

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST  
REGULAR VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES  
Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Board of Trustees was held on Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue – River Forest, IL.

**1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: President Adduci, Trustees Gillis, Vazquez, O'Connell, Bachner, Brennan  
Village Clerk Keller  
Absent: Trustee Johnson  
Also Present: Interim Village Administrator Matt Walsh, Fire Chief Thomas Gaertner,  
Police Chief James O'Shea, Finance Director Rosemary McAdams, Director  
of Public Works and Development Services Jeff Loster, Village Attorney  
Lance Malina, Deputy Clerk Luke Masella, HR Manager Trish Ivansek

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

President Adduci led the pledge of allegiance.

**3. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

President Adduci invited Debbie Borman who resides on Lathrop Avenue up to the podium to give public comment regarding the Madison Street TIF District.

Ms. Borman had the following questions regarding the ongoing demolition and abatement projects on Madison Street:

- How long was the bid open for the abatement project?
- How soon after the contract is awarded when will work begin?
- How long should the abatement project take?
- After the abatement, when would the demolition begin again and how long will that project take?
- What is the status on the historical features of the building?
- What is the status on the permit and projects at 10 Lathrop?
- When will the protection begin for the surrounding homes regarding that project?
- When can her the neighbors meet with Interim Village Administrator Walsh?
- When will the Economic Development Commission meet next? The last meeting did not have a quorum.
- Who were the names of the five-six developers? Mr. John Houseal was the gentleman working with the planning project?

Ms. Borman also stated for the record that her and the neighbors had submitted a FOIA

request regarding inspection records for the property and that she felt the first response back from the Village was incomplete. Some of the questions were the dates for the State & County inspections.

President Adduci invited Jack Lesniak up to the podium to give public comment regarding the traffic installations in the Northeast portion of town.

Mr. Lesniak gave remarks on issues with the installations. He reminded everyone that River Forest is not a suburban community, rather an urban community that interacts with its surrounding neighborhoods. Mr. Lesniak requested the Village consider the recommendations from the traffic study instead. He suggested that street signs, speed bumps, etc would be more effective.

President Adduci invited Cathryn Byrne up to the podium to give public comment regarding the traffic installations in the Northeast portion of town.  
Ms. Byrne reported that herself and others are waiting on information from the Village. from a FOIA and a letter to Interim Village Administrator Walsh.

President Adduci invited Mary Anne Fischer up to the podium to give public comment regarding the traffic installations in the Northeast portion of town.

Ms. Fischer reported being a resident of River Forest for 40 years and that the barriers look ridiculous and are not needed. She stated she never had an issue with traffic in the area and does not know what spurred this issue.

President Adduci invited Dr. Nucifora up to the podium to give public comment regarding the traffic installations in the Northeast portion of town.

Dr. Nucifora asked if the Village has already decided that the traffic installations will become permanent.

President Adduci stated yes and the projects have been budgeted for.

Dr. Nucifora made remarks on the conditions of the alleys in the Northeast portion of town. Dr. Nucifora also brought in photos on posterboard displaying traffic issues that she reports are being caused by the traffic installations.

Dr. Nucifora stated that she perceives these traffic installations as narrowly focused mitigation and ineffective.

Dr. Nucifora also displayed maps explaining the difference between the barriers and infrastructure in Oak Park and River Forest.

President Adduci invited Stephanie Petersmarck from Clinton Place up to the podium to give public comment regarding the traffic installations in the Northeast portion of town.

Ms. Petersmack stated that she was concerned about the Village making the decision to implement these traffic installations contrary to the advice of the professional traffic study.

She also wondered if this could legally be determinantal in case of a lawsuit.

Ms. Petersmarck also asked how these installations would impact emergency vehicles attempting to access that portion of River Forest.

Finally, Ms. Petersmarck reported that the installations have only made speeding traffic along Greenfield even worse.

Ms. Petersmarck asked if the Traffic and Safety Commission followed the recommendation of the report?

Interim Village Administrator Walsh reported the recommendation was fairly like to what the Board adopted.

President Adduci invited Dr. Shana Novick & Rob Novick up to the podium to give public comment regarding the traffic installations in the Northeast portion of town.

