

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2023**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, October 10, 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 7:01 PM. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Chairperson Simon, Commissioners Charrette, Cheng, Drury, Veazie, and Student Commissioner Stierwalt.
Absent: Commissioner Lennon
Also Present: Management Analyst Seth Jansen

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

3. ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Jansen noted minutes changes suggested by Commissioner Lennon, concerning typos. Commissioner Charrette suggested additional changes regarding the name of a business named in the September meeting. Commissioner Charrette made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Veazie to approve the meeting minutes as amended from September 12, 2023.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Chairperson Simon, Commissioners Charrette, Cheng, Drury, Veazie
Absent: Commissioner Lennon
Nays: None
Motion Passes.

4. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

Chairperson Simon began by recognizing Commissioner Cheng's time on the Commission and announcing that Commissioner Cheng would be stepping down by the end of the year. Commissioner Cheng discussed much of the work the Commission had achieved and recognized the present and past commissioners with whom she had worked.

Student Commissioner Stierwalt indicated he had reached out to the Roosevelt student who received honorable mention at the One Earth Film Festival but had not received a response back.

Commissioner Charrette provided an update from the most recent PlanIt Green meeting, noting a solar panel project occurring at Trinity High School and the electrification requirements for new buildings in Oak Park. She also spoke with David Hoyt from the Roosevelt Middle School Green4Good. Green4Good was wanting to seeing if the Village could host a Styrofoam recycling event in January. Green4Good is also hosting the annual pumpkin Smash at Roosevelt on November 4th, and they will

be having a plant sale in the spring. Commissioner Charrette said they also discussed having a film festival for the Roosevelt Student awardees and submissions to the One Earth Film Festival. Green4Good will also begin tracking carbon absorption at the garden at Roosevelt. Commissioner Charrette also attended an electrification event sponsored by Oak Park Sustainability that was targeted toward building owners; but suggested the Village and Commission could help promote the various ComEd rebate programs and get the information out.

Commissioner Veazie noted that Commissioner Lennon had met with Mr. Jansen, and Mr. Jansen indicated he still needs to provide the renewable energy working group with some information.

Commissioner Drury noted that her son spoke with a member of the Park District Board and raised the topic of more recycling containers at the parks.

5. WORKING GROUP REPORTS

Resident Volunteer Louise Mezzatesta has been working with Commissioner Charrette on the Electrification working group. She presented a detailed outline of the benefits and drawbacks of heat pumps. She advocated that the Commission use its role to educate residents about heat pumps. She suggested the Village look into a potential local incentive program. A heat pump can be used to fully replace an air conditioning and partially replace furnace usage. A heat pump can be used to fully replace the furnace when coupled with space heaters and mini splits. Ms. Mezzatesta suggested an advertising campaign to highlight the various options for heat pumps. Switching to heat pumps can be a strong first step to total electrification, reduce natural gas consumption, and, because of their efficiency, can reduce overall energy consumption. Ms. Mezzatesta noted the importance of working with a contractor who is familiar with heat pumps and that those experienced with heat pump installation can also assist with the various tax credits and rebates. Ms. Mezzatesta stated that even a nominal heat pump rebate would allow the Village to collect statistics on who is installing a heat pump. She noted the biggest drawback would be the cost to the Village and also noted issues with finding experienced HVAC contractors and navigating the paperwork for the rebates.

Chairperson Simon shared his experience with heat pumps, noting the efficiency, the cost, and the reduced size and noise of his furnace. The Commission discussed the usage of heat pumps locally, and the availability of experienced contractors. Commissioner Cheng suggested start by immediately getting the word out in the newsletter to raise awareness among residents. The Commission discussed how to encourage HVAC contractors to perform such work and any potential partnerships with Triton College, if they have a training program.

Mr. Jansen provided a brief update on his meeting with Commissioner Lennon regarding the focus of the Renewable Energy working group.

