

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST  
REGULAR VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES  
Monday, December 13, 2021**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Board of Trustees was held on Monday, December 13, 2021 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 7:00p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: President Adduci, Trustees Bachner, Brennan, Gillis, Johnson, Vazquez, Village Clerk Keller

Absent: None

Also, Present: Village Administrator Brian Murphy, Assistant Village Administrator Lisa Scheiner, Assistant to the Village Administrator Jonathan Pape, Management Analyst Sara Phyfer, Management Analyst/Deputy Clerk Elijah Bebora, Fire Marshal Kevin Wiley, Police Chief James O’Shea, Finance Director Rosemary McAdams, Director of Public Works and Development Services Jeff Loster, Village Attorney Greg Smith

Roll call:

Ayes: Trustees Bachner, Brennan, Gillis, Johnson, Vazquez

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

President Adduci led the pledge of allegiance.

**3. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Village Resident Manny Yu came to speak on behalf of the Promenade Association. He stated the Public Works Department recently placed a gas pump on the south side of the facility, about 50 feet from the front door of his home. He remarked he is concerned about his health and the risk of property values decreasing due to the presence of the gas pump. He stated that he requests the Village reevaluate the relocation of the pump, restrict hours of gas pump usage, and better communicate proposed changes so residents can provide their input.

Sarah O’Shea Munoz, Real Estate Agent at Berkshire Hathaway, stated that she represented Manny Yu when he purchased his home. She remarked at the time of

purchase, he knew the house was located next to the Public Works building but did not anticipate a high level of disruption from the property. She commented that there are six housing units that face the Public Works building and homeowners are concerned about their property values decreasing due to the presence of the gas pump. She remarked the Village Board should reconsider relocating the gas pump for the future benefit of the Village.

David Fry, a resident of 31 Forest Avenue, stated he lives next to the Public Works building. He stated he agrees with some of Mr. Yu's comments. He remarked the gas pump was installed at its current location without prior communication with homeowners. He asked which vehicles would be using this pump and at what times. He asked if there is an alternative commercial location the Village can use to gas their vehicles.

President Adduci stated she understands residents' concerns on the location of the gas pump and will direct Staff to find a resolution to the issue.

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

Trustee Bachner began with a land acknowledgment, stating that this land was once and still is inhabited by Indigenous people and that River Forest continues to be a place that people from diverse backgrounds live and gather. She stated she wishes everyone a happy holiday. She commented the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group continues to make good progress towards drafting a request for proposal. She stated while on a recent walk, she saw a sign on snow removal which encouraged the public on the importance of clearing snow from sidewalks. She remarked she often hears from senior citizens and members of the disabled community that it can be difficult to walk or use their motorized scooters when curb and sidewalk areas are not shoveled. She stated that she would like to see the Village draft communications on the importance of clearing snow from sidewalks.

Trustee Gillis stated she wishes everyone a joyous holiday season for all residents. She commented the Light Up the Night in River Forest event will take place on Saturday, December 18. She remarked there will be a lot of luminaries along Village streets and it should be a beautiful view as residents walk on Village sidewalks. She stated she virtually attended the Maywood Chamber of Commerce with President Adduci. She commented the meeting focused on how the Maywood Chamber of Commerce is tapping into Dominican University to assist Maywood's small businesses and nonprofit organizations.

Trustee Vazquez stated he wishes everyone a terrific holiday season and his block in River Forest will be participating in the Light Up the Night illumination on December 18. He stated that the Age Friendly Communities Collaborative met on December 1 and discussed the residential energy efficiency program and home energy assessments. He stated the Age Guide presented on dementia friendly training and will make trainings

available to all municipalities. He stated that the Illinois Department of Aging presented their statewide plan containing goals to support seniors in the Village and statewide. He remarked the special topic during the meeting was on expanding public spaces, parks, and what other communities are doing to achieve those goals.

Village Clerk Jon Keller stated he would like to congratulate the Fenwick Friars on winning the State Men's Football Championship.

