

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
October 21, 2025**

Board or Commission:	Environmental	Date:	October 21, 2025
Meeting:	Regular	Called to Order:	7:00 p.m.
Quorum:	Yes	Adjourned:	9:16 p.m.

Member Attendance: Present/Absent

Christy Truitt	Chair	Present
Jeff Abeln	Commissioner	Absent
Jacquelyn Casazza	Commissioner	Present
John Day	Commissioner	Present
Chris English	Commissioner	Present
Mark Frigo	Commissioner	Present
Barbara Kwiatkowsky	Commissioner	Present
Monica Miller	Commissioner	Present

Also Present:

J.D. Barrett	Staff Liaison, Management Analyst	
Sonia Desai Bhagwakar	Trustee Liaison	
PUBLIC- AP government Glenbard West Students		
Nicholas Brenan Ellen		

I. Call to Order

The October 21, 2025, regular meeting of the Environmental Commission was called to order by Chair Truitt at 7:00 PM at Glen Ellyn Civic Center.

II. Public Comment- None

III. Approval of Minutes-

- a. **August 19, 2025**-Prior to moving to approve the August 19th, Commissioner Kwiatkowsky noted the need to edit a date on the minutes prior to moving to approve.

Move to Approve the Minutes from August 19, 2025
Result: Motion to approve
Mover: Commissioner Kwiatkowsky
Seconder: Commissioner Frigo
Ayes: Unanimous

- b. **September 16, 2025**- Prior to moving to approve the September 16, 2025, minutes, Commissioner Kwiatkowsky asked to have “priority sustainability plan” added at end of meeting minutes.

Chairperson Truitt asked to remove dollar amount and rephrase the paragraph related to PaleBlueDot within Part 5 of the minutes.

Move to Approve the Minutes from September 16, 2025
Result: Motion to approve
Mover: Commissioner Frigo
Seconder: Commissioner Kwiatkowsky
Ayes: Unanimous

IV. Park District Report – Chris Gutmann

Chris met with residents to discuss the management of Lake Ellyn to further understanding of the complexities involved and the Park District’s new approach.

Over 3,000 fish were stocked between Lake Ellyn and Lake Foxcroft.

500 people attended Oaktoberfest. Thank you to Go Green Glen Ellyn for another successful event.

New interpretive signs were installed at Ackerman Woods.

Staff have caged the 100+ trees and shrubs planted this year in natural areas. This is to protect the trees from deer grazing and antler rubbing, which has increasingly become a problem.

The Park District received the Pat Miller Community Engagement Award from DuPage Monarch Project for our new volunteer pollinator monitoring program. This is part of our newly revamped overall volunteer program for Park District Natural Areas called Habitat Heroes. Habitat Heroes launches next month.

V. **Trustee Liaison Report – Sonia Desai Bhagwakar**

Trustee Liaison Bhagwakar reported that there was a presentation on the baseline assessment followed by a meeting on budget planning. I asked about a budget item to fund Phase 2 and was informed that Phase 2 would not be funded. I expressed concern that significant work had been done for Phase 1, and now it would not be completed. The general sentiment from the Board was that they did not see the value in the consultant. They stated that Phase 1 was necessary to identify action items required for Phase 2, and they asked the Environmental Commission (EC) to develop those action items.

Chairperson Truitt responded that her concern with the Phase 1 presentation was that it did not delve deeply into the documentation specific to Glen Ellyn. She noted that the data had not been acted upon and suggested that a consultant could help guide the planning process. While the EC could put together some recommendations, she emphasized that this would require involvement from staff and/or the Board. She objected to selecting just two or three items without knowing what the Village is currently considering for updates or improvements without meeting with Trustees or Staff.

Trustee Liaison Bhagwakar stated that the Board would like the EC to take Phase 1 and develop action items or recommended ordinances. No specific areas of interest were raised in his meeting; the Board simply wants the EC to propose actionable items.

