Sustainability Commission Agenda

Terrace Room
Village Hall
1225 Cedar Lane Northbrook, IL 60062
Thursday, October 16, 2025

5:30 PM

1. ROLL CALL

2. MINUTES APPROVAL

A. Minutes for approval - September 18, 2025.
Review and approve September 18, 2025 Sustainability Commission meeting minutes.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

This agenda item is reserved for members of the public who desire to address the Public Body on a topic that is within purview and jurisdiction of the Public Body, but that is not listed in another location on the agenda. If you would like to speak about a matter that is listed on the agenda, we ask that you wait until that agenda item is called, and we will give you an opportunity to speak then. Anyone desiring to speak should fill out a written speaker form (located in the back of the meeting room) and submit it to the Staff Liaison. "Public Comment Time" is not a forum for open dialogue or engagement with members of the Public Body. Rather, it is intended as an opportunity for you to make comments to the Public Body. While the Public Body will not immediately respond to public comments at this meeting, or engage in a back and forth discussion during the meeting, please be assured that the Public Body is actively listening to all comments, thoughts, and suggestions. All speakers will be limited to a total of three minutes. We request that everyone be respectful, civil, and non-repetitive; and we ask that members of the audience refrain from applauding or making any other comments during or after any speaker. Thank you for your understanding and taking the time to contribute to the success of our community.

4. DISCUSSION TOPICS

A. Metro Region Recycling Education and Outreach campaign presentation by Metropolitan Mayors Caucus.
The Metropolitan Mayor Caucus received a REO grant from the US EPA to partner with waste professionals from Kane, DuPage, Will, and McHenry counties, as well as the Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County, the Solid Waste Agency of Lake County, and the City of Chicago to increase recycling participation and decrease contamination across the 275 Metropolitan Mayors Caucus communities.
The goals of the campaign are:

- *Get residents of the Metro region excited about recycling again!*
- *Educate residents to increase recycling and reduce contamination at the community level.*
- *Improve the quality of materials placed into the recycling stream throughout the region, resulting in a less contaminated, more marketable stream of recyclables.*
- *To encourage residents and businesses to "buy recycled," to seek out*

products made from recycled material or packaged in post-consumer recycled content.

B. Energy Efficiency Challenge.

Action item BE 6-5 from the Northbrook Climate Action Plan (CAP) states: Through the EQC, ComEd, Nicor, and community partners like Go Green Northbrook, create a residential energy efficiency challenge. Establish annual targets of households to engage and energy efficiency targets for participants. Collect communication materials to share with residents. Develop a plan to drive residents to action; Identify other community groups that can build capacity for effective outreach; publicly recognize annual challenge "winners" with successful energy reduction achievements. Track annual progress; Combine efforts with increased renewable energy purchases and installations.

5. REMARKS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER.

6. ADJOURN

The Village of Northbrook is subject to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Individuals with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who require certain accommodations in order to allow them to observe or participate in this meeting, or who have questions regarding the accessibility of the meeting or facilities, are requested to promptly contact the Village of Northbrook at (847) 272-5050, or the Illinois Relay Center at (800) 526-0844, to allow the Village of Northbrook to make reasonable accommodations for those persons.

MEMORANDUM

To: Sustainability Commission
From: Sustainability Coordinator Kate Carney
Date: 2025-10-16
Subject: Minutes for approval - September 18, 2025.

Overview
Review and approve September 18, 2025 Sustainability Commission meeting minutes.

Fiscal Impact
F/A.

Recommendation
Review and approve.

Background

SC 9-18-25 Minutes draft.pdf

Regular Meeting Minutes *Draft*

Terrace Room
Northbrook Village Hall, 1225 Cedar Lane
Thursday, September 18, 2025

ROLL CALL: Chairman Jeremy Reynolds called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. Present were Members Bernadette Knight, Becky Lee, Katie Suarez, Ying Wang, Sandra Weiss, Chairman Jeremy Reynolds & Student Member Cecily Stash. A quorum was present.

Village of Northbrook Staff Present: Liaison Kate Carney, Sustainability Coordinator & Gale Cerabona, Recorder

Absent: Member Aaron Stash & Student Member Gabriela Tamamidis

Guest Present: Jill Franklin, Northbrook Public Library

REVIEW & APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Knight suggested several revisions to the August 21, 2025 meeting minutes.

