing ecological services and how they correlate with green infrastructure.
 - o Don: include invasive species
 - o Chris: there are various groups focusing on invasive species, and we would to some extent be reinventing something already in existence
- Chris: Public transit and transportation in general, including parking garages and idling. Continue our Green Infrastructure goal.
- Ryan: second what Chris has mentioned. Wholesale environmental improvement. We have various environmental plans that are not well known, and we don't know how they are used. Would like to see these plans that we have made as a commission sponsored by certain commissioners and council members.

- Jacob: Utilities and lights is a good idea because it pays for itself
- Kate: Work with the youth climate group that has been especially active the last half of 2019, because some of the EC's goals and the youth climate group's goals might overlap, and with the members and momentum they have they could work with us on overlapping goals.
- Jesus: Improving public transit in the city
- Linda: Two ideas: 1: Continuing Green Infrastructure. We've done work but there's still lots to do. 2: City is trying to be certified by LEED as a LEED certified city. EC could take on the Natural Systems and Ecology prerequisites to help Bloomington get that certification. This would include doing the second phase of the connectivity plan.
 - o ACTION ITEM: Dave: can we put report on Green Infrastructure progress/updates on the agenda for next meeting

Final vote on the EC 2020 bucket list items, by tally vote:

- 1. Green Infrastructure**
- 2. Become a 2030 City/ Building energy efficiency improvements**
- 3. Public transit**

9. Commissioner announcements

- General announcement: Meeting day and time will not be changing
- Dave: I have recently purchased an infrared thermometer at Lowes for \$30 to use to point at walls and windows to see what the temperature is. Would like to offer it for anyone to borrow if they would like.
- Ryan: January is national Radon month. Monroe County health department will set up a free radon test for your home if you call and ask for it, or go to their website.
Don: tighter more well insulated homes more likely to have higher radon levels
- Chris: This is my last meeting because my appointment is up. Thank you all, and good luck.

10. Adjournment at 8:20pm

Next EC meeting, 20 February 6:00 p.m., Hooker Room, City Hall