

**INVER GROVE HEIGHTS
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, July 23, 2020
8150 Barbara Avenue
7:00 P.M.**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Environmental Advisory Commission of Inver Grove Heights met in regular session virtually via Zoom on Thursday, July 23, 2020. Chair Trenzeluk called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Ted Trenzeluk, Commissioners; Aditya Jayam, Sarah Brass, Patricia Todd, Larry Moehring, Matt Mills, and Robert Heidenreich

Absent: Commissioners; Katherine Teiken and Nichole Boehmke (Excused)

3. PRESENTATIONS

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Next meeting – Thursday, August 27th, 2020 – Virtual Regular Meeting 7:00pm

5. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes of January 23, 2020 Environmental Commission Meeting

Motion by Commissioner Heidenreich, seconded by Commissioner Mills to approve the minutes from January 23, 2020 as submitted.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

7. REGULAR AGENDA

A. Consider a Wetland Replacement Plan for 9697 Inver Grove Trail, Alliant Ventures III, LLC

Ally Sutherland presented a Wetland Replacement Plan for 9697 Inver Grove Trail, Alliant Ventures III, LLC. Alliant Capital III, LLC is proposing a new single-family residential housing development in the City of Inver Grove Heights called Inver Grove Trails. This proposed development will be located north of Cahill Avenue and west of Inver Grove Trail in the southeastern part of the City. The site covers approximately 15 acres of land that consists of a vacated residence with outbuildings, deciduous woodlands, areas of mixed native and non-native grassland, and two wetland areas. A transmission line and associated utility easement intersects the property in a north south orientation within the western half of the site. Of the approximate 15 total acres of the site, approximately 8-10 acres is being developed with the remainder of the site being left in its current land use of undeveloped open space. Throughout the site two wetlands were delineated in 2019. Project construction will consist of site grading for infrastructure including roads, utilities, storm water facilities, and building pads. Construction is expected to begin in 2020 and will continue until fully built.

Based on the design of the project, one wetland (Wetland A) will be impacted and therefore a wetland replacement plan must be approved by the City for the project to move forward. There would be a total of 0.1122 acres (4,887 square feet) of permanent wetland impacts with this construction. Wetland impacts would be mitigated at a 2:1 ratio through purchase of wetland credits.

Ms. Sutherland stated one duty of the Environmental Commission is to review wetland replacement plans and make recommendation to the City Council. Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (DCSWCD) reviews and processes wetland applications under the Wetland Conservation Act for the City of Inver Grove Heights. City Staff prepares a summary memo for the Environmental Commission and City Council based on the information provided by and action taken by the DCSWCD.

Ms. Sutherland stated DCSWCD's staff report is included in the agenda packet which includes a timeline of their review, and public comment period which was between May 26, 2020 through June 19, 2020. The DCSWCD's has no objections to the plan and recommends approval of the plan as submitted. City staff, as part of the technical review panel with DCSWCD and the Board of Soil and Water, recommend approval for the request.

Ms. Sutherland showed the Commission a map of the site (Figure 1), which indicates the property is east of Highway 52 and north of Cahill Avenue. An satellite image of the site (Figure 2) was shown which indicates the locations of Wetland A and Wetland B.

Ms. Sutherland noted the Commission can recommend approval or denial of the plan for staff to take forward to the City Council.

Chair Trenzeluk asked if the city received any comments and Ms. Sutherland responded in the negative.

Chair Trenzeluk asked if stormwater ponds will be created on the site during development. Ms. Sutherland stated that the Engineering division is responsible for reviewing stormwater plans during the site review and final plat approval process. This approval will be brought forward to City Council at a later date.

Commissioner Todd asked why the applicant is purchasing a wetland located in Anoka County instead of a wetland closer to Inver Grove Heights. Ms. Sutherland noted the wetlands being purchased are located in the Mississippi-Metro Watershed and Service Bank Area 7, which are the same watershed and service bank area as Wetland A on 9697 Inver Grove Trail.

B. Motion by Chair Trenzeluk, seconded by Commissioner Jayam to recommend approval for the Wetland Replacement Plan for 9697 Inver Grove Trail, Alliant Ventures III, LLC.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

C. Environmental Commissioners Appointments

Ms. Sutherland noted the Commission should appoint a Chair and Vice Chair. Vice Chair will act as the Commission Chair if the Commission Chair is unable to attend a meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Brass, seconded by Commissioner Todd to appoint Chair Trenzeluk as Chair of the Environmental Commission.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

Motion by Commissioner Todd, seconded by Chair Trenzeluk to appoint Commissioner Brass as Vice Chair of the Environmental Commission.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS

A. Partners in Energy Update

Ms. Sutherland noted the Environmental Commission recommended the City apply to the Xcel Energy Partners in Energy Program in November 2019. Xcel Energy presented the Partners Energy program to the Environmental Commission and City Council at regular meetings. Ms. Sutherland stated the program will assist the city in developing community energy goals, for example goals related to energy efficiency, emissions reductions, and renewable energy, with an energy action stakeholder group.

Ms. Sutherland stated the city applied for and was accepted into the program as of February 2020. The program start date had been slightly delayed due to COVID-19 but the stakeholder group, called the Energy Action Team, met virtually for their first workshop on Wednesday, July 22, 2020. At this time, there are 11 stakeholders including a diverse group of representatives of residents, a local non-profit, Environmental Commission, Planning Commission, Housing Committee, City Council, School District 199 and the Inver Hills Community College. So far, the team has reviewed local energy data to learn more about the community's energy usage patterns before setting goals.

Chair Trenzeluk noted he is happy to serve on the Commission and hopes to bring materials from the Energy Action Team to the Environmental Commission to collect feedback and questions throughout the planning process. Ms. Sutherland noted she will assist with soliciting feedback from the Environmental Commission during future Commission meetings. She will send the first workshop material to the Commission via email once it is made available.

Ms. Sutherland also stated that the stakeholder group is still hoping to add more business representation on the planning team.

Commissioner Moehring asked if there are any goals and metrics already developed through the program and Ms. Sutherland responded that the Energy Action Team will develop these goals during the 5-workshops over a 6-month planning phase. The goals will be developed into an Energy Action Plan at the end of the planning phase which subsequently will be approved by the City Council. After that the city moves in the implementation phase, the goals of the Energy Action Plan will be implemented over at least an 18-month period.

B. Minnesota GreenStep Cities

Ms. Sutherland noted the city has achieved Step 4 of the Minnesota GreenStep Cities Program as of June 2020. The city achieved this through documenting operational and development metrics related to city buildings and lighting, city fleets, parks and natural areas, stormwater, renewable

energy, jobs and more. The primary purpose and benefit of Step 4 is for cities to gather data against which a city can compare itself to over time. Data was collected with the help of several city divisions and external partners. The next step is for staff to help make the data more readable so the city can easily learn from the information.

Commission Brass asked if there are other ways for us to share this data publicly, such as in the Community Center. Ms. Sutherland agreed it is important to share the takeaway with the community as well as staff and that it is her next goal. Ms. Sutherland noted they are working on developing an internal Green Team, including the Communications divisions, which she anticipates will assist in sharing this information.

9. COMMISSION COMMENTS

10. ADJOURN

Meeting adjourn unanimously at 7:36pm.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0 Motion carried.