Commissioner Kwiatkowsky noted that a couple of Board members had mentioned recycling. Commissioner English asked whether there was a sense of what would be reasonable to propose to the Board based on the consultant's suggestions. Trustee Liaison Bhagwakar replied that the conversation was only a small part of the broader planning effort and lacked detail. He said the Board felt the scope was too broad and would prefer the EC to focus on tangible items and narrow the scope.

Chairperson Truitt stated that the original goal was to implement changes over a 10-year period, and that direction could be established as the process unfolds.

Commissioner Casazza mentioned that he had emailed a document to Sonia and that JD had spoken with staff in Skokie about their EC initiative program.

Chairperson Truitt proposed that once recommendations are assembled, a workshop should be held to collaboratively review and agree on which items to move forward with. She noted that while the EC can initiate programs and initiatives, meaningful progress would require ordinance changes, which the EC cannot enact. She asked

whether, in the absence of a consultant, we would commit to scheduling workshops to support this effort.

Trustee Liaison Bhagwakar referenced the workshop, where the list was narrowed down to five items, and suggested using that list. Commissioner Casazza asked whether parameters could be developed to help gain Board support for environmental changes.

Commissioner English observed that the length of time it took to reach this discussion during the meeting highlighted the need for Village funding and facilitation of workshops, as well as an understanding of the time commitment involved.

J.D. Barrett suggested potentially holding a special meeting with just the EC and said he would follow up with Ted to see if he had the list of the top five items from the June 3 Workshop Draft review of the baseline assessment.

VI. Staff Liaison Report- J.D Barrett

The Sustainability Assessment was discussed at the Village Board budget workshop. The Board's direction was to consider alternative approaches. Commissioner Kwiatkowsky noted that the objection was not primarily about funding, but rather a concern about the content. The Board was not impressed with the presentation or the information provided. Mark Franz suggested the work be taken in-house. They were underwhelmed and felt it did not meet their expectations, they wanted clear action items. Trustee Bhagwakar was supportive during the meeting and stated that staff resources would be necessary.

Commissioner Kwiatkowsky responded that the task now is for the EC to identify three to four priorities and seek agreement from the Trustees on those, along with an action plan.

Chairperson Truitt said that Phase 2 is feasible, but it requires the right people to sit down and discuss it. J.D. Barrett shared that he had reached out to the Village of Skokie, which has one full-time employee dedicated to sustainability. Skokie also worked with PaleBlueDot. He expressed uncertainty about who on staff could take on this responsibility and emphasized the need for direction from the Board.

Chairperson Truitt suggested that demonstrating and clearly communicating the EC's vision could help paint a more accurate picture. There are areas where the EC lacks visibility, such as electric vehicles. The best the EC can do is recommend the use of renewable energy for vehicles, but they do not know when such recommendations would be implemented. She proposed providing a list of items for the Board to consider.

Regarding Tree Preservation Enforcement, J.D. Barrett stated that he will compile the notes and send them out to everyone.

The Zoning Plan RFP will be published at the end of the month and will include an environmental sustainability component. A consultant will be selected to ensure that environmental considerations are incorporated into ordinance updates. The timeline is to publish the RFP by the end of the month, select a consultant by mid-December, and begin the project in January.

Commissioner Casazza asked about bike lanes: how are they considered, and how would modifications be made to incorporate them? Chairperson Truitt responded that where streets are wide enough, there will be space for bike lanes. Asphalt will remain asphalt, and concrete will stay concrete. For new streets, different decisions can be made. Conversations about using sidewalks for bike lanes are ongoing.

Commissioner Casazza stated she was under the assumption that all streets were redesigned without any consideration for bikes and questioned whether the EC could assess such matters. Chairperson Truitt asked which streets were being referred to, noting that for the train, the streets will be wider to support pedestrians.

Commissioner Kwiatkowsky commented that there had been significantly more discussion about parking than about bike trails. Commissioner Frigo remarked that some analysis should have been presented to the EC Commissioners. Commissioner Kwiatkowsky added that she does not believe any part of the Village is obligated to show the EC the work they do and suggested that the EC's role may need further discussion.