Trustee Brennan stated she would like to thank Village Staff for placing the holiday recycling bin on Central Avenue. She commented that residents should make sure to place any lights that are intended for recycling into the bin and not leave them out. She commented that December 10 was the last date for Village leaf pickup, but piles of leaves are still visible on Village streets. She stated that she would like to know what is the plan from Village Staff to address the issue.

Jeff Loster stated that leaf pickup crews will be making another sweep this week to remove any leftover leaf piles. He commented that composting bags get picked up every other week during the winter.

Trustee Brennan stated that she attended the Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation meeting at Dominican University. She remarked the National Day of Racial Healing is on January 18 and Dominican University has events planned to commemorate the day. She commented Dominican University is having a keynote address by Dr. Reggie Williams. She remarked that people with the University can attend the keynote in person, while others in the Village can attend via streaming. She stated that Dominican University is planning on facilitating a White Accountability Group (WAG) for individuals who identify as white to explore how to recognize white privilege and develop strategies for change. She remarked small groups will meet every other Monday, over eight sessions on Zoom, beginning on January 31.

Trustee Johnson stated he wishes everyone a happy holiday and urges residents to inspect their snow removal equipment to ensure they are properly tuned and in working order. He remarked that Cook County is currently accepting property tax appeals through January 9th and urges residents to take advantage of the opportunity to file a property tax appeal. He remarked that he is looking forward to Village Administrator Brian Murphy joining as Co-Chair of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group.

Trustee O'Connell stated he welcomes Village Administrator Brian Murphy and is looking forward to working with him. He commented that he wishes residents a happy holiday season full of safety and joy. He commented that tornadoes have caused damage in Kentucky and other states and urged residents to donate to the Red Cross to provide relief for tornado disaster victims. He commented the gas pump issue was dealt with in December of 2020. He stated a lot of time and effort was put into completing the project. He commented that if the Board would like to take a step back to look at the gas pump issue, he is comfortable with that decision.

Village President Adduci stated she virtually attended the Sustainability Forum hosted by PlanIt Green. She remarked that she heard from two youths who attended the Climate Change Forum in Scotland on their experiences. She stated she attended the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus Age Friendly Communities Collaborative meeting. She remarked she attended the Illinois Municipal League Board of Directors meeting on the federal infrastructure legislation featuring Senator Dick Durbin as the keynote speaker. She stated she would like to thank Lisa Scheiner for her hard work during the time she was the Acting Village Administrator, and she wished everyone happy holidays.

Cory Robertson, of Corwin Partners and Jamison Realty, provided a marketing update to the Village Board regarding the Lake and Lathrop development property. He stated in the last month, the development had 10 inquiries, which delivered 5 appointments. He commented about a large offer that was rescinded. He stated they will work with the buyer who originally rescinded their offer to finalize an agreement. He remarked the recent agreement with the Village has made buyers comfortable with the time frame of the project.

President Adduci asked about the timeline on the project.

Trustee Bachner asked if the rescinded offer was residential or commercial.

Mr. Robertson stated the rescinded offer was residential.

Ms. Scheiner commented that despite the late start the developer should be able to complete the project on time.

Trustee Brennan asked about the lender.

Ms. Scheiner commented that a representative from Sedgewick would have to comment on that question.

Village Attorney Greg Smith stated that he has reached out to the lender to secure their attorney's contact information.

## **5. CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Village Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - November 22, 2021
- b. Executive Session Meeting Minutes - November 22, 2021
- c. Special Village Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - December 6, 2021
- d. Executive Session Meeting Minutes - December 6, 2021
- e. Approval of an Ordinance Levying Taxes for Corporate Purposes for the Current Fiscal Year Commencing on the 1st Day of May, 2021 and Ending on the 30th Day of April, 2022 - Ordinance
- f. Ratification of an Agreement with Integrity Environmental Services, Inc. in the Amount of \$34,925.00 for the Fuel System Improvement Project - Authorize the

- Village Administrator to Execute the Contract Agreement
- g. Approval of a Change Order in the Amount of \$20,926.98 for the Construction of the 2021 Curb and Sidewalk Replacement Project - Resolution
  - h. 2022 Public Notice of Meeting Schedule
  - i. Monthly Department Reports
  - j. November Financial Report
  - k. Accounts Payable - November 2021 - \$2,191,491.32
  - l. Village Administrator's Report

Trustee Brennan requested the removal of item f from the consent agenda.