Dr. Novick gave remarks speaking against the new traffic installations. Mr. Novick reported that it took him nearly an additional 15-20 minutes to get to work today and that he worried how these installations are impacting business in the area.

Dr. Novick reported on the negative impacts these traffic installations are having on her dental practice. She also asked when and where is a potential vote to remove these barricades?

President Adduci noted that the Traffic & Safety Commission is meeting on Wednesday, March 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### **4. ELECTED OFFICIAL COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Trustee Bachner started with a land acknowledgment. She reported enjoying the 4th Grade Girl Scouts from Willard School at an event she attended with other members of the Board.

Trustee Gillis reported attending the Planet Green Leaders lunch the previous week. She also reported that the C4 conference will be on June 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Trustee Vazquez reminded everyone to sign up for e-waste by March 15<sup>th</sup> with Lake Shore Recycling.

Village Clerk Keller stated he had nothing additional to add to the permanent record.

Trustee Brennan apologized for missing the last meeting due to a late flight. She reported issues with the recorded audio from the last meeting due to technical issues and people not utilizing the microphones.

Trustee Brennan reiterated Trustee Bachner's comments regarding the Girl Scouts Events. She then read some comments the Girl Scouts made about River Forest and what they would change about RF.

She also reported errors with a flyer sent out about an electrical aggregation opportunity. Ms Brennan noted that the flyer was a bit confusing and needed clarification.

Trustee Gillis and President Adduci attempted to clarify some of the errors on the flyer for Trustee Brennan.

Trustee Bachner also raised questions regarding the program.

Trustee Brennan also reported about giving a presentation at the Lincoln Elementary School Sustainability Club. She gave thanks to Village staff for delivering waste stations to the event.

Trustee Brennan stated she attended the One Earth Film Festival Gala and the Oak Park River Forest Historical Museum Gala.

Trustee Brennan and President Adduci had a conversation on whether the traffic installations were originally placed as temporary measure, vs a permanent one. She emphasized to Village residents to participate in the upcoming meeting in order to give their feedback.

Trustee O'Connell reported attending the Saint Patrick's Day parade in Forest Park with Trustee Gillis and President Adduci and enjoyed the day.

Trustee O'Connell asked for members of the public attending the Traffic and Safety meeting to be civil and respectful with the neighbors who are volunteers on the commission.

President Adduci and Interim Village Administrator Walsh explained what an item being budgeted means. Ms. Adduci explained further on what was voted on unanimously by the VRF Board.

Trustee Brennan commented that there is further confusion on the permanence of the traffic issues based on what was discussed in the October meeting.

President Adduci asked Director Loster to give clarification remarks regarding the "temporary" status of the barriers. Mr. Loster explained that the Board did vote to implement the present measures.

Director Loster reported the difference between the Commission's recommendation and the Village Board's recommendations. He also explained how the Village Wide Traffic Survey and Study will impact potential further changes.

Village Attorney Lance Malina made remarks clarifying the "temporary" status of the Village Board ordinance. Attorney Malina further explained that any ordinance is subject to changes based on resident input.

President Adduci also reported enjoying spending time with the Girl Scouts. She stated she met with the Cook County Assessor Kaegi, and reminded everyone that the tri-annual assessment is this year and to take the opportunity of the appeal process for property taxes.

## 5. PUBLIC HEARING: IEPA LEAD SERVICE LINES

Interim Village Administrator Walsh gave a statement on the program.

There was no public comment.

**MOTION** by Trustee Vazquez to close the Public Hearing. Seconded by Trustee Bachner.

Roll call:

Ayes: Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, Bachner, O'Connell

Absent: Trustee Johnson

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

## 6. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Village Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – February 27, 2023
- b. Accounts Payable – February 2023 - \$1,666,928.53
- c. Finance Report - February
- d. Administration Department Report
- e. Department Reports
- f. Award of Contract - 2023 Street Improvement Project (SIP) – Schroeder Asphalt Services - \$335,936.80
- g. Award of Contract - 2023 Curb and Sidewalk Replacement Program – Strada Construction Co. - \$61,897.50
- h. Award of Contract - 2023 Pavement Preservation Project – Denler, Inc - \$48,262.50
- i. Award of Contract - 2023 Asphalt Pavement Crack Sealing Project – Denler, Inc. - \$45,900.00
- j. Award of Contract - 2023 Street Patching Program – Schroeder Asphalt Services - \$94,135.15
- k. Award of Contract - 2023 Sewer Lining Project – Visu-Sewer of Illinois - \$127,578.50
- l. Women's History Month – Proclamation

