

## Berwyn Sustainability Commission

### Meeting Minutes

Berwyn City Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room

February 2, 2026, at 10:00 am

Attendees: Ruth Siaba Green, Hannah Breakey, Cathy Fallon, Joseph Vallez, Jessica Aquino Rodriguez, Marybeth Arenella, Mary Havis, George Lambesis, Eric Bjornstad

1. An introduction of the members was made.
2. A mission statement was discussed and edited to add "that improves the quality of life for the residents." The final mission statement can be found in the attached documents from the meeting.
3. Discussed were communications amongst all governing bodies. Hannah from the BDC mentioned that Macey (from her organization) is currently working on a listserv to connect the marketing/communications persons from all the governing bodies. Ruth will speak to Macey to see if the commission can benefit from the listserv.

All members were asked to submit to Ruth the contact information for their marketing/communications personnel. Ruth will compile and share with all. It is important that these marketing/communications personnel meet separate from the commission to find the best way to share sustainability events and initiatives.

The City has a community calendar for programs open to the public from the City and its partners. The City's communications team can work with the partner agencies of commission members to add their sustainability related events to this calendar. Attached are instructions for adding items to the calendar; Ruth will also email this information in a separate electronic document. The calendar will only be a success as long as it is utilized by all.

4. All attendees were given a sample survey for choosing 2 resident members (attached document). Please review and give feedback to Ruth with any edits etc. by February 9<sup>th</sup>. At this time, Ruth will work with the City's communications team in creating a public survey. Once it's created, Ruth will share with commission members for final review and edit. Once it is approved, the City will publish, and share with all commission members. At the next meeting, the commission can discuss the applications received.
5. This year, most entities already have Arbor Day / Earth Day events organized. Please have your marketing/communication personnel share with the City's communications team with the attached Berwyn Community Calendar Request Form. Please also make sure to include your organizations' logos. This year, with the assistance of the City's communications team, we will have one electronic flier (to be shared) that contains all of the events to be shared via each organizations' email lists and on their social media.

Next year we agreed to collaborate with a Citywide “Sustainability Week”. This can include clean-up events, planting of trees, educational events, older persons reading at schools, residents sharing what they are doing to go green etc. This planning can start later in the year.

Next year, it was discussed to further expand the “Walk, Bike and Roll” events currently organized by the City and D98 and D100.

6. It was discussed that future meetings include invitations to the Morton Arboretum and MWRD as to current grants they have available and resources they can bring to each entity.
7. Ruth shared with all that the Mayor has always been ready to assist the other entities with programs that service the public. Please reach out to Ruth with any requests.
8. Each member shared updates on their entity related to sustainability.

- The City worked into its most recent waste contract with SBC a composting program (opt in). This year, they have decreased the cost to hope to increase participation. They continue with electronic recycling and hazardous materials recycling/program in which residents can call and have items picked up in the alley or in front of their house. Containers for recycling of light bulbs and batteries continues at City Hall and the Library. If any schools are looking at going out to bid for waste services, Ruth can put them in contact with the C4 Collaborative that has assisted schools with grants to incorporate composting of uneaten food.

The City also recently finished a CERT program organized by Emergency Management Coordinator Scott Waszak (e: [swaszak@ci.berwyn.il.us](mailto:swaszak@ci.berwyn.il.us)). The residents who completed this program are now certified to assist as volunteers for safety positions at community events. If any member is in need of volunteers for events (traffic control, crowd control etc.), please contact Scott Waszak.

- The Township just finished their Participatory Budgeting. Two of the programs approved assist with flooding/flood mitigation, and another program addresses street safety.
- The Berwyn Park District has partnered with the Morton Arboretum in regard to tree planting/inventory/ maintenance. They are also working on a redevelopment project at Proksa that includes repairs to the pond and new storm water detention.
- North Berwyn Park District has partnered with the BDC in acquiring the property next to Bodhi Thai on Roosevelt Road to construct an Art Plaza. It will include art pieces, and a stage with lights and sound to accommodate programming for the community and business district.

- D100 has updated all of their facilities with an automated system that helps save money on utilities; programming schedules have been changed to compress the time that utilities have to be fully functioning saving dollars spent. All of their lights are also LED to conserve electricity.

D100 has incorporated underground detention at their new Ridgeland property. They have also worked with the Arboretum on creating gardens. They will also continue their Earth Day events at each of their schools; the principals at each school have really taken ownership of these events and participation has been strong.

- D201 will be hosting an Earth Day event within their schools. They have also finished constructing a nature walk at Morton West and have expanded their pollinator gardens with the assistance of Morton Arboretum.

Morton West has the largest greenhouse within a public school in IL. They have cultivated plants for the creation of their pollinator gardens and the butterfly gardens at the Freshman Center in Cicero. They are willing to partner with members of the commission for their future projects with the cultivation of plants; please make sure to contact them with enough time as it takes to organize and fulfill the requests.

It was mentioned that one of the issues that they run into after growing the gardens, is that during the summer finding suffice help to maintain them as students aren't at school. Joe Vallez recommended that D201 can reach out to him to see if they can partner with their summer camps to create a Project Grow.

- D98 has done raised gardens at their schools. They have also created a new culinary program and are building a new community center. They are interested in participating in a Citywide "Sustainability Week" next year.

