

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST  
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION  
TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 2023**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, April 11, 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 7:02 PM. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Chairperson Simon (arriving a 7:36) Commissioners Charrette, Cheng, Lennon (attending via Zoom), and Veazie (arriving at 7:04).

Absent: Commissioner Roberts, Student Commissioners Raidt and Stierwalt

Also Present: Management Analyst Seth Jansen

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Resident Dan Hollenbach of 610 Park Ave. wanted to raise the issue of noise pollution caused by gas-powered leaf blowers. He was prompted to raise the issue after reading about Oak Park and some north suburban communities banning the use of them and would like the Village to follow. He indicated he believes that commercial contractors should be the primary target of noise pollution; he wants to ensure regulations on residents are gradually phased in, with an emphasis on enforcing times when leaf blowers can be used. Mr. Hollenbach indicated that reducing the use of gas-powered equipment will increase both the social connectedness and health of the community by having more residents outside and interacting with each other.

The Commission then began discussing the Oak Park Leaf Blower Ban, which was an item under Other Business on the agenda. Commissioner Charrette provided some history and context to the leaf blower ban proposal. Commissioner Charrette also noted that while residents are primarily concerned about noise while the Commission's mission is more focused on the emissions caused by gas-powered leaf blowers. Mr. Hollenbach noted that electric leaf blowers are much quieter in his opinion. Mr. Hollenbach noted that some times he's heard leaf blowers being operated, and the Commission noted there is an existing noise ordinance for times of day that such equipment can be operated. Commissioner Cheng noted how the Leave the Leaves Program, which the Commission promotes in the autumn months, can be beneficial at addressing the issue by promoting the benefits of not blowing all leaves for collection. Mr. Jansen noted that the regional Cross Community Climate Collaborative is studying how communities can transition to electric lawn equipment and noted most Village equipment is already electric.

**3. ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES**

Commissioner Cheng made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Charrette to approve the meeting minutes from March 14, 2023.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Commissioners Charrette, Cheng, Lennon, Roberts, Veazie

Absent: Chairperson Simon, Commissioner Roberts

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

#### **4. COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

Commissioner Charrette asked when the Village's Arbor Day Tree planting would be held. Mr. Jansen stated he would find out more information. Commissioner Charrette mentioned she was part of a group that met with Sen. Harmon to discuss the proposed legislation banning Styrofoam and will discuss that later in the meeting. She also noted that a resident had approached her inquiring about compost for Har Zion Temple, as LRS no longer offers them composting, and asked for the Village to look into it. Mr. Jansen said the same matter had been raised at the Village Board meeting yesterday and that he was already looking into the issue.

No other commissioners had reports.

#### **5. COMMUNICATIONS**

Mr. Jansen provided an overview of the final draft Sustainability webpage. Commissioner Cheng provided feedback to make sure the topics on each page matches the table of contents on the home page. The Commission discussed events that can go into the Upcoming Green Events page and changing the title to say Green Dates and Deadlines. Commissioner Cheng provided input for upcoming events. Commissioner Lennon suggested comprehensive review and updating of the webpage every 6 months.

Mr. Jansen solicited input for weekly and monthly newsletter items. The Commissioners agreed to promote the new webpage, Earth Day, Arbor Day, and the Bicycle Exchange Event in the upcoming weekly newsletters. The Commission decided to highlight the completion of the permeable Green alleys for the May monthly newsletter. Commissioner Lennon also suggested, in response to the public comments, to have a weekly newsletter share a reminder of the existing Noise Ordinance for when equipment can be operated. Commissioner Charrette volunteered to write the newsletter article regarding the noise ordinance.

#### **6. 2023 COMMISSION INITIATIVES AND GOALS**

Chairperson Simon sought input for how the Commission wants to handle establishing initiatives and goals. He suggested having the May meeting be exclusively to workshopping initiatives and goals. The Commission agreed to this proposal, and Commissioner Lennon suggested a document to review in advance of the meeting. Commissioner Cheng suggested reviewing old programs and looking at which programs should be sunset. Commissioner

Lennon also suggested leveraging the work Oak Park has done for their plan and using that information to identify 4 or 5 items on which to focus.

## **7. OTHER BUSINESS**

Commissioner Veazie inquired about the status of the Des Plaines River Bike Trail. Mr. Jansen provided a brief update on the status of the engineering currently being conducted on the project and would look further into the status.

Chairperson Simon introduced the concept of a gas leaf blower ban and where Oak Park is at in the implementation of their ordinance doing such. Commissioner Charrette noted that many of the same landscaping companies work in both communities. The Commission discussed the best approach to implementing a similar ordinance locally and what the most effective outreach to the landscaping companies licensed by the village. Chairperson Simon also raised the existing provisions of the Oak Park ordinance, which prohibits use of gas leaf blowers during part of the year and using that as an intermediate step for phasing in the ban. Commissioner Charrette inquired about the work C4 was doing in this field, and Mr. Jansen provided a brief overview of the lawn equipment electrification working group and the information being discussed there. Commissioner Veazie stressed the need for engagement with stakeholders before such an ordinance is brought to the Village Board. The Commission discussed the next steps in pursuing the ordinance.

Mr. Jansen provided an update regarding the ongoing Yard Sign Recycling after the local elections and that information is being shared through social media. Mr. Jansen also provided an update on the sign-ups for compost delivery.

Chairperson Simon inquired about the status of the proposed Styrofoam ban legislation in Springfield. Commissioner Charrette provided an update on the meeting with Senate President Don Harmon on the issue. Commissioner Charrette indicated the President had a number of questions on the issue and explained the shorter timeframe that the second chamber has to take action on a bill, as opposed to the time the originating chamber and sponsor have to work on bill.

Mr. Jansen sought feedback from the Commission on the March E-waste Collection. The Commissioners inquired about quantity, and Mr. Jansen indicated that was not available yet. The Commission expressed concern about the broad pickup window and the concern of scrappers collecting items before they're being collected by LRS. The Commission discussed the benefits and costs of curbside e-waste collection vs e-waste drop off events.

## **8. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING – MAY 9, 2023**

The Commission reached a consensus to hold its next meeting Tuesday, May 9, 2023.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Cheng made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Veazie to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 PM.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Chairperson Simon, Commissioners Charrette, Cheng, Lennon, and Veazie

Absent: Commissioner Roberts

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

  
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Seth Jansen, Secretary