

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

MINUTES

April 15, 2025

Board or Commission: Environmental
Meeting: Regular
Quorum: Yes

Date: April 15, 2025
Called to Order: 7:00 p.m.
Adjourned: 9:35 p.m.

MEMBER ATTENDANCE:

Christy Truitt	Chairperson	Present
Jeff D. Abeln	Commissioner	Present
Jacquelyn Casazza	Commissioner	Present
John Day	Commissioner	Present
Chris English	Commissioner	Present
Mark Frigo	Commissioner	Present
Barbara Kwiatkowsky	Commissioner	Present
Karen Lilly	Commissioner	Absent
Maggie Frigo	Student Commissioner	Present
Also Present:		
Kristina Christie	Management Analyst – Public Works	
Elisa Pollina	Recording Secretary	
Donna Jean Simon	Acting Village President	
Sonya Desai Bhagwakar	Village Trustee-Elect	
Steve Szymanski	Village Trustee-Elect	
	Students from Glenbard West	

I. CALL TO ORDER

The April 15, 2025 meeting of the Environmental Commission was called to order by Commissioner Frigo at 7:00 PM at Glen Ellyn Civic Center.

Staff Liaison Christie announced that tonight's meeting would begin with a presentation by Ted from Pale Blue Dot. She explained that Ted would help guide the Environmental Commission (EC) through the Sustainability Assessment proposal and provide an additional presentation. Given the number of questions raised by the EC regarding the proposal, Christie felt this approach would be the most effective.

Ted began by presenting an overview of the foundational documents, which included the Vulnerability Assessment, the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory and Forecast, the Ground Cover Study, and the Renewable Energy Potential Study. He explained that all of this research was used to develop the summary and the Sustainability Baseline Assessment, providing a basis for goal development and implementation strategies.

Ted noted that Pale Blue Dot (PBD) applied the baseline assessment across all categories, testing examples of how certain strategies and goals could be implemented, supported by potential illustrated solutions. Each section of the assessment concludes with suggested starter goals.

He reviewed the distinction between sustainable strategies and actions, explaining that strategies are broad, clear statement goals that reflect the community's future vision, while actions are detailed steps supporting the strategies.

When reviewing the baseline assessment, Ted asked the EC to consider the following key questions:

1. How well do the goals fit the Village's needs?
2. Are there any changes you would suggest?
3. Are there any goals that should be eliminated?
4. Are there additional goals that should be added?

Ted explained that the next steps would include holding a workshop to refine the goals. Staff Liaison Christie added that she is awaiting confirmation from the Village on what staff is responsible for and which EC members will participate in the workshop process. Once the goals are refined during the workshop, a presentation will be made to the Village Board during a future Board workshop.

Ted then opened the floor for questions from the EC. Commissioners Frigo, Kwiatkowsky, and Casazza had previously submitted a list of questions, to which Ted responded to some of Commissioner Kwiatkowsky's during the virtual call and will respond to the others at a later date. Staff Liaison Christie will compile and send the additional questions received from the EC to Ted. A special workshop date will be scheduled to meet with Ted, during which all the proposed goals will be reviewed and finalized based on the EC's feedback.

Following the workshop, the Sustainability Baseline Assessment will be finalized, and the EC will determine their formal recommendations to present to the Village Board.

The Environmental Commission (EC) further discussed the next steps and agreed it would be beneficial to meet prior to the workshop to review each category and develop preliminary recommendations. This meeting will be scheduled for early May.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – None

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 11, 2025 & MARCH 18, 2025 MEETING

Commissioner Day motioned to approve the February 11, 2025 meeting minutes and Commissioner Frigo seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

Commissioner English motioned to approve the March 18, 2025 meeting minutes as amended and Commissioner Kwiatkowsky seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

IV. **LIAISON REPORTS**

A. Trustee Liaison Report: Trustee Simon provided several Village updates. She noted that two new trustees, Steve Szymanski and Sonya Desai Bhagwakar, have been elected to the Village Board. The Akerman Park Community Gardens project has been approved by the Board; the site, originally zoned for residential use, required a zoning change to allow for non-residential use. Simon also shared that the Village has a new Assistant Village Manager, Sabrina Irizarry, who was sworn in during last night's meeting. Additionally, a swearing-in ceremony was held for five new police officers. The newly elected Village Board will be officially sworn in on May 12.

B. Staff Liaison Report – Staff Liaison Christie announced that a proclamation recognizing Bike Month for Bike Glen Ellyn will be issued.

C. Park District Liaison Report – Park District Liaison Gutmann provided updates that Kristina Christie presented: Interviews are currently underway for the open tree care position. A bird migration walk is scheduled for Thursday. Invasive tree and shrub removal has been completed for the season and will resume in the fall if needed. In total, three acres of buckthorn, honeysuckle, and multiflora rose were removed.

