

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2025**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, October 14, 2025, 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 PM. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Co-Chair Charrette, Commissioners Kadlec, Avalos, Hoyt, and Marti, Student
Commissioner Stierwalt
Absent: Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioner Hayley
Also Present: Staff Liaison Seth Jansen

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

3. ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Marti made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kadlec, to approve the meeting minutes from September 9, 2025.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chair Charrette, Commissioners Kadlec, Avalos, Hoyt, and Marti
Absent: Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioner Hayley
Motion Passes.

4. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

Commissioner Kadlec attended a community event in Franklin Park with the Xerces Society that was part of Village of Franklin Park's Bee City and Tree City public events. Commissioner Kadlec also plugged upcoming sustainability events at Triton College; Mr. Jansen indicated he would add them to the sustainability events page on the Village website.

Commissioner Avalos indicated he would be attending the Illinois Environmental Council's Springfield lobby day to promote public transit and encourage phase out of Styrofoam. Commissioner Avalos also indicated the Triton Environmental Club would be hosting the director of the IEC at an event in November.

Commissioner Hoyt recommended promoting the Triton College events in a future newsletter. Commissioner Hoyt also recapped the Roosevelt Middle School native plant sale. Commissioner Hoyt stated that he observed river otters in Illinois while hiking the previous weekend.

Co-Chair Charrette attended the Forest Preserve green lawn equipment expo. Co-Chair Charrette also attended the Faith in Place Environmental Summit. Co-Chair Charrette also recommended the final interview with Jane Goodall.

5. BIRD CITY ILLINOIS UPDATE

Commissioner Hoyt met with the Director of the Trailside Museum at the Forest Preserve to discuss potential partnership in the Village attaining Bird City designation. The Forest Preserve is drafting an official letter of intent for the Forest Preserve to formally dedicate resources to the project. The Forest Preserve has existing relationships with Dominican and Concordia, along with Trinity High School, and would work to find ways to support their curricula through events such as bird walks. By building up these relationships incrementally, the hope is to eventually develop conservation recommendations to these institutions regarding the common nighthawk.

Commissioner Marti indicated interest in working through the Bird City designation process. He and Commissioner Hoyt indicated they would meet directly between meetings. The Commissioner discussed bird window collisions and bird mortalities and ways to raise awareness of the issue. Mr. Jansen offered staff support for any further updates in partnering with the Forest Preserve. Mr. Jansen also indicated the educational support events with other community partners could also serve as the public event component of the Bird City designation.

6. NATIVE PLANTS DISCUSSION

Mr. Jansen introduced the topic by briefly outlining actions previously done by the Commission and the Village with regards to native plants. Commissioner Hoyt proposed developing a native planting garden on Village property. The goal of the garden would be to add more native plants to Village property and to educate and encourage residents to add native plants to their yards as well. The commission discussed potential planting locations, including the areas near the community gardens at the pump station. The Commission discussed finding a planting location where it could be highlighted and visible for the community. Commissioner Hoyt stated that outside grant funding would likely be needed to fund this project. Commissioner Hoyt mentioned several small private grants that may be available. Mr. Jansen noted the Openlands/ComEd Green Region grant that had previously funded the Commission's Parkway Pollinator Project. Mr. Jansen indicated the grant opens in January with applications due in March. The Commission indicated interest in discussing the grant further at the January meeting to begin to develop an application. The Commission further discussed other potential planting location, specifically the parkways along the railroad tracks near Central Ave. and Hawthorne Ave. The Commission further discussed the native plant sale and seed propagation in helping residents plant their own native gardens.

7. COMMUNICATIONS AND STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Jansen outlined the revised draft of the Solar Energy Guide webpage within the sustainability section of the Village website. Mr. Jansen sought any final edits, comments, and revisions from the Commission before going live with it on the website.

Mr. Jansen outline the quarterly Electric Vehicle Report to the Commission. Mr. Jansen noted he would revised the registration number format to better illustrate the growth rate. Mr. Jansen further noted the electric vehicle permit numbers are likely limited to installation of Level 2 chargers at residences. Mr. Jansen highlighted the shift in usage at the Village Hall charging station following the shift in fee structure for EV charging.

Mr. Jansen provided updates on the EV Charging Station installation process and when the first two locations will come online. Mr. Jansen also noted the Village Board approved a contract to install solar panels on the roof of the public works garage, making the garage a net-zero facility. Mr. Jansen also explained design is still underway to convert the Village Hall parking lot to permeable pavers, indicating the project will likely be split into two portions with construction occurring in 2026 and 2027.

Mr. Jansen outlined the upcoming planned communications for the remainder of the year.

8. RECYCLING

Mr. Jansen outlined what the Recycle Coach program and explained that there will soon be a tool on the Village website as part of Recycle Coach that will help residents with finding where items should be disposed, what is accepted as part of the local recycling and composting program, and where special drop off locations and events are located. Mr. Jansen noted a lot of the functions, such as collection schedules and contact forms, may not be needed, but the educational features would likely be very helpful in directing residents to the right information and resources.

Mr. Jansen stated that the Village would be partnering with EcoShip again to serve as a special collection location for packaging goods at Village Hall during the holiday season. Any materials collected would be distributed to small businesses for reuse. Mr. Jansen noted there was a very high level of participation during the last collection in April.

Co-Chair Charrette outlined the Ridwell collection program for materials that cannot be recycled as part of curbside recycling collection. The program finds partners for each item or material that is collected to ensure it is reused or recycled properly.

Co-Chair Charrette stated the need to continue to communicate the effectiveness of curbside recycling programs and highlighting what the true rate of recycling is.

9. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING – NOVEMBER 11, 2025

The Commission reached a consensus to hold its next meeting Tuesday, October 14, 2025.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Avalos made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Marti, to adjourn the meeting at 8:34PM.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chair Charrette, Commissioners Kadlec, Avalos, Hoyt, and Marti

Absent: Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioner Hayley

Nays: None

Motion Passes.


Seth Jansen, Secretary

