

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST  
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2025**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, February 11, 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 7:01 PM. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Co-Chairs Charrette and Lennon, Commissioners Mezzatesta, Kadlec, Avalos, and Student Commissioner Stierwalt.

Absent: Commissioners Hayley and Veazie

Also Present: Management Analyst Seth Jansen

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**3. ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES**

Commissioner Mezzatesta made a motion, seconded by Co-Chair Charrette to approve the meeting minutes with corrections identified by Commissioner Mezzatesta from January 14, 2025.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chairs Charrette and Lennon, Commissioners Mezzatesta, Kadlec, and Avalos

Absent: Commissioners Hayley and Veazie

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

**4. COMMISSIONER UPDATES**

Commissioner Avalos plugged the One Earth Collective's Green Calendar and indicated he would draft a newsletter article and social media post to promote the calendar. Commissioner Avalos suggested a community event in April for Earth Month or Earth Day.

Commissioner Mezzatesta discussed partnering with the River Forest Library to have a display of climate-change related books and to have a demonstration one day on electric cooking methods such as induction stoves. The date is still to be determined, but Commissioner Mezzatesta anticipates it will be on a Sunday. The Commission discussed ways to have multiple price or budget points for electric cooking methods for those who may

not be able to afford a new induction oven. Commissioner Kadlec suggested a youth-focused event for a potential Earth Day event with the Library.

## **5. PROPOSED TREE PRESERVATION ORDINANCE**

Mr. Jansen summarized the draft ordinance, the memo drafted for the Commission, and previous discussion from the Commission on the topic. The Commission discussed the draft ordinance in order to better understand the existing and proposed requirements. The Commission raised concerns about the existing replacement requirements being too onerous for single family properties to be able to comply with and suggested getting further staff feedback on what the replacement requirement should be. Co-Chair Charrette requested further information on what would constitute economic hardship requirement for location of a proposed structure as reason for removal. Mr. Jansen indicated he would bring a revised ordinance draft and an updated memo to the Commission next month.

## **6. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY MEMBER RECOGNITION DISCUSSION**

Mr. Jansen summarized the memo to the Commission and the awards structure that Oak Park and Forest Park utilize. The Commission discussed ways to very information for nominees for any potential award. The Commission discussed organizing the suggested score card actions into topic-focused buckets and potentially tier them into easy to more difficult level actions. The Commission discussed a potential timeframe for the awards, when it should be launched to begin accepting nominees, and when it should be awarded. The Commission discussed promoting the scorecard actions as reasons why someone should be nominated for the award. Commissioner Kadlec suggested a future newsletter for soliciting nominations and further newsletters highlighting those nominees with interviews and photos. The Commission also suggested that by highlighting the actions of some residents through the awards, the scorecard could be further promoted to encourage more residents to take actions towards sustainability. The Commission discussed use of yard signs for recognition for those receiving sustainability awards or receiving recognition from the Commission for their scorecard actions. Student Commission Stierwalt suggested that any such signs be by-request rather than automatically provided to residents in order to reduce waste. Commissioner Kadlec indicated he would take the lead on further developing the scorecard actions and format.

## **7. WASTE AND COMPOST DISCUSSION**

Mr. Jansen summarized the memos provided to the Commission and indicated recent slight drop off in number of subscribers to the Curbside Composting Program. Co-Chair Charrette discussed the challenges and difficulties the proposal from LRS to switch from opt-in to opt-out composting. Co-Chair Charrette suggested promoting the compost drop off site in front of Village Hall, expanding the drop off program to include sites at the Public Works Garage and Water Pumping Station, and potentially finding other community partners who would host their own drop-off locations. The Commission discussed the merits of an expanded compost drop of program. Commissioner Kadlec stated further signage at new locations should be made to match the signage at the Village Hall location. Mr. Jansen indicated he

would examine what other communities, notably Oak Park and Chicago, do for their compost drop off programs. The Commission agreed that future communication could promote drop off sites, the curbside composting program, and information on backyard composting for residents.

## **8. OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Jansen outlined the communications plan for the coming month, including any national days that been compiled into a list by Commissioner Mezzatesta. Mr. Jansen solicited ideas from the Commission for any future newsletter topics. Mr. Jansen provided brief updates on the status of the EV Charging Station Installation project and the proposed leaf blower ordinance the Commission had recommended to the Board. Mr. Jansen had indicated that he would have information regarding Village actions on parkway plantings for the Commission to discuss at the next meeting. The Commission indicated interest in looking into expanding native plantings and look at ways to limit pesticides in some public spaces.

## **9. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING - MARCH 11, 2025**

The Commission reached a consensus to hold its next meeting Tuesday, March 11, 2025.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Avalos made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mezzatesta, to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 PM.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chairs Charrette and Lennon, Commissioners Mezzatesta, Kadlec, and Avalos

Absent: Commissioners Hayley and Veazie

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

  
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Seth Jansen, Secretary