Trustee Johnson made a motion, seconded by Trustee O'Connell, to approve Consent Agenda Items A - E and G-L

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

Trustee O'Connell made a motion to approve consent agenda item f. Seconded by Trustee Johnson.

Trustee Brennan stated she asked to pull agenda item f to discuss the status of this project.

Jeff Loster stated the agenda item is the consulting portion of the project. He commented that after the project was completed, they realized that the consulting portion was never brought before the Board, which is why it is being done now.

Trustee Brennan asked if the Village would seek out the consultant for more work now that issues have arisen with the project.

Director Loster commented that the Village could seek out the consultant, however the project is complete.

Trustee O'Connell commented that the project is done and the Village Board worked on the issue over a year ago. He stated that he would like acknowledgment that the gas pump will not be relocated.

President Adduci commented that residents are asking for three items, not just to relocate it.

Trustee Johnson stated that the original Village communication should shed light on the process.

Jeff Loster stated that the original intent of the project was to replace the existing dispenser in the same location, but the State Fire Marshall indicated that there are new requirements in place that restricts where the Village can place the gas pump. He remarked the only option the Village had was to adjust the plan to meet the new criteria.

President Adduci directed Mr. Loster to provide his explanation to residents, and respond to questions on the hours for refueling and the aesthetic of the gas pump.

Trustee O'Connell asked what the expectation of the Village Board is in regard to communication.

Trustee Bachner stated that it makes sense to evaluate what it would cost to move the gas dispenser.

Trustee Brennan stated that the gas pump is not pleasing to the residents. She remarked that the Village owes it to residents to evaluate the issue further.

President Adduci stated that it's worth another look on behalf of the residents.

Trustee Brennan stated that the Village should re-engage with the project consultant.

Trustee Vazquez stated that re-engaging the consultant would cost the Village more money. He commented that he is fine with looking into the issue, but that he has concerns with re-engaging with the consultant due to the cost.

Trustee Johnson indicated that asking the consultant questions may not be an issue.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

## **6. CONSENT ITEMS FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION**

None.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES**

a. Historic Preservation Commission - Recommendation for an Amendment of the

Village Code Regarding Demolition Delay for Significant Properties that are Zoned in the Public, Recreational and Institutional District - Ordinance

Motion by Trustee Bachner to approve an ordinance change to extend the maximum potential demolition delay for the Public, Recreational and Institutional zone significant properties from six months to twelve months. Seconded by Trustee Gillis.

David Franek, Chairperson of the Historic Preservation Commission stated when the Historic Preservation Commission was formed, an architectural firm conducted a survey of all properties within the Village. He commented the findings from the survey found that 296 properties, primarily single family homes, fit the historical property designation. He remarked Village Ordinance allows for a demolition delay of up to 6 months after submission of an application seeking a historical property designation. He stated the Historic Preservation Commission is recommending a demolition delay for 29 properties that are designated as public, recreational, and institutional. He remarked due to the size and location of the properties, these transactions are much more complicated and become difficult due to the involvement of multiple parties. He commented it is unlikely any viable alternatives can be found in the 6-month period and this ordinance was originally designed for single family residences. He remarked if the Village Board permits an extension of up to 12 months, it will allow sufficient time for owners, potential purchasers and the community to make an assessment on what is happening.

Jon Pape commented that a public meeting date was set, and notices were sent to the 29 property owners.

Chairperson Franek stated that as of today, no responses to the notices have been received.

Trustee O'Connell commented that a few of the properties are County owned.

Village Attorney Greg Smith commented that County owned properties do change, and the list does change over time.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

- b. Traffic and Safety Commission - Recommendation Regarding Pole-Mounted Radar Signs on Thatcher Avenue and Temporary Knock-Down Bollards at the Limits of the Parking Lanes of Chicago Avenue with its Intersect at William Street

Director Jeff Loster stated that he is seeking consensus from the Village Board on the Traffic and Safety Commission's recommendation of mounting a radar feedback sign on the West side of Thatcher Avenue near the intersection with Vine Street. He stated the

Traffic and Safety Commission also recommends the installation of knock-down bollards in the parking lanes in the eastbound and westbound directions of Chicago Avenue during non-winter months to prevent vehicles from using parking lanes as a driving lane.

