



**JASCULCA TERMAN**  
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

**WHY NEIGHBORHOOD DIALOGUES?**

To Fellow River Forest Community Members:

Our firm, Jasculca Terman & Associates, is a public affairs firm. We focus on issues and public policy, with a special emphasis on outreach and engagement. We do a lot of work for foundations, not-for-profits, community organizations, villages, school districts and library boards.

What we have discovered over forty-three years is that, while public hearings and town hall meetings remain very important forums for considering and promulgating public policy, those formats tend to produce more speeches and talking points, but significantly less listening and real dialogue. And many people simply don't feel comfortable in those more "official" forums.

Over the years, we've been asked: "Why the neighborhood dialogue format?"

That's a legitimate question and deserves a response. Neighborhood dialogues are intended to be small (10-15 person) informal, but facilitated conversations, either in homes or friendly community spaces. They are designed to engage village residents; encourage civil and productive conversations; and where possible, develop consensus. Importantly, they are intended to produce both listening and real discussion.

The whole point of neighborhood dialogues is to have attendees feel comfortable, with everyone encouraged to participate and share their thoughts. There are no presentations, nor is there promoting one point of view. The facilitator (myself or my colleague, James Chase) is there to encourage participation by all attendees. Either the Village Administrator or Assistant Village Administrator are there to answer questions. At the end of the dialogue series, a report will be prepared and shared with the Village Board of Trustees detailing the ideas and comments received during the conversations.

Initially we started at the south end of the village (where I've lived for 49 years, and where my late wife, Judy, and I raised our four children), simply because the two parcels where new development is being discussed are at Madison & Ashland and Lake & Lathrop. However, because of incoming requests, we will be scheduling dialogues in other parts of our community.

We look forward to the conversations this fall and hope they will benefit our wonderful community.

Warmest best,  
Rick Jasculca