D. Chair Report – Chairperson Truitt provided several updates, noting that Volunteer Park has been cleared and will become the fourth location in town to feature a sustainable garden. Max is currently in the process of ordering plants for the site. Truitt expressed gratitude to volunteer – Mary Colby who generously donated her time to the project. Additionally, 50 trees will be planted during the May community tree planting events. Truitt also thanked the Village staff for helping make the Environmental Commission's content more visible in the Village newsletter.

V. **OLD BUSINESS**

A. Strategic Planning Priorities Chairperson Truitt reviewed the EC's upcoming priorities:

Sustainable Yard Certification Blitz days – Commissioner Day proposed setting a goal of certifying 200 yards. This summer, the Conservation Foundation will conduct a yard certification blitz, and the Environmental Commission will help promote the effort. Chairperson Truitt will work with the Conservation Foundation to select three dates for the blitz, which will then be publicized. Currently, there are 60 certified sustainable yards in Glen Ellyn.

Recycling Extravaganza Update – Commissioner Kwiatkowsky provided an update, noting that reminder emails have been sent to all vendors, with no cancellations to date. She observed that posters promoting the event have not yet been placed in the Civic Center. Volunteers are confirmed and ready for the event, and all vendors will handle their own cash transactions and staffing. Kwiatkowsky stated that preparations are on track and thanked the Village for doing a great job promoting the event. She asked all volunteers to arrive between 8:00 and 8:30 a.m.

Commissioner Casazza inquired about promoting new vendors participating in this year's event. Staff Liaison Christie will follow up with Grant, and Casazza will provide the new vendor information to share with him.

The Environmental Commission also discussed creating a QR code that attendees can scan at the event to learn more about upcoming EC activities and volunteer opportunities, such as the Sustainable Garden Walk and future tree plantings. Staff Liaison Christie will coordinate and create the QR code materials.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Municipal Sustainability Certifications - Commissioner English provided an update, noting that last month the EC identified several certifications the Village is either already participating in or could easily pursue.

- **Monarch Pledge:** The Village has already adopted this pledge. We could submit paperwork to claim leadership circle status as we have achieved those requirements.
- **Bird City:** This certification requires a one-time application fee of \$200, with an annual renewal fee of \$100 for up to three years. Public Works is already completing much of the necessary work and can confirm compliance. A resolution would need to be passed by the Village Board. The EC would be responsible for preparing the supporting documentation, which would then be reviewed and signed off by Public Works. A proclamation recognizing bird migration (scheduled for May 10) and a migration-related event (which the Park District is already hosting) would satisfy additional requirements.
- **Bee City:** This certification is more policy-driven, focusing heavily on pesticide use. Achieving it would require broader conversations with the Village, Park District, and schools regarding pesticide ordinances. It would involve significantly more work and coordination.
- **Dark Skies:** Also largely policy-based, the Village is already meeting some criteria. We can apply for a temporary two-year membership, during which we must work toward full compliance. Board approval would be needed to move forward.
- **Wildlife Habitat Community:** This certification would take considerable time to achieve. It is based on a point system tied to the number of properties certified as wildlife habitats. Strong documentation and a narrative outlining our efforts would be required.

Commissioner English recommended that the EC move forward with the Monarch Pledge and Bird City certifications, and offered to prepare the necessary documentation. The EC agreed with the recommendation. Chairperson Truitt volunteered to conduct additional research on the Wildlife Habitat Community certification. Commissioner Kwiatkowsky commended Commissioner English for his outstanding research and for providing a clear roadmap for pursuing these sustainability certifications.

Tree Ordinance – Chairperson Truitt reported that she reviewed the ordinance with Trustee Christiansen, and Trustee Christiansen then forwarded it to the Village Attorney for review.

Waste Stewardship – Recognition of restaurants that reduce distribution of plastic silverware - Commissioner Kwiatkowsky reported that she received feedback from Mount Prospect regarding their approach to reducing plastic utensil waste. In Mount Prospect, businesses ask customers if they would like plastic utensils, making it optional rather than automatic. To support this effort, they created a decal, and a representative visited local restaurants to see if they were participating. If they were, the decal was provided for display. Commissioner Kwiatkowsky suggested this could be a good initiative to implement in Glen Ellyn. Commissioner Casazza added that related legislation recently passed at the state level, and noted that many restaurants support the change because it saves them money. The EC agreed to move forward with exploring this initiative. Trustee Simon will reach out to Meredith Hannah to discuss this program.

VII Next Meeting & Adjournment

- A. Commissioner Frigo motioned and Commissioner English seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 9:35 pm.

The next EC meeting – May 20, 2025

Submitted by Elisa Pollina, Recording Secretary

Reviewed by Staff Liaison, Kristina Christie