For the Waste working group, Commissioner Cheng noted the provision in the contract with LRS regarding annual meetings with the Commission concerning the composting program and requested that they be invited to a future Commission meeting. Commissioner Cheng mentioned wanting to see how the Village compares to other villages and how we could increase participation in the compost program. She noted it would be helpful for the Commission to know what the barriers are from LRS's perspective. Chairperson Simon discussed having questions ready for the in advance. Commissioner Charrette requested looking into how the Village could adopt a cost splitting program for the Village composting program, similar to Oak Park. Commissioner Veazie also stated he would be interested in visiting an LRS recycling plant.

Commissioner Drury inquired as to whether there was a cheat sheet for what can and cannot be recycled and potentially resharing that information to raise awareness. Mr. Jansen noted there are available infographics for both what can be recycled and what can be composted. Commissioner Charrette suggested adding it to the newsletter and having printed copies in the lobby at Village Hall. Student Commissioner Stierwalt also suggested linking to the LRS website with any communications, as he found it extremely helpful and easy to follow.

6. ELECTRIC VEHICLE READINESS COHORT UPDATE

Mr. Jansen provided an outline of the draft website and solicited input from the Commission on changes. Commissioner Cheng suggested specifically citing that the carbon data as being from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency on Planning. The Commission discussed the provision promoting EV installers be registered with the Illinois Commerce Commission and its potential effect in limiting the pool of installers. Commissioner Veazie noted that Level 1 chargers utilize the same outlet as household clothes dryers. Commissioner Charrette had suggested outreach to contractors who perform work and encouraging them to become registered. Commissioner Cheng suggested renaming "Consumer Resources" as "Thinking about Buying or Leasing an EV?" and moving it more toward the top near, after the introductory benefits of EV section. The Commission further discussed the outline of the website and how to present the information most effectively to residents and consumers.

Chairperson Simon inquired about establishing a time limit for charging at the current charging station at Village Hall, noting that most cars he's observed are fully charged and have been parked for hours. The Commission discussed the potential implementation of such a program.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Jansen outlined recent newsletter topics and solicited input for upcoming newsletters. The Commission agreed to utilize the information Ms. Mezzatesta had compiled on heat pumps for the November Monthly newsletter. The commission suggested sharing the recycling and composting infographics as part of a weekly newsletter. Commissioner Charrette suggested a weekly newsletter on the state bring your own container law as a weekly in December and combining it with information about the Refiller in Humboldt Park for the January monthly. Mr. Jansen did note that the annual holiday lights program has been set for this year and information on that would be included in the weekly the weekend of Thanksgiving. Student Commissioner Stierwalt volunteered to write a weekly newsletter on recycling and donating coats.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Jansen briefly provided a brief overview of the number of rooftop solar permits issued by the Village. Commissioner Charrette asked about the amount of electricity generated by each rooftop solar installation and inquired about updated numbers; Chairperson Simon shared the previous information last updated in 2020.

Mr. Jansen shared information regarding the Village electric aggregation program and the enrollment information he received back from MC2. Mr. Jansen also indicated he would share the 2022 Renewable Energy Credit report. The Commission discussed how the program works and how MC2 chooses accounts to enroll.

Commissioner Charrette again noted the state bring your own container law and a copy of the law included in the Commission Packet.

Mr. Jansen inquired with the Commission about hosting a C4 community engagement meeting. He noted similar meetings had been hosted in other C4 communities, with relatively strong turnout. The Commission inquired about what it all would consist of and how it would be structured. Mr. Jansen indicated he would get more information on how other events have been run and provide that information.

Commissioner Charrette plugged the date and time of this year's annual PlanIt Green Leadership Forum, specifically noting the afternoon time to accommodate attendance of high school students at the forum.

9. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING – NOVEMBER 14, 2023

The Commission reached a consensus to hold its next meeting Tuesday, November 14, 2023.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Cheng made a motion, seconded by Chairperson Simon to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 PM.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Chairperson Simon, Commissioners Charrette, Cheng, Drury, Veazie

Absent: Commissioner Lennon

Nays: None

Motion Passes.



Seth Jansen, Secretary