

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST  
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION  
TUESDAY, APRIL 8, 2025**

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

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

Absent: None

Also Present: Management Analyst Seth Jansen

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**3. ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES**

Co-Chair Charrette made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mezzatesta to approve the meeting minutes from March 11, 2025 with corrections identified by Commissioner Mezzatesta.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chair Charrette, Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioners Veazie, Hayley, Mezzatesta, Kadlec, and Avalos.

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

**4. COMMISSIONER UPDATES**

None.

**5. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY MEMBER RECOGNITION DISCUSSION**

Commissioner Kadlec introduced the draft community recognition form for individuals to nominate someone from the Village for recognition in a newsletter. Commissioner Kadlec solicited feedback from the Commission for the formatting of the form. Co-Chair Lennon suggested making sure the nominated resident's address is in there. The Commission discussed formatting of both the Village Recognition form and the Sustainability Scorecard drafts put together by Commissioner Kadlec.

Commissioner Kadlec stated he felt the scorecard is a way for residents to self-assess their sustainability actions. He indicated the tiers of the scorecard are ranked by difficulty to implement as opposed to how effective the action is, with tier 1 actions being easy to do and tier 3 being more difficult to do. Commissioner Kadlec stated he plans to include resource links for each action so that residents could learn more about specific actions. Commissioner Kadlec solicited suggestions for action items from the Commission. The Commission discussed the tier and rating system and potential actions.

For the community recognition nomination form, Co-Chair Charrette suggested opening up for businesses or organizations. Commissioner Kadlec stated that the first form would be for residents but a similar nomination form for businesses and organizations.

Commissioner Hayley suggested putting the scorecard on the Village website and stated it would be beneficial to direct residents to it when she gets questions. Commissioner Kadlec also asked for input to avoid repeated items on the scorecard. Commissioner Veazie suggested plugging in information and programs that the Commissioner has already highlighted and supported. Co-Chair Lennon suggested the action items be bucketed by topic; Co-Chair Lennon also suggested a simple list rather than a tiered approach. The Commission discussed potential ways to format the scorecard. Commission Avalos stated that too long of a list may overwhelm some who would feel they'd need to do all these items. Commissioner Mezzatesta sought clarification that the scorecard would be purely self assessment. Commissioner Hayley expressed support for having the data collected to better understand resident use of the checklist and for residents to view their own results. The Commission discussed potential online format of the scorecard survey and a potential certificate or score result provided to residents.

The Commission discussed a potential student/youth-focused version of the survey. The commission discussed what questions to ask and how to disseminate a youth-focused survey. The Commission discussed ways a future scorecard could even be focused toward the elementary school district schools and students.

Mr. Jansen sought clarification on the format and final edits for the nomination form and when that should run in the weekly newsletter. For the scorecard, Commissioner Kadlec indicated he would incorporate the feedback from the Commission and bring back further edits at next month's meeting. Mr. Jansen indicated the nomination form would run in a weekly newsletter and that future forms could be done for businesses and institutions. Commissioner Hayley offered to help with links to resources in the scorecard and inquired about sources for the links and whether to use Village or external information.

## **6. COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS**

Mr. Jansen outlined the results of the Community Survey that had been conducted by the Commission. Commissioner Mezzatesta noted the comments in the survey and the need to address general skepticism of the effectiveness of various programs, such as recycling. Co-Chair Lennon suggested having an event with LRS to highlight the effectiveness of education

programs. The Commission discussed some of the communications that have been previously done and what could be done through the newsletter and social media to better educate residents. Commissioner Veazie also noted that several comments in the survey expressed skepticism of capacity for the electric grid. The Commission generally discussed some of the comments left in the survey. Student Commissioner Stierwalt also suggested highlighting the benefits of electrification vs gas-powered vehicles and equipment.

Commissioner Kadlec suggested addressing inquiries from residents regarding energy efficiency and energy assessments. Mr. Jansen noted that was one of the recommendations from the UIC Climate Plan, specifically with regards to home weatherization information and resources. Commissioner Avalos suggested a way to partner with the Oak Park Climate Action Network to have an energy efficiency and clean energy open house. Commissioner Mezzatesta suggested newsletter articles weatherstripping and similar actions that residents could be low hanging fruit for residents to do. The Commission discussed resources available relating to energy efficiency and where they may be found.

Commissioner Mezzatesta indicated she'd identify potential items for weekly newsletters to address misconceptions and highlight simple actions residents can undertake.

Co-Chair Lennon inquired about EV charging and ways to highlight how Level 1 chargers can be effective for the driving needs of most residents. Mr. Jansen outlined the permitting process for Level 1 and Level 2 charging and how they differ. The Commission discussed EV Charging infrastructure.

## **7. STAFF UPDATES AND OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Jansen provided an update on the EV Charging Station installation project and where the design process is and how many chargers will go in at each location. Mr. Jansen indicated that as the project gets closer to installation, the Commission would need to discuss the rate the Village will charge for use of the charging stations.

Mr. Jansen briefly outlined the quarterly electric vehicle report. Co-Chair Charrette noted the year-over-year growth in ownership of electric and hybrid vehicles. The Commission discussed the total number of electric vehicles in relation to the total number of vehicles registered in the Village and total number of households in the Village. Mr. Jansen also highlighted the increased number of charging session and users, citing the effectiveness of the fee implemented last year to prevent vehicles fully charged vehicles from blocking access to the charger.

Mr. Jansen stated that the new compost drop-off centers are up and running at the Public Works Garage and Pumping Station and will be promoted in the May monthly newsletter as part of International Compost Awareness Week the first week of May.

Mr. Jansen noted that the EcoShip Earth Month collection program is already off to a big success with lots of materials already being collected in the dropbox in the Village Hall lobby. Co-Chair Charrette noted the early confusion about what is and is not accepted and wanted

to clarify that the special collection event is accepting a larger amount of items than the permanent EcoShip drop off locations.

Mr. Jansen indicated he had begun onboard the Village into Recycle Coach, a free online tool to help residents better understand what can be recycled and will have a widget embedded onto the Village website where residents can also see the special collection dates.

Mr. Jansen has stated that MC2 will be doing a round of post cards to encourage residents to sign up for the Village's Community Solar program. This would be at no cost to the Village, and the hope is to boost enrollment in the program, which has been relatively stagnant. Co-Chair Lennon suggested that information also be posted on the Village website when the postcards go out.

Mr. Jansen shared that the Village is participating in the National Wildlife Federation's Mayors Monarch Pledge and indicated the Commission would have a couple of items to consider at next month's meeting to meet some of goals the Village committed to as part of the pledge: a native planting guide webpage and a National Pollinator Week proclamation. Mr. Jansen also stated that clean up of the Chicago Ave. bioswales would also serve as a demonstration provision for the Village's pledge to the program. Commissioner Kadlec also suggested highlighting the Monarch Waystation program.

Commissioner Kadlec also quickly plugged events going on at Triton College as part of Earth Month and the One Earth Film Festival.

#### **8. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING – MAY 13, 2025**

The Commission reached a consensus to hold its next meeting Tuesday, May 13, 2025.

#### **9. ADJOURNMENT**

Co-Chair Charrette made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Avalos, to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 PM.

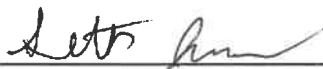
Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chair Charrette, Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioners Veazie, Hayley, Mezzatesta, Kadlec, and Avalos.

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.



---

Seth Jansen, Secretary