

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2022**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, February 8, 2022 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 7:03p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Chairperson Simon, Commissioners Charrette, Cheng, Veazie, Student
Commissioners Meyer, Raidt
Absent: Commissioners Clancy, McLean, Roberts
Also Present: Trustee Lisa Gillis, Management Analyst Sara Phyfer

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Charrette made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Cheng, to approve the January 11, 2022 meeting minutes, as amended.

Commissioner Charrette suggested adding SolSmart to the statement about the silver designation in item 6.

Commissioner Cheng suggested clarifying the statement in item 4 about community solar.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Chairperson Simon, Commissioners Charrette, Cheng, Veazie
Absent: Commissioners Clancy, McLean, Roberts
Nays: None
Motion Passes.

4. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Student Commissioner Meyer stated she had no updates yet regarding the OPRF climate policy but they will be meeting tomorrow and monthly. She stated an Oak Park commission member spoke at Enviro Club and discussed reaching out as much as possible. She also reported the Oak Park was created with Wix.

Commissioner Charrette reported on the PlanItGreen meeting and shared that the Illinois Secretary of State website is a source for electric vehicle numbers by zip code. She reviewed the growth in EV numbers. The Commissioners also briefly discussed geo-thermal installations. Commissioner Charrette stated the Park District of Oak Park hosts Sustainable Saturdays on the second Saturday of the month at Austin Garden Environmental Centers. She noted the Oak Park Sustainably marketing campaign and stated she would follow up with their marketing company. She reported she attended Commissioner Roberts' meeting with the UIC Department of Urban Planning. She stated she and Student Commissioner Raidt met with Cory Kadlec and David Hoyt to discuss Community Wildlife Habitat, and that Ms. Raidt would be following up with residents who have Parkway for Pollinator gardens to see if they are interested in becoming certified wildlife habitats.

Trustee Gillis reported on the Village Board meeting and noted that all alleys will be upgraded with permeable pavers by 2023. She also noted that a new State law goes into effect on January 1, 2023 regarding upgraded smoke detectors and that the Fire Chief is working on a plan to sustainably recycle old smoke detectors.

Ms. Phyfer stated SolSmart did not accept the Village's zoning designation letter and that Staff will be working on modifying the letter to resubmit it for consideration. She also noted she had two complimentary tickets for the One Earth Film Festival Launch Party. The Commission briefly discussed the film festival, and it was noted the Village is sponsoring the Plastic Bag Store film.

Student Commissioner Raidt reported she presented VegOut to the Veggie Club at OPRF and that she is trying to advocate for community solar to families she knows.

5. DISCUSSION REGARDING SINGLE USE PLASTIC ORDINANCE

Ms. Phyfer reviewed the single-use plastic ordinances, stating it would require places for eating to only hand out single-use plastics for take-out and delivery orders at the customer's request, meaning they would "opt in" to receive them. She noted this was brought forward by the elected officials and that it has been a topic at PlanItGreen meetings. She also noted the City of Chicago recently adopted a similar ordinance, and the Village can do what Chicago has done.

The Commission discussed the need for the ordinance. Trustee Gillis noted it could save restaurants money, and Commissioner Charrette suggested comparing to Oak Park's proposed ordinance. The Commission reviewed the approximate timeline for the process.

Commissioner Cheng stated she is in favor of the outcome and suggested having broader conversations with local businesses to think sustainably.

Trustee Gillis reviewed the plastic bag day meeting the Commission held with the business community. She noted compostable containers cost more money but they could pick that dialogue back up.

Chairperson Simon stated the Commission could provide businesses a one-page resource on ways to be more sustainable.

Commissioner Veazie stated he supports it and asked for clarification about containers.

Chairperson Simon stated he thought the Chicago ordinance was created with the restaurant community to not add additional costs or administrative burdens to them. He reiterated that this would save restaurants money and that many online ordering platforms already have this in place.

In discussing the need for an ordinance, Trustee Gillis the Village governs through ordinance and that having an ordinance in place would give restaurants an out if someone complains they did not receive utensils.

Commissioner Charrette concurred and stated the only reason anyone would object is if they are not in compliance. She asked whether it should be extended to the colleges.

The Commission discussed the idea of this ordinance being a first step towards restaurants being more sustainable while noting the cost burden of doing so.

Student Commissioner Meyer concurred that they have to look out for businesses.

Ms. Phyfer stated the Commission may be able to carve out college cafeterias.

6. DISCUSSION REGARDING COMMUNITY SOLAR AND BENCHMARK ENROLLMENT

Ms. Phyfer stated MCSquared shared enrollment numbers. The Commission discussed the numbers and requested to get these regularly and to ask for context comparing to other municipalities of the same size.

The Commission also discussed clarifying the “subscription” fee and bills, and how to communicate the program to get more enrollment.

7. UPDATE ON EV NUMBERS

Commissioner Charrette stated she would check these numbers quarterly and report if something interesting happens.

8. COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Cheng thanked everyone for participating with the communications process. The Commission discussed the communications calendar and content options.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Student Commissioner Meyer stated she could reach out to the Wednesday Journal to provide an update on community solar and help promote the program.

Commissioner Charrette stated she spoke with Mr. Kadlec and that he could set up Student Commissioner Meyer to present about the Enviro Club to his 8th grade classes.

10. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING - MARCH 8

The Committee reached a consensus to hold its next meeting Tuesday, March 8, 2022.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Veazie made a motion, seconded by Chairperson Simon, to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 PM.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Chairperson Simon, Commissioners Charrette, Cheng, Veazie

Absent: Commissioners Clancy, McLean, Roberts

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

Sara Phyfer, Secretary