



**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.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION AGENDA

18 February 2021, 6:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting <https://bloomington.zoom.us/j/96827335538?pwd=bUp3Y0VoeUp2VWVk3MkNOM2FzcUFIZz09>
Meeting ID: 968 2733 5538 Passcode: 203526
One tap mobile +19292056099,,96827335538# US (New York)

1. Call to order and quorum confirmation

Feb 18, 2021 6:07PM roll called

Matt Caldie
Don Eggert
Andrew Guenther
Mike Litwin
Dave Parkhurst
Scott Shackelford
Dedaimia Whitney
Meredith Dickerson

Quorum Confirmed

2. Introductions

Matt: Commissioner for 4 years, concerned citizens, hasn't missed a meeting

Don: Retired environmental geologist, SPEA connection in Public Administration, 3rd year on commission

Andrew: Chair, been on the commission since 2018, previously served on the Monroe County Environmental commission, graduate of SPEA with a degree in public affairs

Mike: Retired biologist from the US fish and Wildlife service, has been on the commission for a long time

Dave: undergraduate degree in applied math, graduate degree in physiological plant ecology, was on the commission in 73 for 14 years when issues were related to PCBs, taught at SPEA

Scott: has a JAD, practiced for a while, PHD in international relations, A lot of work on sustainable development, is working on cyber security now

Dedaimia: Retired English teacher and taught environmental studies from Franklin college, has been on the EC before, and is on the tree commission

Linda: senior environmental planner in the Planning and transportation department, worked for 17 years, is the liaison for the EC, degree in geology

Ben: SPEA fellow, current master's student at IU getting degree in public affairs and environmental science, returned Peace Corps volunteer

3. Approval of minutes

Dave moved we accept the minutes, and they were seconded by Matt.

Matt Caldie Approved

Don Eggert Approved

Andrew Approved

Mike Approved

Dave Approved

Scott Approved

Dedaimia Abstained

Minutes Approved

4. Public comment: Limit 5 minutes per person

No public comment

5. Reports from TC, MoCo EC, BCOS, ERAC, MPO-CAC, FOLM, & MC-IRIS

TC: Chris Neggars wanted some dead trees in his neighborhood taken out. 4 city projects were discussed. One along Jackson Creek, one along High Street, and south of Goat Farm Park. South of Goat Farm Park they are going to put a trail to ride bikes, etc. They will be planting 190 trees south of the park and a new trail along Jackson Creek. Once the trail gets past the park it will be from Shorewood Oaks down to Rhorer rd. Will start on the north side in the spring but might need to wait until next year for the south side. Lots of talk about 4 burr oaks that people didn't want taken out but may need to be. The second project was at Discovery Parkway and they will leave the island trees. The third project is at 17th and Dunn. They are putting a turn lane in. Some trees may need to be removed, but they will be replaced somewhere. The fourth project is at 7th street. A protected bike lane might be built from the B-Line trail to campus. Some trees may need to be removed.

MoCo EC: No information because they did not post any minutes or videos.

BCOS: Didn't have a quorum. Voted on the draft to the city council of the 10-year emissions document draft proposal. No minutes yet.

ERAC: Met February 10th. Talked about CHAP, which is the hunting of deer up at Griffy lake. It's run by a white buffalo employee. They bring in local hunters to lower the high populations of deer. In 2017 white buffalo sharp shooters killed 62 deer, in 2019 they got 26 deer, and in 2020 one got 40 deer. Too many deer eating vegetation. They talked about a trail for a pier that will be built out to the lake at Griffy where people can fish from. There's a loop trail that is 6 miles that is being built that may affect some wetland. Switchyard Park landscaping has received the gold leaf award. The XR app which is a history map of Switchyard Park is something that has been created. People can learn about railroads on the map. A new powerline trail along Duke powerline is being built that would go along Switchyard Park and then west from there. The design is underway. The Goat Farm Park is going to be renamed Rogers Family Park. They will put in toilets and parking. Some prairie area will be lost, we will need to make up for that. Last year

there was a prescribed burn at Griffy Lake. They burned 8 acres on the north side to try to support oak and hickory trees. They will burn again this spring if the weather cooperates.

MPO-CAC: send out brief soon.

Friends of Lake Monroe: Has a two-year grant to study the lake and its watershed. This is to see the problems there and how they might fix them. 20 people on the steering committee. Dave represents the EC there. They are looking at priority areas where phosphorus might be coming in because this can cause algae blooms. A blitz occurred last year where people looked at 140 streams. The blitz will occur again April 2nd. They are doing some source sampling of E. coli to try and find out if its coming from humans or something else. Large watershed for the size of the lake. Largest reservoir in the state of Indiana. Is shoreline erosion or toxins being brought in from streams the biggest issue?

MC-Iris: Focused on joint MC-Iris and city effort to remove Purple Winter Creeper. They hope to eradicate it. This year the group of volunteers and Syacamore Knolls Home Owners Association are coming together with parks to remove invasive plants from Southeast Park. The past 5 years have been successful. They are meeting this Saturday to eliminate invasives. They would love to encourage more homeowners to participate.

6. Discussion from Environmental Commission working groups: B Cycle

A Cycle

- A. ECPC/Plan Commission
- B. Waste/Hazards
- C. Water

B Cycle

- ~~A. Outreach~~
- B. ECPC/Plan Commission
- C. Biodiversity

ECPC: No petitions for the March planning commission agenda.

