

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
February 1, 2023**

A meeting of the Village of River Forest Economic Development Commission was held on Wednesday, February 1, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the 1st Floor Community Room of Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue, River Forest, Illinois.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Chairman Cuyler Brown, Commissioners Robert Graham, Katie Lowes, Tim Brangle, Rajendra Chiplunkar.

Absent: Commissioners Preston, Wahlfeldt.

Also Present: Interim Village Administrator Matt Walsh, Village Planning Consultant Nik Davis, Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Liz Holt.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – October 5, 2022

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Brown and SECONDED by Commissioner Brangle to approve the minutes of the October 5, 2022 meeting of the Economic Development Commission. MOTION PASSED by unanimous vote.

4. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPDATE

Director Holt reported that the Village agreed to extend the Chamber of Commerce free membership program and asked for Village assistance in promotion and welcoming new businesses. The group discussed extending the promotion on a permanent basis.

Director Holt also reported on the general state of business in Oak Park and River Forest and promoted the upcoming Health & Wellness Fair.

5. DISCUSSION OF MADISON STREET & NORTH AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Administrator Walsh introduced Nik Davis of Houseal Lavigne and mentioned that additional stakeholder meetings were required. Mr. Davis provided an overview of the progress so far.

Houseal Lavigne staff is working on development concepts however there have not been focus group meetings yet. There was discussion about planning resident meetings.

Davis presented concept renderings and zoning considerations regarding North Avenue. The Commission asked about whether the renderings showed sufficient parking. Davis clarified that the renderings showed sufficient parking with a reduced parking standard from the current code.

Chairman Brown asked about how the Village's zoning code currently compares to other towns. Davis responded that height and parking are the primary limiting factors. The group agreed that more information on neighboring communities would be helpful. Commissioner Brangle noted that these potential zoning changes would be applied across the entire district, not simply specific sites.

Mr. Davis asked the Commission to consider removing the FAR requirement because other zoning restrictions already accomplish the same goals, such as height. There was discussion about revising bedroom requirement rules and sizes for multi-family buildings as well. Mr. Davis then presented the other renderings for different sites along North Avenue.

Mr. Davis proceeded to discuss Madison Street opportunity sites. The group expressed general support for the direction of the discussion.

Resident Susan Altier pointed out an error in a concept rendering for the Madison Street opportunity site, and Nik Davis responded that it will be fixed.

Chairman Brown stressed the importance of taking the considerations of the surrounding neighborhood when developing this property.

Mr. Davis reiterated that the residents in the area need have input on the project.

A conversation ensued on the opportunities Madison Street is allowing for both River Forest and Forest Park.

Commissioner Lowes mentioned that the developer should consider the potential parking issues a development could cause.

The Commissioners requested the Houseal Lavigne team consider allowing zoning changes that could favor features such as residential screening and pedestrian features while helping potential developers achieve their goals.

6. CONTINUED DISCUSSION REGARDING BUSINESS COMMUNITY RETENTION/ SUPPORT STRATEGIES AND COMMUNICATION

None.

7. DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

A. Lake & Lathrop Construction

Interim Village Administrator Walsh and the Commission had a conversation regarding activity on the property.

B. Madison Street TIF

None.

C. North Avenue TIF

None.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

10. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Chiplunkar and SECONDED by Commissioner Brangle to adjourn the February 01, 2023, meeting of the Economic Development Commission at 7:21 p.m. MOTION PASSED by unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted:

Matt Walsh, Interim Village Administrator

Date: _____

Cuyler Brown, Chairman Economic Development Commission