

Inver Grove Heights Environmental Advisory Commission
8150 Barbara Avenue
Thursday, May 18, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order

The Environmental Advisory Commission of Inver Grove Heights met in City Council Chambers on Thursday, May 18, 2023. Chair Boehmke called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Chair Nichole Boehmke, Commissioners; Sarah Brass, Sara Goodman, Nick Ruiz, Ted Trenzeluk, Larry Moehring, Todd Kruse

Absent: Kevin Sethre (excused); Brian Barner (unexcused)

3. Presentations

4. Approval of Minutes

A. Minutes of Thursday, April 27, 2023, Environmental Advisory Commission Meeting

Motion by Commissioner Trenzeluk, seconded by Commissioner Brass to approve the minutes from Thursday, April 27, 2023 as submitted.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

5. Regular Agenda

A. Sustainability Recognition Program

Ally Sutherland, Environmental Specialist, presented the following PowerPoint slides on the Sustainability Recognition Program to the Commission.

2023 EAC Work Plan

- 2023 EAC Work Plan approved by City Council in February 2023.
- EAC city code duties and how they relate to the work plan.
- Creating a sustainability recognition program for residents and businesses was one of the work plan goals.

Research

- List of 12 other local cities who have created similar programs.

Purpose

- Recognize residents and businesses for taking action.
- Share success with others (environmental and/or cost savings).
- Foster sustainability and environmental friendliness as a community norm.

Sustainability

- Variety of applications and definitions
- Balance of "Three E's"

DRAFT Program Parameters

- Program Name: Sustainable IGH
- Eligible Recipients: IGH residents, businesses, and organizations
- Recognition Award Process:
 - April 1 – April 22 (Earth Day): Promote application
 - April 22 (Earth Day): Deadline
 - April 23 – May 31: Review applications
 - June 1: Notify recipients
 - Late June: Public meeting and public promotions of recipient
- Recognition:
 - Bronze: Submit application and complete 5 program action.
 - Silver: Submit application and complete 10 program actions.
 - Gold: Submit application and complete 15 or more program actions.
- Awards: Awards and funding under review.
 - Award examples:
 - Framed certificate
 - Window cling
 - Sticker
 - Yard sign
 - Digital award
 - Considerations: cost, material, value, displayable, dated
- Recognized actions:
 - Energy (renewable energy, energy efficiency, EVs)
 - Landscape (pollinators, natives, invasives, local food)
 - Water (conservation, quality, invasives)
 - Waste (organics, recycling, reduction)

Next Steps

- Thurs, 5/18: Gather initial EAC feedback.
- Thurs, 6/15: Collect all comments from staff and partner organizations.
- Thurs, 6/22: EAC final review and consideration of the program.
- ~July/Aug: City Council review and consideration.

EAC Feedback

- Requested EAC feedback.

Mrs. Sutherland explained that the program is currently drafted where anyone who submits an application and showcases they have completed enough actions will be recognized. The city would not need to select a winner. Lack of application submissions is a reported program barrier experienced by other communities. This recognition model is meant to encourage more applicants and not turn away those that apply.

The Environmental Advisory Commission shared the following suggestions for staff to consider:

- Consider nomination options.
- Important to request applicants quantify the positive benefits they have experienced from taking their actions.
- City should share positive benefits reported by awardees with the public to motivate others.

- Recognize being within nature and planting vegetation.
- Create recognition wall of awardees.
- Partner with education or medical sectors.
- Platinum recognition saved for projects that deserved special recognition.
- Consider how to add equity into the actions.
- Partner with the community college for potential student volunteers studying landscaping and other related topics.
- Recognize no mow may or native landscaping.
- Recognize litter clean ups.

6. Public Comment

7. Commissioner and Staff Comments

Ally Sutherland, Environmental Specialist, presented the following PowerPoint slides on Inver Glen Library Organics Drop-Off to the Commission.

Overview

- Review Dakota County Organics Drop Off Program
- Inver Glen Library Drop-Off

Dakota County Organics Drop Off Program

- 9 drop off sites
- Temporary fenced-in enclosures with organics dumpsters
- Residents bring organics to dumpsters. FREE.
- 9 existing sites
- 9,338 participants, 461 IGH households

Organics Collection Process

Organics Drop Off Map

Program Purpose

- Meet legislative goal, recycle 75% by 2030
- ~30% of trash is organics and no curbside
- MPCA Plan and County stakeholder process

Inver Glen Library Site Map

- Northwest area
- 18 feet (L) x 10 feet (W) x 6 feet (H)

JPA Terms

Timeline

- June/July 2023: Install enclosure
- July 2023: Recruitment, Residential Training Opportunities
- August 2023: Open Site, Open House
- May 31, 2029: JPA termination date

How the EAC can get involved

- Join the program
- Encourage a friend or neighbor to join
- Join a training session
- Join the drop site open house
- Share the city's social media posts
- Help host organics drop site registration tables at city events

Mrs. Sutherland stated there was a record high of Environmental Advisory Commission applications. There was a total of 14 applicants for the EAC, of which 9 selected the EAC as their top choice of commission.

Mrs. Sutherland congratulated Commissioner Boehmke for being reappointed, and Commissioner Brass and Moehring for their terms of service.

Commissioner Trenzeluk asked how many recyclables are being thrown away after they have been collected by waste haulers, and if this is factored into the State and County recycling rates. Mrs. Sutherland stated as long as you are recycling the designated list of recyclables, your recycling is getting recycled. This list is published by Dakota County based on what is recyclable in our local market. The hauler is mandated by state law to recycle all recyclables they collect. Commissioner Goodman noted there is a contamination rate the haulers must stay under, typically around 5%. Commissioner Boehmke said the contamination is a result of people not properly recycling.

Commissioner Ruiz stated he attended the St. Paul ride and drive and provided a summary of the event.

Commissioner Ruiz stated he felt the Bituminous Roadways item should have been reviewed on multiple agendas and should have been reviewed by the city earlier based on the request. Mrs. Sutherland stated the EAC reviewed this item due to the Planning Commission's specific request but that she will discuss process improvement options internally. Commissioner Goodman stated she also felt rushed with a decision based on the amount of information presented.

Commissioner Goodman stated we should continue to discuss the light pollution topic brought to the EAC recently by the resident. Mrs. Sutherland stated this item could be a consideration for the 2024 EAC Work Plan if the Commission chooses.

8. Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Ruiz, seconded by Commissioner Goodman to adjourn at 8:08 p.m.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0 Motion carried.