**MOTION** by Trustee O'Connell to approve consent agenda items A-L. Second by Trustee Bachner.

Roll call:

Ayes: Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, Bachner, O'Connell

Absent: Trustee Johnson

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

**7. CONSENT ITEMS FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION**

**8. RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES**

**9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**10. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Award of Contract – Madison Street Asbestos Abatement – Husar Abatement LTD - \$51,719.00

**MOTION** by Trustee Vazquez award a contract to Husar Abatement, Ltd. In an amount not to exceed \$51,719 and authorize the Village Administrator to execute a contract agreement subject to Village Attorney review. Seconded by Trustee O'Connell.

Mr. Walsh explained background information on the asbestos portion of the Madison Street Demolition project and how the Village got to this point.

Mr. Walsh stated that the Village emailed around 20 separate contractors for the bid and received only two official bids. He explained it was an expedited bidding process.

Regarding the questions earlier from Ms. Borman, Mr. Walsh stated that the work will start no sooner than 10 days from when the permit is applied for. He also reported that the abatement process will take no more than ten days.

Mr. Walsh could not give a date or timeline on the actual demolition project however he said it would be as soon as possible after the asbestos abatement project is completed.

Regarding the permits for the two houses on Lathrop, Mr. Walsh stated that the Village has not applied for them yet as they only have a 30 day time limit.

Mr. Walsh reported that the Village has hired Northern Environmental Development(NED) to perform the 3<sup>rd</sup> party oversight on the asbestos abatement. Mr. Walsh explained NED will perform periodic site visits and testing and will also present the Village with a final report on the project after the abatement.

Mr. Walsh stated the demolition process would not start until the final report from NED is received and reviewed with Cook County. Finally, Mr. Walsh stated that NED will not be overseeing the demolition process, just the asbestos abatement. He reported the Village will hire a different contractor for the demolition oversight.

Mr. Walsh noted he does not have a date for the next Economic Development Commission meeting.

Trustee Brennan asked for a clarification on the historic features of the building, specifically the are glass, & the name of the site supervisor.

Mr. Walsh reported as of last week, Lutheran Child Family Services has shown interest in the windows.

Mr. Walsh explained Aaron Sanchez is the site supervisor that he has been working with for Husar Abatement and that Kevin and Michael Casey are the representatives from NED.

A member of the public asked how the alley projects will impact the parking on Madison Street?

Mr. Walsh stated that he did not see an issue arising in the future.

Trustee Bachner asked for clarification on the developers John Houseal consulted with.

Mr. Walsh stated he does not have that information at this time.

President Adduci gave an explanation on what the residents can expect to see regarding North Avenue and Madison Street at the next Economic Development Commission meeting.

Village Attorney Lance Molina requested that the motion be amended to waive the formal competitive bidding process.

Trustee Vazquez amended his original motion to waive the formal bidding process.

Roll call:

Ayes: Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, Bachner, O'Connell

Absent: Trustee Johnson

Nays: None

Motion Passes

b. Stormwater Master Plan – Project Update and Presentation

Margie Cekander of River Oaks Drive gave public comment regarding the Storm Water Master Plan. She reported issues with the previous two meetings regarding the Stormwater Master Plan and felt as if those meetings existed to check boxes.

Ms. Cekander reported that the residents in Western River Forest are impacted due to their proximity to the River and location along main sewer lines.

Ms. Cekander asked the Village to consider being as transparent as possible throughout this process and allowing residents to digest the information before making any final decisions.

Director Loster gave a short summary of the process and how the Village has gotten to this point. He stressed that the following discussion is very preliminary and is about conceptual ideas.

Director Loster introduced Jeff Julkowski with Christopher Burke engineering to present the preliminary plan.

Mr. Julkowski gave the presentation on the preliminary storm water master plan. He started with background information on terminology and the guiding principles for the plan. He showed maps that explain how each section of the Village drains and to where. He then presented options the Village could take and the related costs.