Member Suarez arrived at 5:34 p.m.

Member Knight moved to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2025, Sustainability Commission/SC meeting as amended. Member Wang seconded the motion. The amended minutes were approved by a unanimous voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Franklin advised of an upcoming program:

- 9:30 a.m. October 17 Tree Identification Walk through Village Green. She noted there are 10 spaces available, and RSVPs are required. A guide from Openlands TreeKeepers will facilitate the walk.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Waste, Solar, & Single-Use Bag Data

Waste: Liaison Carney explained Total Waste Collected from 2012-July, 2025. She highlighted categories – trash, recycling, compost, etc. LRS data is pretty accurate. Liaison Carney noted that the LRS data appears fairly accurate but does not know how to adjust between the two vendors. All numbers are lower than previous years; 30% diversion rate. Goal is 50%. She would like to have a larger education campaign next spring. Feedback is positive.

Chair Reynolds said the compost is contained in the yellow cart. Liaison Carney concurred, and noted bags are included as well.

Liaison Carney shared comparisons from January-July, 2024 vs. 2025. She noted trash is down 1%, recycling is up 2%. Chair Reynolds commented, generally, the numbers are the same and not near 50%. Liaison Carney concluded this is a start.

Solar: Liaison Carney shared this includes data from 2016. Numbers are ahead of previous years. There have been 30 permits issued year-to-date in 2025 and 14 battery installations this year.

Member Weiss asked if this is via single-family residences. Liaison Carney said, yes, along with commercial.

DRAFT

Member Weiss asked how community solar interacts with the individual. Liaison Carney said she receives simple data for Community Solar (from MC Squared). The information presented is based only on permits issued for solar installations. She noted Northbrook's participation in Community Solar is typically the highest among other suburbs in the area.

Liaison Carney explained that the aggregation programs have changed over time and explained changes. Community Solar is through MC Squared (which spun off the overflow). Regarding the aggregation program, it began in 2018. MC Squared was the supplier, ComEd was the distributor. The current program is a price-match program. MC Squared offers a $90,000 grant per year.

Member Knight asked if this is on the Village website. Liaison Carney said it is, illustrated and explained same.

Member Weiss expressed outreach and education is continually needed.

Liaison Carney concluded Northbrook is having a great year so far but, the end of extra tax incentives seems near. She displayed the geothermal page on the website.

Single-Use Bag Data: Liaison Carney highlighted a spike in February. Other months were lower; 15% decrease overall year-to-date, from 2024.

Liaison Carney advised new stores opened (Fresh Market) and some closed (Louis Vuitton, Sephora).

Member Weiss asked if a PR opportunity is possible. Liaison Carney suggested this be a topic for a Community Moment. Member Weiss suggested sharing this information in the Northbrook Voice.

Liaison Carney advised there is new signage; simple and straight-forward.

2. <u>Northbrook Climate Action Day Planning for 2026 Event Discussion</u>

Liaison Carney reminded member that the date is Saturday, May 30, 2026. She stated a time needs to be chosen for the SC event. Design guidelines will be provided to Member Stash, as he will design a banner. She would like the design to be completed this year.

Last year, the event was from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. and the previous Earth Day event was from 9 a.m.-12 noon. After some discussion, it was decided 10 a.m.-1 p.m. would work best for next year.

Liaison Carney asked if anyone can think of more key exhibitors who would participate (i.e. car dealers, HVAC companies). She said EV companies need to be recruited.

Having a food truck was mentioned as an option. Member Weiss suggested a compost station and a buckthorn learning station (including all the steps to rid buckthorn, as people are not familiar with the process). Liaison Carney suggested the SC could enlist the Garden Club for a buckthorn station.

3. <u>Energy Efficiency Challenge</u>

Liaison Carney distributed worksheets to SC members compiled from submitted suggestions and additional resources. She would like to launch something simple soon and something more comprehensive later, as that gives time to engage now and develop more for a future challenge.