The Village Board reached a consensus and accepted the Traffic and Safety Commission's recommendation to mount a radar feedback sign on the West side of Thatcher Avenue near the intersection with Vine Street and install knock-bollards in the parking lanes in the eastbound and westbound directions of Chicago Avenue during non-winter months.

- c. Development Review Board – 400 Ashland Avenue – Amendment to Planned Development Permit to Convert Commercial Space into Studio Apartment – Ordinance.

Trustee Gillis made a motion to approve an Ordinance granting an amendment to the Planned Development Permit at 400 Ashland Avenue. Seconded by Trustee Brennan.

John Conrad Schiess, Architect for 400 Ashland Avenue, addressed the Village Board. He stated he reviewed the development plans with the Village technical team before bringing his permit to the Development Review Board. He commented on November 4, 2021, the Development Review Board voted in favor of recommending a permit for the proposed development. He stated there will be no change in real estate classification, density, and building envelope. He commented that there will be updates to align with parking requirements and exterior window changes. He stated there will be 5 offsite parking spaces based on recommendations from the Development Review Board as a condition for permit approval. He stated he is asking the Village Board to accept the Development Review Board's recommendation for the offsite parking spaces.

Trustee Brennan asked what was the issue in regard to the parking and what is being asked of the Board.

Lisa Scheiner commented that the planned development requires an additional parking space for new the residential unit. She stated that the property owner is securing off-site parking to meet the requirement. She remarked that the additional residential unit will be designated as an affordable housing unit for ten years.

Trustee Brennan asked how the Village will know that a low income housing resident will get the housing unit?

Village Attorney Greg Smith commented that he was unsure how the Village can enforce the income restrictions on the housing unit.

Viktor Jakovljevic, owner of 400 Ashland Avenue, stated that he is willing to keep the residential unit as low income housing for 30 years.



Motion by Trustee Vazquez to amend the affordable housing terms from 10 years to 30 years.  
Second by Trustee Gillis.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

d. Sustainability Commission - 2020 Carbon Inventory Presentation

Shannon Roberts, Commissioner on the Sustainability Commission, [presented](#) the Sustainability Commission's River Forest Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Reduction plan to the Village Board. The presentation focused on the components of the Village sustainability plan, climate commitments, and frameworks to support approaches to climate action.

Trustee Bachner asked if any recycling goes into the trash and how that metric is measured. She asked why electricity usage did not increase during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Commissioner Roberts stated that Roy Strom measures recycling and that data from ComEd did not show an uptick in usage from 2019-2020. She commented that the key lever is electricity usage and that needs to move into renewable sources. She remarked electricity use should increase as more people transition to electric vehicles. She stated currently, there are no alternatives to natural gas, but other energy sources such as hydrogen are being explored.

President Adduci stated that electric vehicle charging stations will be a big part of the future.

Commissioner Roberts stated that water usage is down in the Village and that the Village is meeting its goals for reducing greenhouse gases.

Trustee Brennan stated that she would like to extended a thank you to the Commission for the amazing work that they do. She asked what the Village Board can do to help with the Sustainability Commission's efforts.

Commissioner Roberts stated that they have asked for help in meeting goals and that all decisions need to incorporate the needs and goals of the Commission.

**8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**9. NEW BUSINESS**

a. Appointment of Brian Murphy as Co-Chair of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion *Ad Hoc* Advisory Group

Motion by Trustee Bachner to appoint Brian Murphy as Co-Chair of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion *Ad Hoc* Advisory Group. Seconded by Trustee Johnson.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Vazquez made a motion, seconded by Trustee Brennan, to adjourn the Village Board of Trustees Meeting at 9:17 p.m.

Roll call:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

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Jonathan Keller, Village Clerk