Trustee Vazquez asked a clarification question regarding stormwater flows in the Northern portion of town on one the displays in the presentation.

Mr. Julkowski noted the vulnerabilities of the stormwater infrastructure in the central portion of town. He explained that having a 10 year storm level of protection would be an appropriate goal. To achieve that, he presented different plan costs.

Trustee Brennan asked for clarification on where the stormwater infrastructure vaults would be placed for the central portion of town.

Mr. Julkowski stated they would be placed under the streets since there is no present green space in the central part of the Village.

Trustee Vazquez asked if the price for the central portion would be separate from the price for the other two projects.

Mr. Julkowski confirmed that the prices are separate from each other.

Trustee Gillis asked if it would make sense to install the same infrastructure needed for the central portion of town in the other two portions.

Mr. Julkowski stated that it comes down to what level of protection the Village wants to implement and that level of protection is over spending.

Trustee O'Connell asked how these projects will impact the local water district.

Mr. Julkowski reported that these projects will not change how the water district will receive water or the amount of water the district receives. All the recommendations do not include new connections to existing water district measures. These recommendations are all about creating new water storage options.

Trustee Bachner stated the Village should consider the impacts of the larger storms, more than 10-year storms, that are becoming more prominent.

Mr. Julkowski stated the Village could consider utilizing privately installed infrastructure such as overhead sewers/check valves/backflow preventers to help mitigate the larger storms.

Mr. Walsh asked how recent the variables and statistics for the rainfalls are.

Mr. Julkowski stated that those variables were updated two years ago and have considered the increase in larger storms.



Trustee Brennan asked which area of town is at most risk.

Mr. Julkowski stated the central portion of the village from Division Street to Oak Avenue is particularly undersized with its present sewer structure.

Trustee Vazquez requested more information on financing and the project before making any decision. And, how can the costs be spread out and/or financed before it is implemented?

Director Loster commented the Village can implement the project in whatever timeline/fashion the Board sees fit.

Trustee O'Connell asked if there are any strategic points the Village should address first.

Director Loster stated yes.

Trustee Vazquez asked if it would make sense to start with the central portion as it is the largest and most in need.

Mr. Julkowski stated that would make sense.

Trustee Brennan asked if the Village would have to consider State owned roads.

Director Loster stated no state-owned roads would be worked on outside of Lake Street. And previously, work in the north east section of the Village was not an issue with working with state owned Harlem Ave.

Trustee Bachner stated she would like the Village to move forward with the infrastructure.

Trustee Vazquez reiterated he would like to wait for more information.

President Adduci and Trustee Gillis stressed that green initiatives and other forms of infrastructure should be utilized in these plans to help mitigate storm water issues.

Director Loster reported that those systems are involved in the stormwater proposal and will be discussed at further dates.

Trustee Bachner asked if these installations will impact property values and insurance.

Director Loster stated no.

Clerk Keller asked if there are any portions of the Village that are registered flood plains.

Director Loster reported yes, certain areas along Chicago and Thatcher in the Western portions of town.

Ms. Cekander of the audience asked Mr. Julkowski a question on the variables used in the study and the placement of water upstream from residents in the Western areas of the Village.

Mr. Julkowski addressed the questions about the levels of storms and how rain amounts per hour make a key difference in terms of flooding.

President Adduci stressed that this is just the start of the conversation regarding the Storm Water Plan and suggested the Village host some community meetings regarding the plan.

Trustee Vazquez asked if there is a possibility it would be cheaper to place storage tanks in residential properties instead of the streets.

Director Loster stated that may address a separate issue of private properties flooding.

## 11. EXECUTIVE SESSION

**MOTION** by Trustee Bachner to enter Executive Session pursuant to 5ILCS 120/2(c)(2) to discuss: Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives. The Village Board will adjourn after executive session and will not return to open session. Seconded by Trustee O'Connell

## 12. ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION** to adjourn by Trustee O'Connell. Second by Trustee Vazquez

Roll call:

Ayes: Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, O'Connell, Bachner

Absent: Johnson

Nays: None

The Village Board of Trustees Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

  
Jonathan Keller, Village Clerk