Discussion took place on the worksheet. Liaison Carney said a bar needs to be set in accomplishing the challenge (i.e. complete 5 or 10 things, etc.). How many actions, along with a goal, needs to be decided. Chair Reynolds reminded this is an internal goal for the SC. Member Suarez believes the initial challenge should have

fewer actions. Chair Reynolds concurred, as it should be approachable. Member Knight suggested a multi-tier checklist (5 years ago, now, and a future aspiration). Member Wang recommended habits be indicated. The SC brainstormed on the number of and what the actions should be to achieve the challenge.

Member Knight said the same number of participants that responded to the survey could be anticipated to complete the challenge. Liaison Carney noted the audience is people who are not thinking about these things.

Liaison Carney recommended the first launch's duration be until Climate Action Day. It was noted tiered actions could be illustrated for the second launch. She suggested an Energy Efficiency Challenge first then a Sustainability Challenge to follow. It was noted behavioral actions are attainable/simple. Liaison Carney said a simple launch would be wise.

Member Lee wonders if people will share habits/things they are currently doing. Member Wang said the point is to engage people.

Member Suarez shared she prefers questions be mixed in rather than having categories noted. Member Wang likes categories, otherwise it alludes to no thought being put into the worksheet. Chair Reynolds likes categories with actions indicated everywhere.

Liaison Carney asked that SC members complete the worksheet and submit feedback to her. She asked that more actions be given.

Member Weiss suggested an end goal of a 1% return, 120 responses, as there are 12,000 households.

REMARKS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Liaison Carney shared the following events:

- Go Green Wilmette, EV & Bike Show, September 20, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. in the Wilmette Metra parking lot.
- Family Dinner is November 6 from 6 a.m.-8 p.m.
- Pumpkin Smash is November 8

Chair Reynolds will present a Green Moment in October.

The next regularly-scheduled meeting of the Sustainability Commission is on October 16, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURN

Member Wang moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 p.m. Member Weiss seconded the motion, and by unanimous voice vote, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Gale Cerabona
Recorder

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MEMORANDUM

To: Sustainability Commission
From: Sustainability Coordinator Kate Carney
Date: 2025-10-16
Subject: Metro Region Recycling Education and Outreach campaign presentation by Metropolitan Mayors Caucus.

Overview

The Metropolitan Mayor Caucus received a REO grant from the US EPA to partner with waste professionals from Kane, DuPage, Will, and McHenry counties, as well as the Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County, the Solid Waste Agency of Lake County, and the City of Chicago to increase recycling participation and decrease contamination across the 275 Metropolitan Mayors Caucus communities.
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- Educate residents to increase recycling and reduce contamination at the community level.
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- To encourage residents and businesses to “buy recycled,” to seek out products made from recycled material or packaged in post-consumer recycled content.

Fiscal Impact

N/A.

Recommendation

Receive information about the Metro Region Recycling Education and Outreach campaign.

Background

The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus is a membership organization of the Chicago region’s 275 cities, towns, and villages. Founded in 1997 by then Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley and leading Mayors from nine suburban municipal groups, the Mayors Caucus pushes past geographical boundaries and local interests to work on public policy issues. The Caucus provides a forum for metropolitan Chicago’s chief elected officials to collaborate on common problems and work toward a common goal of improving the quality of life for the millions of people who call the region home.

MEMORANDUM

To: Sustainability Commission
From: Sustainability Coordinator Kate Carney
Date: 2025-10-16
Subject: Energy Efficiency Challenge.

Overview

Action item BE 6-5 from the Northbrook Climate Action Plan (CAP) states: Through the EQC, ComEd, Nicor, and community partners like Go Green Northbrook, create a residential energy efficiency challenge. Establish annual targets of households to engage and energy efficiency targets for participants. Collect communication materials to share with residents. Develop a plan to drive residents to action; Identify other community groups that can build capacity for effective outreach; publicly recognize annual challenge "winners" with successful energy reduction achievements. Track annual progress; Combine efforts with increased renewable energy purchases and installations.

Fiscal Impact

N/A.

Recommendation

Further discussion regarding the creation of an Energy Efficiency Challenge to move CAP BE 6-5 forward. The Sustainability Commission should approve actions to be included on the initial challenge and finalize decisions for initial households engaged and launch date.

Background

The Sustainability Commission recommended BE 6-5 as a Priority Action Item for 2025. Members previously made progress with discussion of potential actions, modes of sharing the challenge, and goals for expanding the initial Energy Efficiency Challenge into a larger Sustainability Challenge.