



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	August 24, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Call to Order.

Roll Call.

Public Comments.

Approval of Minutes.

- Draft Minutes from June 22, 2026

New Business.

- A. Promoting Native Landscaping

Old Business.

Next Meeting.

- September 28, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Adjournment.



Village of Downers Grove

Environmental Concerns Commission – Minutes

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

Meeting Location	Civic Center – Training Room (Council Chamber East)
Meeting Address	850 Curtiss St., Downers Grove, IL 60515
Meeting Date	June 22, 2026 at 06:00 PM

Call to Order.

Chair Pelloso was absent. L. Dantoft served as Acting Chair for the meeting. Acting Chair Dantoft called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm and asked for a roll call

Roll Call.

Table 2 - Roll Call of Commissioners Present and Absent

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.		

Acting Chair Dantoft declared a quorum present.

Public Comments.

S. Ruffolo stated his support for adding a student commissioner to the ECC and asked whether further discussion of a student representative would take place. One of the students present at the last meeting was a freshman and could serve multiple years. Another representative from Downers Grove South would also need to be identified. He also asked whether the ECC would have a chance to discuss and make a recommendation regarding tree preservation that is a Priority Action Item being considered by Village Council. Lastly, Greener Grove will be hosting the Recycling Extravaganza on September 19 and asked for support from the ECC.

Approval of Minutes.

- A motion to approve the minutes from the April 27, 2026 meeting was made by K. Lerner. Seconded by P. Bolton. The motion was carried unanimously.

New Business.

A. Promoting Recycling and Composting

Staff provided the commission with an update on the first two months of the new solid waste contract with Republic Services. The new contract included the primary change of removing the option for garbage stickers for weekly service and transitioning to a monthly subscription model. Under the new program model, residents are able to opt into having an organics recycling cart at no additional cost. Residents can dispose of yard waste and food scraps year round using the organics cart.

Staff reported that approximately 4,500 households have opted into the organics recycling program so far, which represents nearly one-third of households served by the contract. Staff also shared the first two months of reported tonnage for

waste, recycling, and organics. The first month saw a slight increase in waste but remained flat in the second month compared to the previous year. Recycling remained flat compared to the previous year. There was a significant increase in the amount of organic waste collected compared to the previous year.

Now that the rollout of the new program has been complete, the Village is able to shift the focus of communications about the program towards education. The commission discussed several strategies for improving residents awareness about both recycling and composting. The commission encourage staff to share the success of the organics program in any promotional materials that are created and asked if it would be possible to have some sort of public facing tracker of waste collected/diverted. Creating a community-wide diversion goal would need to be tracked and promoted at the same time.

The commission also suggested creating educational materials around how to compost food scraps with the organics containers. This could include helpful suggestions around using paper bags or newspapers to wrap food scraps in before throwing them in the organics cart. The commission also discussed the need to help residents in apartment buildings that are not part of the curbside program find composting solutions. Lastly, the commission also recommended connecting with the school districts to see if there is an opportunity to connect curriculums about recycling and composting to the Village's solid waste program.

B. Review of Guiding DG Sustainability Two-Year Action Plan

The commission reviewed the list of projects included in the Village's Environmental Sustainability Plan that was adopted in April 2025. Staff provided an update on the following projects in the two-year action plan:

Facility Assessment: The Village has engaged McKinstry, an engineering firm, to

conduct an overall facility condition assessment for all of the Village's facilities. The first phase of the project focused on data collection and a preliminary assessment of which facilities were viable for renewable energy systems. The second phase is currently underway and will include recommendations for each facility to move towards full electrification. Those recommendations will then be considered in the Village's long-term facility planning and budgeting. It is anticipated that the current phase will be completed in this year.

Ecological Assessment: The Village approved a contract with Great Lakes Urban Forestry (GRUF) to conduct a full inventory of the Village's parkway trees. The inventory started last week and will include an assessment of the health of each tree, species, and key data points needed to calculate the ecological value of the trees. A special software will then be used to analyze carbon sequestration, stormwater runoff avoided, and energy savings from parkway trees. That data will then be included in the Village's GIS system. The project will be completed mid 2026.

Waste Survey: The Village's internal Green Team has been discussing strategies to measure and reduce waste in day-to-day operations. The process has already revealed opportunities for improved recycling and the introduction of food scrap collection at Village facilities. A systematic survey strategy is being discussed but has not been developed yet.

Zoning Update: Following the adoption of an update to the Village's Comprehensive Plan, staff is working with the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) to develop recommendations for updates to the Zoning Ordinance that align with Guiding DG recommendations. The PZC discussed several Guiding DG Sustainability related topics in April, including:

- Renewable Energy Systems
- Electric Vehicle Parking Requirements
- Dark Sky Compliance
- Native Landscape Requirements

The PZC recommended approving the language as drafted by staff at that meeting. Other topics will be considered by PZC on a monthly basis and a full set of recommendations will be made to Village Council later this year. These topics and recommendations directly support the Policy Reviews elements of landscape biodiversity, energy efficiency and renewables, and dark sky community.

Enhanced Curbside Collection Services: The new solid waste contract discussed earlier in the meeting fulfilled this project in the two-year action plan.

Streetlight Replacement: The Village is on year 3 of 5 of an anticipated replacement program. All new fixtures are high efficiency LED and certified by Dark Sky International. The project may extend past the two year timeframe, but a majority of streetlights will be replaced by 2027 and remaining lights in the Downtown and Fairview areas may be incorporated into streetscape projects per Guiding DG Streetscapes plan.

Pledge Resource Guide: The Greener Way Guide was published in June and completes this action item.

Install EV Charging Stations at Village Facilities: The Village recently earned the EV Readiness designation from the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and ComEd. Additionally, the Village has been awarded a grant from the State of Illinois to install EV charging stations at multiple Village facilities. Final information on the grant is

pending but the Village has identified priority areas and multiple firms that would be able to assist in the design and installation of the charging stations.

The commission discussed the updates and asked about ways that they can continue to support the ongoing projects or other Guiding DG initiatives. The commission specifically identified parkway landscaping and promoting active transportation as future topics they would like to discuss. Staff will prepare a review of existing parkway management regulations and coordinate with other staff regarding the Active Transportation Plan.

Old Business.

A. Greener Way Guide

The Village officially published the Greener Way Guide on June 12, 2026. Now that the website is live, the commission discussed ways to promote it and hopefully increase the number of individuals that have taken the pledge to 100 by the end of August. Suggestions for promoting the Guide included attending Farmers Markets, putting information about the Guide at the library and other public venues, and reaching out to the interfaith community as a way to get the word out.

Next Meeting.

- July 27, 2026.

Adjournment.

Motion to adjourn by L. Donnelly. Seconded by K. Lerner. The motion to adjourn was carried on a voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:07 pm.