

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COUNCIL
City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation
Regular Meeting

Wednesday, April 14, 2021

Zoom Virtual Meeting: 4:30 - 6:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Dan Myers called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Angie Shelton, Dave Parkhurst, Denise Gardiner, Cathy Meyer, Autumn Brunelle, Jeff Ehman, Bill Jones, Dan Myers

Staff: Steve Cotter, Rebecca Swift, Tim Street, Joanna Sparks, Sydney Granlund

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 2021

Meeting minutes were approved unanimously

IV. AGENDA

A. Public Appearances

A-1 Public Comment Period

No Members of the public were present

B. Old Business

B-1 Duke Power Line Trail Progress

Steve Cotter provided updates on potential connections from the proposed Power Line Trail to connect it to Wapehani Mountain Bike Park, and eventually Twin Lakes. The section of Weimer Road, south of Wapehani Road to Tapp Road, could become an extension of the Clear Creek Trail. To the East of the road there are also a potential route that passes through two properties that are being developed. A road constructed for cell tower access could also serve as a potential route. Tim Street added that phase one of construction may begin in the fall. Phase 1 funding is secured, but avenues for the second phase of funding are being examined. The trail is planned to be paved. The trail will eventually provide connections from Summit School and RCA Park to Switchyard Park.

B-2 Rogers Family Park Design

Cotter provided updates on changed design plans. The parking spots have been moved from the north side of the prairie field to the west side. DNR and USFW will help with the removal part of the prairie and replacement in the southern portion. The chimney swift towers on the land will not be impacted by the design. Picnic tables are planned to be put under the awning next to the

barn on the property. Tim Street added that a public meeting will be held at Switchyard Park on April 22, followed up with a virtual meeting.

B-3 Prescribed Burn at Griffy Lake Nature Preserve

A contract with Habitat Solutions for another burn is planned uphill from the Griffy Boathouse parking lot off of Headley Road. It is likely that this burn will occur in the fall. The goal is to encourage oak and hickory forest and to encourage growth of wildflowers, per recommendations from the DNR Division of Nature Preserves.

C. New Business

C-1 Education Update

Rebecca Swift provided updates, noting that Earth Day will be celebrated at Southeast Park in one week and published on Facebook Live. There will be live presentations from organizations that offer grants and opportunities to neighborhoods. Native plant plugs and trees will be given out during the event.

There will be a cicada citizen science opportunity offered through Purdue Extension.

In person programs are continuing despite the pandemic, with group sizes being limited. As more individuals become vaccinated event sizes will be increased. Virtual programming continues to be offered to promote accessibility, with more likely to be opened up for in-person programs in the fall. Cotter added that through collaboration with first nation members, there may be potential programming in the fall.

Autumn Brunelle provided updates on Bug Fest and Bird Fest, which have been moved to the fall. On Earth Day there will be a garlic mustard pull on the Limestone Greenway from 5:30-6:30. A construction contract has been awarded for the section of the Karst Farm Greenway from highway 46 to Woodyard Road. In-person programming at the Monroe County level also have group sizes limited, with an evening book club series, "Books and Bonfires", starting May 6 at Karst Farm Park.

Cathy Meyer noted that there are many mustard weed pulls being offered through MC-IRIS and awareness on purple wintercreeper continues to be a focus for this year. Joanna Sparks added that weed wrangles with Monroe County identify and reduce invasive species will begin to host recurring weed wrangles starting this Friday and Invasive plant awareness days will be held on the first Saturday of every month.

C-2 COVID-19 Update

The Monroe County Health Department has issued an update on protocols stating that mask mandates will continue through May 28. Commercial group sizes are still limited to 50 people, Private gatherings limited to 15 people.

C-3 Meadowwood Pond & Griffy Algae Blooms

There have been reports of large amounts of algae at Meadowwood Pond, which is causing blooms in the creek. The department is waiting on report results from the limnology lab to determine the cause of the blooms. In December there were blooms at Griffy, and staff continue to monitor the water. Swift made a note of thanking the Indiana Clean Lakes Program for their support with testing water samples.

C-4 Cascades Trail & Stream Stabilization Project Updates

Bids for the project have come in high which have caused the department to examine how to effectively use current funding. Possible funding could come from recovery funds. The pilot closure for the road is continuing, however members of the public have commented that it is not fair to evaluate the traffic during COVID. Street added that the road closure is scheduled to go through June but is currently open for pedestrians and cyclists. Limestone mill blocks are planned to be placed on the stream banks to prevent erosion, in addition to having the stream widened to slow down water flow. Mature trees were removed to allow for the creek banks to be reshaped to improve the stream in the long run. A tree replanting ratio of 5 to 1 will occur in the same watershed to offset these removals.

C-5 Griffy Loop Trail & Accessible Fishing Pier Project Updates

Cotter provided updates. The permit for work on the dam was approved, and approval for wetland mitigation credits are in process. Potential stream improvements through the wetland mitigation program are being examined. Approximately 60 trees will have to be removed on the west side of the causeway as part of the loop development.

C-6 Experience Reality Tours & OuterSpatial Mobile App

OuterSpatial was launched one week ago, and members of ERAC were encouraged to download this application due to the park, trail, and event information that is available through it. As more geospatial information is collected the application will continue to improve user accessibility in park spaces.

Experience Reality has been under development for three years with a desire to publish information by associating it with points of interest to create curated tours. Experience Reality can provide turn-by-turn navigation for the tours from wherever you are located. Audio, text, and images can be presented at each point of interest.

C-7 June 2021 Meeting Agenda Items

Next meeting's agenda item(s) will include an update on the Leonard Springs shelter, pollinator habitats, and water quality updates

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:54. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday June 9th.