9. The next meeting has been scheduled for May 7<sup>th</sup> at 11 am. Ruth will provide an invite to all.



Berwyn Sustainability Commission  
Meeting Agenda  
Berwyn City Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
February 2, 2026 at 10:00 am

1. Call to Order
2. Introduction of Members
3. Discussion of Mission Statement
4. Discussion of Electing Resident Members
5. Discussion of Inventory of Existing Programs & Calendar of Events
6. Discuss possible policies, projects and grants
7. Next Meeting Date
8. Open Forum
9. Adjournment

## Berwyn Sustainability Commissioners Email List:

Ruth Siaba Green, City of Berwyn City Administrator: [rsiabagreen@ci.berwyn.il.us](mailto:rsiabagreen@ci.berwyn.il.us)

Hannah Breakey, BDC Economic Development Project Manager: [HannahB@berwyn.net](mailto:HannahB@berwyn.net)

Cathy Fallon, Berwyn Park District Director: [cfallon@berwynparks.org](mailto:cfallon@berwynparks.org)

Joseph Vallez, North Berwyn Parks Director: [jvallez@nbpd4fun.org](mailto:jvallez@nbpd4fun.org)

Jessica Aquino Rodriguez, Berwyn Health & Township Supervisor:  
[manager@berwyntownship.org](mailto:manager@berwyntownship.org)

Marybeth Arenella, D98 Home-School Community & McKinney Vento Liaison,  
[marenella@bn98.org](mailto:marenella@bn98.org)

Mary Havis, D100 Superintendent: [mhavis@bsd100.org](mailto:mhavis@bsd100.org)

Eric Bjornstad, D201 Director of Science: [EBjornstad@jasmorton.org](mailto:EBjornstad@jasmorton.org)

**The City of Berwyn**



**Ruth E. Siaba Green**  
**City Administrator**

**A Century of Progress with Pride**

## **City of Berwyn Sustainability Commission**

**Promoting Environmental Stewardship & Community Well-being**

### **Mission**

Promote environmental stewardship and community well-being by coordinating and expanding sustainability efforts across city departments, schools, township and health department, park districts, local businesses, and residents. Through education, partnerships, and practical initiatives, the Commission advances a more sustainable and resilient Berwyn that improves the quality of life for the residents.

### **Composition**

- 9–11 members appointed by the Mayor
- Chair: City Administrator
- Representatives from School Districts 100, 98, 201; Township/Health Department; Berwyn & North Berwyn Park Districts; Business community; and 2–3 residents-at-large
- Guests from utilities, community organizations, and regional partners as needed

### **Key Responsibilities**

- Coordinate sustainability initiatives across City and partner agencies
- Inventory and evaluate existing local programs
- Promote education and engagement through events and campaigns
- This is an advisory commission that recommends policies, projects, and grants to advance sustainability
- Submit annual report to City Council

### **Examples of Collaboration**

- Community Green Fair, City Clean-Up Events, and Active Transportation Month
- Recycling & Composting campaigns with schools and SBC
- Water Conservation and Arbor Day programs
- Waste Reduction drives such as Uniform Exchange and Prom Dress Donation events

### **Contact Information**

**For more information:** Ruth Siaba Green, City Administrator  
**Email:** [rsiabagreen@ci.berwyn.il.com](mailto:rsiabagreen@ci.berwyn.il.com)



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### Berwyn Community Calendar: [www.berwyn-il.gov](http://www.berwyn-il.gov)

#### REQUIRED INFORMATION

Event Title:

Venue Address:

Date & Time:

*Include Start Time/End Time*

Is this a recurring event?

NO

YES

Department/Agency:

Request Date:

Event Contact for Registration:

Requested Publish Date:

Event Description  
(140 Character LIMIT)

Please submit and include all required information. Check-off the appropriate event type/audience and submit media. All creative multimedia requests for Communications Division (ex: event flyer/Spanish translation) requires a **72-hour** (minimum) notice during workweek (Mon-Fri) emailed to [communications@berwyn-il.gov](mailto:communications@berwyn-il.gov).

#### **MEDIA & EVENT DETAILS CHECKLIST: INCOMPLETE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE POSTED**

**English JPEG Event Flyer**

8' x 11' sized FLYER in JPEG Format  
If NOT available, request for media requires **72 hour Notice** (workweek) prior to desired posting date.

**\*Spanish JPEG Event Flyer**

**72 Hour advanced noticed REQUIRED** if translation assistance is needed (1 JPEG SPA)

#### Type of Event:

Board/Committee/Public Meeting

Informational

Library Event

Recreational Event (City REC Center)

Educational (d98/d100/d201)

Facilities Closed

Holiday, Social, Parade, Special City Event

Health, Fitness & Wellness

Educational Workshop

#### Audience:

Family

Seniors

Adults

Children

#### **FOR COMMUNICATION DIVISION USE ONLY**

Mayor review

Approved

Revision required

**Berwyn Sustainability Commission**

**Resident Member Application**

**Applicant Information**

**Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Residential Address:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:**

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\_\_\_\_\_

**Length of Time as a Berwyn Resident**

Please indicate how long you have lived in the City of Berwyn:

- Less than 1 year
- 1–3 years
- 3–5 years
- 5–10 years
- More than 10 years

**Relevant Experience**

Please describe any professional, volunteer, educational, or lived experience that relates to sustainability, environmental stewardship, community engagement, urban planning, education, public health, or related fields.

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**Summary of Interest**

Please explain why you are interested in serving on the Berwyn Sustainability Commission and what perspectives or skills you would bring to the Commission.

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**Availability and Commitment**

Commission members are expected to attend quarterly meetings or as needed and participate in Commission activities as needed. Meetings will be on weekdays in the morning.

**Typical Availability (check all that apply):**

- Weekday evenings
- Weekends
- Occasional daytime meetings
- Flexible as needed

Please note any scheduling limitations or additional information regarding your availability:

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**Certification**

I certify that the information provided in this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that submission of this application does not guarantee appointment to the Berwyn Sustainability Commission.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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