

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH  
Environmental Board**

6:30 PM  
June 11, 2025

**MINUTES**

Tibbetts Manor, 750 17th Ave.  
NW, Issaquah

**BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT**

*Board members:*

Don McQuilliams, Chair – excused absence  
Alix Lee-Tigner, Vice Chair  
Nancy Davidson  
Mina (Alexandra) Jun\*  
Prajakta Ghatpande  
Dixie Bair  
Tom Anderson  
Tommy DuBeau – excused absence  
Kiran Pan\*

*Administration/Staff:*

David Reedy, Sustainability Coordinator  
Doug Yormick, Environmental Planner  
Minnie Dhaliwal, Director Community  
Planning and Development

*Student Presenters:*

Bridget Vesely, Gibson Ek High School  
Ava Magnusson, Gibson Ek High School  
Zoe Dearing, Gibson Ek High School  
Matthew Fischer, Issaquah High School

Anne Newcomb, Alternate  
Keith Gonzalez, Alternate  
Jonathan Smith, Alternate

\*Youth/young adult members.

**CALL TO ORDER**

VICE CHAIR Lee-Tigner called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Vice Chair introduced the minutes, which were included in the agenda materials. The minutes were approved as presented by unanimous consent.

- a) Minutes of May 14, 2025

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

CONNIE MARSH provided public comments on concerns related to specific projects and mitigation efforts. MARSH asked for a conversation on how to make code better and how to ensure projects mentioned are included in the Natural Environment Checklist. MARSH also noted that there are many problems with the Tree Code and encouraged staff to simplify the process and reduce the cost of tree permits.

**AGENDA ITEMS**

- a) **Student Presentations (I)**  
*Presented by:*  
*David Reedy, Sustainability Coordinator*

Gibson Ek High School students VESELY and MAGNUSSON presented on their work over the last year including launching IssaQuest, a sustainability focused geo caching tour in Issaquah, and supporting the Issaquah Sustainability Fair. VESELY and MAGNUSSON answered questions from Board Members on their work and the implementation of the GeoTour project.

Gibson Ek and Issaquah High School students DEARING and FISCHER presented on their work with the Sustainability Ambassadors, highlighting the projects and initiatives to incorporate sustainability into the Issaquah School District. Projects included the Issaquah School District Sustainability Policy, efforts to encourage sustainable transportation, and reducing energy use.

Gibson Ek student and Environmental Board Member JUN provided an update on the Junior Ranger program and discussed the program launch at the Wildlife Coexistence Day. Board Members provided recommendations on how to partner with businesses to print more Junior Ranger booklets.

**b) Natural Systems Checklist (D)**

*Presented by:*

*Doug Yormick, Environmental Planner*

YORMICK provided summaries of previous feedback on the Natural Systems Checklist and checklist updates. YORMICK also provided updates on the projects that have been using the Natural Systems Checklist and the phases of these projects.

Board Member DAVIDSON noted that the Natural Systems Checklist has improved a lot and that it is helpful to see how projects are moving through the system. Board Member DAVIDSON seconded concerns brought up during public comments on projects that should get tracked but aren't. YORMICK noted some projects started before the Natural Systems Checklist and therefore were going through the permitting system before the checklist. Board Member DAVIDSON asked if large developments following development agreements would also go through the checklist and expressed support for these projects to be tracked. YORMICK and DHALI WAL noted that they are not tracked through these systems. DHALI WAL expressed that the Natural Systems Checklist is to help the EB advise Council and so if a development agreement has already been agreed on by Council then there is less value in tracking the projects.

Board Member DAVIDSON asked for an update on older projects not tracked in the Natural System Checklist so that the Environmental Board can then inform Council of any changes needed. DHALI WAL noted that learnings from previous mitigation measures informed Title 18 update including as it relates to wetland buffer areas.

Board Member ANDERSON expressed support for the spreadsheet and asked if there is a written report or summary of the projects on the sheet. YORMICK noted that the monitoring reports for projects are received yearly and reviewed to see if the site is meeting performance standards. YORMICK described how the monitoring system and compliance assessments are done and how staff bring sites back into compliance if they fall out of compliance. Board Members expressed support for more information to be incorporated into the checklist.

**c) Tree Code Update (D)**

*Presented by:*

*Doug Yormick, Environmental Planner*

*Minnie Dhaliwal, Director Community Planning and Development*

DHALI WAL presented the proposed Tree Code updates and the progress on the update process so far. DHALI WAL expressed a goal to have the Tree Code update sent to Council in September. DHALI WAL summarized feedback from the Environmental Board and the Planning Policy Commission and proposed 6 questions for the board to consider.

For the first policy question related to tree replacement exemptions, Board Members Gonzalez, DAVIDSON, ANDERSON, GHATPANDE, JUN and LEE-TIGNER expressed support for the 1 to 1 tree replacement method. Board Members felt like this was a way to keep the Tree Code simple, straightforward, and more affordable.

The second policy question related to the new canopy method, Board Members DAVIDSON and NEWCOMB asked about the reason for changing to this method and the data we have to inform targets. DHALI WAL provided background on why the change was made to make tree canopy targets more reasonable for different zoning types based on example projects. Board Members reached consensus that the methodology was acceptable. Additionally, DHALI WAL clarified that these canopy targets only come into play for major remodels or new development. Board Member PAN asked staff to consider equity in implementing tree programs to achieve tree canopy goals.

The third policy question related to when the tree canopy targets should be applied. DHALI WAL provided clarification on how the tree code applies in different situations. Board Members DAVIDSON, GHATPANDE, and JUN asked staff to have a minimum of 1:1 replacement language for development and redevelopments in addition to the tree canopy targets. Board Members JUN and ANDERSON encouraged the City to pursue more public education to help the City achieve tree canopy goals.

The fourth policy question related to the replacement ratio for hazardous/nuisance trees and landmark trees. The Environmental Board was supportive of the proposed replacement ratios.

The fifth policy question related to flexible tree retention requirements in Central Issaquah and eligibility criteria for this flexibility. Board Member DAVIDSON is supportive of the proposal but asks that additional requirements are added for the removal of landmark trees specifically.

The sixth policy question related to wildfire mitigation. Board Member NEWCOMB agreed that it is valuable to allow flexibility provided for wildfire risk mitigation.

Finally, staff asked if there was anything else missing from the proposed changes that the Environmental Board would like staff to consider. Board Member DAVIDSON expressed concern for the cost of the tree permits and asked staff to reconsider costs.

The Environmental Board expressed support for a Board letter to Council on Environmental Board feedback on the proposed Tree Canopy code changes.

## **REPORTS**

- a) Board Workplan

## **OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Staff shared announcements in written form following the meeting.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 PM.

## **INQUIRIES**