Commissioner Casazza suggested that it would be useful for high-impact projects to be routed through the EC, so Commissioners are aware of projects relevant to their scope. J.D. Barrett indicated he will follow up with John regarding streets and bike lanes. Chairperson Truitt stated that surfacing and repair work on streets was discussed more in relation to the southern routes, and how implementation might be possible.

Chair Report – Christy Truitt

Thank you to many for their support of Volunteer Park as a TCF Certified Sustainable Site - as celebrated on September 16, 2025.

GE Forestry Superintendent Max Brown and the Public Works team for sponsoring this site to become a sustainable pollinator garden, and for all of their work to install, water, and care for this site.

Mary Colby of Grandview Green for designing the garden and sourcing plants and volunteers.

The Conservation Foundation, Jim Kleinwachter and Beth Peluse, for consulting on design, for certifying the site, and for recommending the pilot of low-mow grass, Pearl's Premium.

Glen Ellyn resident Meredith Bachner for collecting and raising Monarch eggs found on local milkweed and bringing a pair of Monarchs for release at the certification event.

Glen Ellyn Management Analyst JD Barrett for attending the event, photographing the festivities, and posting a notice to Village e-news.

Thank you to the Village of Glen Ellyn for supporting sustainable landscaping both in the streetscape planters on the North side of the central business district and in the future implementation of the Crescent parking lot.

Thank you to GEPD and Go Green Glen Ellyn for sponsoring Oaktobfest this year! Many great participants from multiple communities (Wheaton, Elmhurst, Aurora, Lombard, etc.). At the EC table, I invited visitors to discuss either recycling, trees, or sustainable landscaping - most groups included children, and they chose sustainable landscaping (probably because of the picture game). We played a plant identification game, and they learned how certain flowers and trees can make a big difference to pollinators - and they were encouraged to contact TCF to learn about Conservation@Home.

Chairperson Truitt asked if there were any additional questions regarding the environmental impacts of pesticides. Commissioner Casazza requested confirmation of spray dates and asked that residents be notified. She also recommended avoiding spraying on Friday and Saturday evenings. Chairperson Truitt indicated she would follow up on this.

The Recycling Event at the College of DuPage will feature three vendors and is scheduled for November 8, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

Three requested changes were made to the Tree Preservation Ordinance, focusing on clarity, tree protection, fees, and tree funds. It was suggested that the first two changes be requested in January and February, and that larger revisions be postponed until the full rewrite is completed. J.D. Barrett stated he will speak with Paul, the Village Attorney, to see if this can be accomplished.

VII. Old Business Topics

1. Strategic Planning Priorities-

Chairperson Truitt emphasized that each item should be under the control of the Village. She also requested that each goal be revisited to assess its impact on commercial and residential sectors. As the group reviews each section, some items may fall entirely under municipal control, some under EC control, and others under shared control. She added that the Commission should celebrate all that has been accomplished, which is why they are pursuing certifications. She will follow up with J.D. and ask for his feedback.

The Commissioners discussed what the Village Board is seeking in reference to Phase 2 items. The Board is looking for a narrowed list of three to five items to focus on, based on the areas outlined below. It was agreed that each Commissioner would take responsibility for one area, as assigned, and return to the November meeting with a refined list of items.

Assigned areas:

- Greenspace – Completed
- Health and Safety – Completed
- Water – Monica Miller & Chairperson Christy Truitt
- Waste – Jacquelyn Casazza & John Day
- Transportation and Land Use – Chris English & Barbara Kwiatkowski
- Building and Energy – Mark Frigo & Jeff Abeln

IX. New Business

1. Role of Environmental Commission on Large Scale Projects

X. Adjourn: 9:16pm

Submitted by Adriana Ohl, Recording Secretary

**Reviewed by J.D. Barrett,
Management Analyst**