

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2026**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, May 12, 2026, at 7:30 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 7:34 PM. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Co-Chair Charrette, Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioners Kadlec, Avalos, Hoyt, and Schaider.

Absent: Commissioner Beckman and Student Commissioner Stierwalt

Also Present: Staff Liaison Seth Jansen

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Lillian Ryan, a 4th grader at Lincoln School delivered comments encouraging the Village to address global warming, reducing litter and pollution, protecting wildlife, and encouraging reuse and conservation. Lillian encouraged reducing use of fossil fuels and planting more trees. She encouraged voters and consumers to make decisions based on what is good for the Earth.

The Commission offered thanks to Lillian. Commissioner Avalos also noted other students had made public comments in support of sustainability initiatives at the most recent Board meeting. Co-Chair Lennon noted that a lot of what was raised is in line with the goals of the Commission to change people's behavior. Commissioner Hoyt suggested greater coordination between what the school district environmental clubs are doing and what the Commission is working on.

3. ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Kadlec made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Avalos, to approve the meeting minutes from April 14, 2026.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chair Charrette, Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioners Kadlec, Avalos, Hoyt, and Schaider.

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Beckman

Motion Passes.

4. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

Mr. Jansen noted that the Board had just appointed two new Commissioners, stated that newly appointed Commissioner Beckman was unable to attend the meeting, and introduced Commissioner Schaider. Commissioner Schaider introduced himself, his career, and his time as a River Forest resident.

Commissioner Avalos mentioned the public comments from the Board meeting that requested public recycling and compost containers near public garbage cans. Commissioner Avalos noted the difficulties, particularly with regards to contamination of recycling containers with waste. Mr. Jansen provided background on the public comments at the Board meeting, with the focus to be on the new park at the corner of Lake St. and Park Ave. Mr. Jansen described the plan for the park and the funding and servicing of cans at the park. Mr. Jansen highlighted other items discussed at the Village Board meeting relating to sustainability, including approval of the community aggregation program. The Commission discussed installation of public recycling receptacles and ways to limit contamination. The Commission discussed the drop off composting locations and the curbside composting program. The Commission discussed the Heritage Square project and how community feedback will be incorporated as the project is built out. Co-Chair Lennon encouraged the Village to have plantings be education and information at the site to promote native plants for the Village.

5. BIRD CITY ILLINOIS AND MIGRATORY BIRDS

Co-Chair Charrette discussed the Big Sit event at the Forest Preserve for World Migratory Bird Day. Co-Chairs Charrette and Lennon and Commissioner Hoyt discussed species spotted at the event. Mr. Jansen provided background for the Bird City Illinois project to Commissioner Schaidler.

Commissioner Hoyt introduced the protocols for the Nighthawk Monitoring Project, discussing the volunteers who have already committed, the program length, and the actions for monitor nighthawks beginning June 1st. The project area will cover Oak Park, River Forest, and some surrounding areas. The Commission discussed the assignments of volunteers and tools to help identify nighthawk activity.

Commissioner Hoyt recapped the Big Sit event held at the Forest Preserve and offered his thanks to their staff for the work. The Commission discussed the upcoming bird walk event at Thatcher Woods and the upcoming book discussion at the River Forest Library.

Mr. Jansen briefly introduced the Bird City Proclamation draft, sharing the template text provided for communities as well as two community examples that incorporated locally specific items into the proclamation. Mr. Jansen solicited feedback from the Commission to develop a proclamation for the Village over the summer months. The Commission offered initial thoughts, indicated they would provide feedback, and timeframe for development.

Co-Chair Lennon and Commissioner Hoyt discussed how feedback on the focal species monitoring would progress and how the data of the project will be compiled and summarized.

6. POLLINATOR WEEK PROCLAMATION

Mr. Jansen briefly introduced the draft Pollinator Week Proclamation. Co-Chair Lennon offered suggested edits, citing a redundant “Whereas” clause in the draft proclamation. Commissioner Hoyt requested that the proclamation identify specific milkweed planting

sites. Commissioner Schaider inquired about available public planting sites; Mr. Jansen explained the pending grant application for plantings along the parkway near the rail lines. Commissioner Hoyt pushed for expanded milkweed planting, possibly at Village Hall. Commissioner Kadlec discussed milkweed planting locations on school district properties. The Commission discussed native planting sites and potential native planting sites owned and maintained by the Village and by other public bodies within the Village. Co-Chair Charrette inquired about confirming whether or not milkweed is planted within the bioswales and, if needed, request that milkweed be incorporated into new plantings. The Commission discussed specific species of milkweed ideal for planting at specific locations. Co-Chair Lennon inquired about the maintenance of native plant sites in the Village and the concern for cost of maintenance; Commissioner Hoyt discussed the importance of cultivation and management of any planting locations. The Commission also discussed the need to make sure it looks appealing to people for their to be support for such programs. The Commission discussed the cost of maintenance, need for consistent dedicated funding and potential use of volunteers to lower maintenance costs. Co-Chair Lennon inquired about the cost of regular maintenance is and what the size of other planting sites.

7. GREEN BUILDING GUIDE

Mr. Jansen summarized what he believed to be the consensus on the format of the Green Building Guide based on previous discussions at Commission meetings. Mr. Jansen discussed developing a survey to go out to locally licensed contractors to get an assessment of what electric appliances they are used to working with and those who are qualified to and comfortable within installing such products. The guide would be used to promote and encourage adoption of electric home appliances, and the survey would be used to compile of list of contractors who homeowners may wish to reach out to regarding potential installation. The Commission requested feedback from the Commission on the full list of appliances to include in the survey. Commissioner Avalos stated he could put together some ideas and bring it to the Commission, inquiring specifically if any specific certifications exist. Commissioner Hoyt inquired about if there is a record of who has installed a heat pump. Co-Chair Charrette asked if permit dates could also be included. The Commission discussed the range of appliances and if installation of certain appliances requires a permit.

8. COMMUNICATIONS AND STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Jansen summarized the quarterly LRS report, and the Commission discussed the data. Mr. Jansen gave an update to the Battery Network battery recycling program suggested by Co-Chair Lennon at the previous month's meeting, and the Commission asked about the specifics of collection protocols. Mr. Jansen provided an update on ongoing projects relating to sustainability. Commissioner Schaider inquired about the permeable paver project details and the effectiveness of permeable pavers and rainwater storage and infiltration projects. Mr. Janse outlined the planned upcoming communications for the newsletter and social media.

Co-Chair Lennon wanted to know how to offer thanks to students who had come out and offered public comment to the Commission, asking the best way to acknowledge them. Commissioner Avalos suggested finding ways to further coordinate and work with the school

district and the sustainability clubs and green for good teams at each school. Commissioner Hoyt suggested potential quarterly invites for the groups to attend the Commission meetings to present.

9. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING - JUNE 9, 2026

The Commission reached a consensus to hold its next meeting Tuesday, June 9, 2026

10. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Schaider made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hoyt, to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 PM.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chair Charrette, Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioners Kadlec, Avalos, Hoyt, and Schaider.

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Beckman

Motion Passes.



Seth Jansen, Secretary