



Village of Downers Grove

Environmental Concerns Commission – Agenda

Table 1 - Detailed information on this Board or Commission meeting.

Meeting Location	Civic Center – Training Room (East Council Chambers)
Meeting Address	850 Curtiss St., Downers Grove, IL 60515
Meeting Date	June 22, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Call to Order.

Roll Call.

Public Comments.

Approval of Minutes.

- Draft Minutes from April 27, 2026

New Business.

- A. Promoting Recycling and Composting
- B. 2-Year Action Plan Review

Old Business.

- A. Greener Way Guide Update

Next Meeting.

- July 27, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Adjournment.

Village of Downers Grove Environmental Concerns Commission

Civic Center
850 Curtiss Street
April 27, 2026
Meeting Minutes

Chair Pelloso called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm and asked for a roll call.

Commissioner	Present	Absent
G. Baldassari		x
P. Bolton	x	
L. Dantoft		x
L. Donnelly	x	
K. Lerner	x	
B. Johnson	x	
L. Pelloso	x	

Also present: Jason Michnick, Environmental Sustainability Coordinator, Village of Downers Grove; Jeff Grant, Teacher at Downers Grove North High School; Melina Kyroudis, Mari Sharkey, Tala Vayla Nehme, Vivienne Lenart, students at Downers Grove North High School.

Chair Pelloso declared a quorum present.

Public Comment - Items not pertaining to the agenda

S. Ruffolo provided a summary of Earth Week activities coordinated by Greener Grove. Overall, it was a successful week of programming. Greener Grove is also planning another Recycling Extravaganza that will take place in September.

Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes from the March 23, 2026 meeting was made by K. Lerner. Seconded by L. Donnelly. The motion was carried unanimously.

New Business

Downers Grove North High School Student Presentation

Four students that are active in environmental and science clubs at DGN presented ideas for the community. The following are summaries of the ideas presented by the students.

1. **More Outdoor Third Spaces:** These types of spaces would provide place for students to hang out and not loiter at restaurants. Incorporate
2. **Increase and Enhance Outdoor Dining Spaces:** Outdoor dining spaces, especially those in or adjacent to public areas can be decorated with native plants and managed by HS students
3. **Native Plants in Parkways:** Parkways could be enhanced visually and ecologically by promoting native landscapes in parkways. This would raise awareness for drivers and pedestrians about the value of native plants and create a reputation for the community.
4. **More Bike Lanes:** New Main Street bike lane is great but we need more. Protected bike lanes or shared use paths would be better. Improves individuals mental and physical wellbeing.
5. **Replace Turf Grass:** Turf grass is resource intensive to maintain and provides almost no ecological benefit. Replacing grass with native plants would improve biodiversity, soil retention, and reduce stormwater runoff. The Village could consider incentives for replacing turf grass with native landscaping and rain gardens.

Commission Feedback

Members of the commission expressed their gratitude for the students taking time to attend and present. The students were impressive in their understanding of sustainability and confidence in presenting. The commission and staff also expressed excitement about how well the ideas shared by students aligned with the Village's Guiding DG plans. The Comprehensive Plan and Streetscape Plan both discuss the need for more third places and outdoor dining. One suggestion from the Commission was for students to think about how they can advocate for enhancing or creating third places on campus. Staff noted that the Sustainability Plan includes goals for reducing turf grass and increasing native landscaping, including goals of transforming roadways into natural corridors between natural areas.

The Commission also discussed the Active Transportation Plan and specifically asked students what can be done to, "make it cool to ride a bike to school?" Students stated that for some students it is either too far or there are uncomfortable routes and crossings. For many that do live closer, riding a bike to school is an enjoyable experience as the streets around DGN are

tree lined and pleasant to ride down. One suggestion was to work with younger students in elementary and middle schools to build that culture earlier.

Old Business

Greener Way

Prior to the meeting, staff informed the Commission that the previously reviewed PDF version of the Greener Way Guide was being replaced with an interactive website. A preliminary draft of the website was reviewed and the Commission gave several detailed suggestions for improving the functionality or language throughout the website. Overall, the Commission agreed that the interactive website was an improvement from the previous static PDF. Staff will incorporate the suggestions into the next update and begin working with the IT Department to publish the website.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by L. Donnelly. Seconded by K. Lerner. The motion to adjourn was carried on a voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.

DRAFT