Biodiversity Group: Just re-establish last week. Have not reviewed the Habitat Connectivity Plan project yet. Will review this coming month and vote then.

7. Old business

A. Draft Climate Action Plan discussion

Water/Wastewater

W4 section 4: Rain garden should be used instead of other wordings.

Should mention that best waste can be used for fertilizer for flower gardens

Impervious surface and greenspace should be increased

Goal W4 mitigating flood hazards and impacts: they mention how we need to promote native landscaping and conserve habitat, encourage rain gardens, They don't mention preserving and increasing greenspace in the city. They should include permeable surfaces under goals and mention conserving and increasing greenspace. Bloomington has lost over 2000 acres since 1991. Don't focus enough on greenspace.

How do the goals of the climate action plan stack up against previous plans goals? A question to be asked

Greenspace

In G1-B-1 they should integrate the knowledge of the extensive EC documents produced in the past about pollination and wildlife corridors. Should be referred to in this plan. Don't cite habitat connectivity that has already be done (an issue). Missing key information that can be found in these past documents.

A good place for habitat corridor information is in section G1-B-1.

Lack of discussion of invasive species in this section

Should promote diversity in greenspace and avoid monoculture

In G4 of reduce stormwater and micro heat island impacts, they never mention increasing greenspace. Also only mention increase pervious surface along roads and not development sites.

On introduction page where they talk about impervious surfaces, they should mention that they negatively impact stormwater runoff and the water cycle. Is not mentioned in introduction

Should mention the dangers of impervious surfaces

Under Goal G2 increasing quantity and quality of climate adaptive habitats: they don't mention planting native vegetation on private development and to encourage developers to plant native species. Increase use of no mow areas or low mow areas is a better priority. Also promoting landscaping for absorption practices are more important in this section.

How does Goal 1 connect to the Habitat Connectivity Plan? Should be connected to these past plans.

G3B1 Educational resources should be higher on the priority list then incentives. Priorities out of order

Health and Safety

Doesn't mention any forms of volunteering

Refers to Bloomington as a school or county in this section. Need to change

Climate economy

Business insurance might want to protect economy and jobs

Focus on leveraging existing pathways. New taxes for climate change would be difficult. Less likely to occur. Not a likely way to mitigate climate change.

Ben and Andrew will compile notes and then send to Lauren Travis. A new draft has come out for the climate action plan. Submit as soon as possible.

Vote on the process to approve amendments that Ben and Andrew will reword and send out to Lauren Travis. Andrew entertains a motion, Mike moved it and it was seconded by Matt

Matt Caldie Approved

Meredith Approved

Don Eggert Approved

Andrew Approved

Mike Approved

Dave Approved

Scott Approved

Dedaimia Approved

Final Section

EC and Tree commission, and ERAC are left out. Add them

8. New business

A. Election of 2021 officers

One candidate for each office

Slate committee was Mike Litwin, Dave Parkhurst and Matt Caldie

Andrew as chair, Matt as vice chair, and Dave as secretary treasurer

No nominations from the floor. Moved by Mike and seconded by Dave for the slate above

Matt Approved

Meredith Approved

Don Approved

Andrew Approved

Mike Approved

Dave Approved

Scott Approved

Dedaimia Approved

B. 2021 projects/” bucket list”

The bucket list meeting is when all EC members suggest ideas on what the EC should be working on in the coming year. It can include long-term projects, as well as short-term.

Andrew: In the ordinance for the EC it states that the EC is also tasked with Board of Public Works proposals. Statutorily the EC is meant to oversee some of their business.

Update BEAP. Keep EC current. Update greenhouse gas section. Can be a multi-year plan

Linda: Update the BEQI. Required to do that by statute. To research and provide information on how Bloomington’s environment is doing. All the basic environmental sections need to be updated.

Matt: Write a better no-mow area by putting together a pamphlet. The Climate Action Plan section of no mow areas is sub-par. No mow areas are meant to return an area to nature. Low-mow areas (Mowing once in the spring and once in the fall) creates a lot of great habitat for animals. Whether its birds’ nest, or any other species that can use the tall grasses for habitat. Matt wants to see if there are any city properties would be willing to create low-mow areas. Encourage churches schools, etc.

Scott: Every year the Ostrom fellows do a service-learning project. They can work with the EC to do a sustainability “like” report over the academic year. The Ostrom fellows did this for city hall 7 years ago. Would start in the fall.

Don: Find out energy efficiency of certain buildings.

Friend of Matt: Shared property boundaries have invasive thickets (A lot of rental properties). Try and get support or grants to encourage landowners to plant natives and get rid of invasives. He is hoping local contractors could do a lot of the work. Essentially incentivizing landowners to do this.

A survey was sent out to see which ideas people want to work on the most. Plans and proposals will be discussed next month

C. HT Greenspace column

Andrew will send out to commission again. Amendments were made from previous commissioners.

9. Commissioner announcements

Mike mentions proposed state wetland rule that would eliminate state wetland laws. This would reduce the number of wetlands, so please contact your legislature objecting to the proposal.

10. Adjournment

Adjourned

Next EC meeting: 18 March, 2021, 6:00 p.m., ZOOM