

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 2026**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, June 9, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the 2nd Floor Conference Room of Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue – River Forest, IL.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 PM. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Co-Chair Charrette, Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioner Avalos, Student
Commissioner Stierwalt, Commissioner Beckman (arriving at 7:15),
Commissioner Hoyt (arriving at 7:31)
Absent: Commissioners Kadlec and Schaider
Also Present: Staff Liaison Seth Jansen

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

3. ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES

Co-Chair Lennon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Avalos, to approve the meeting minutes from May 12, 2026.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chair Charrette, Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioners Avalos, and Beckman
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioners Hoyt, Kadlec, and Schaider
Motion Passes.

4. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

Co-Chair Lennon noted it is noticeably quieter with the new leaf blower ban in effect. Co-Chair Lennon noted he had observed some contractors continuing to use gas leaf blowers. Mr. Jansen indicated the Village recently expanded to notification other types of contractors beyond just landscape contractors. The Commission discussed the change in how contractors have used blowers and believe that contractors had been overusing blowers prior to the ordinance taking effect. The Commission discussed how warning notices and citations will work. Co-Chair Lennon and Co-Chair Charrette noted it is significantly quieter and suggested a newsletter post highlighting the lack of noise and encouraging continued compliance and reporting of issues.

Commissioner Beckman introduced himself to the Commission. Co-Chair Charrette inquired about areas of interest and Commissioner Beckman stated he was interested in sustainable buildings, energy efficiency, and solar energy.

5. BIRD CITY ILLINOIS AND MIGRATORY BIRDS

Co-Chair Lennon discussed the book reading event which served largely as a kick-off event for the nighthawk monitoring project, with further individuals signing up to volunteer for the observation project. Co-Chair Lennon summarized the discussion of the event and noted he saw his first nighthawk walking home after the event. Mr. Jansen summarized the ongoing efforts for Commissioner Beckman. Co-Chair Lennon further noted that Commissioner Hoyt shared there were nesting nighthawks observed on the roof of Roosevelt Middle School. Co-Chair Lennon further described his observations of nighthawks and where they may be nesting in the Village. Commissioner Avalos inquired about how the data would be compiled and presented following the conclusion of the observation period; Co-Chair Lennon indicated that Commissioner Hoyt would be compiling and reviewing the data first.

Commissioner Hoyt stated there are exhibits currently at the Chicago Architecture Center on designing bird-friendly buildings. Commissioner Hoyt further summarized the work being done by 30 total volunteers for the Nighthawk monitoring program. The Commission further discussed monitoring sites throughout River Forest and Oak Park. Commissioner Hoyt discussed viewing the rooftop at Roosevelt Middle School and finding a roosting nighthawk on the remaining gravel portion of the rooftop. Commissioner Hoyt also discussed plans to view the garage rooftop at Dominican University. Commissioner Hoyt further discussed how the school district is now considering preserving a gravel patch during a planned roof replacement. A trail camera was placed on the Roosevelt roof to observe the bird their and another will be placed on the Dominican roof. Commissioner Hoyt indicated he also viewed the Jewel rooftop from a neighboring building. While the Jewel roof is gravel, he did not observe any nighthawks at that time. Commissioner Avalos said he viewed several nighthawks near Scoville Park in Oak Park. Co-Chair Lennon indicated that the night hawks he observed at Jewel and near Lathrop Ave. will fly to the northeast from those locations. Co-Chair Lennon suggested an update in the newsletter and social media posts.

6. POLLINATOR WEEK PROCLAMATION

Mr. Jansen summarized the discussion and feedback from the Commission at the previous meeting and the revisions he made, deleting the redundant whereas clause recommended by Co-Chair Lennon and added language regarding Milkweed planting sites within the Village. The draft now indicates Swamp Milkweed is planted in the Chicago Ave. Bioswales and the Village is seeking funding to plant Butterfly Milkweed along the Central Ave. and Hawthorne Ave. parkways. Co-Chair Lennon suggested further language noting that other taxing bodies and institutions have planted milkweed on their properties, as have many private residents. The Commission agreed that additional language should be added highlighting further milkweed planting by residents and community institutions.

Co-Chair Charrette inquired about the Village having milkweed seed giveaway. Co-Chair Charrette suggested having packets of seeds put together in the fall and left at the front counter of Village Hall for residents to take along with a social media drive to help promote the giveaway. The Commission discussed the best timing for collection, distribution, and planting of milkweed during the fall months. Commissioner Hoyt suggested harvesting seeds from the swamp milkweed in the bioswales and further suggested coordination with the school Environmental Clubs and Green4Good groups.

Mr. Jansen summarized the updated contents of the language. Commissioner Hoyt said he would continue to advocate for a small demonstration garden on Village Hall grounds. Co-Chair Charrette made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hoyt, to approve recommend the Village Board approve Proclamations recognizing June 22 through June 28, 2026 as Pollinator Week, incorporating the edits suggested by the Commission.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chair Charrette, Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioners Avalos, Hoyt, and Beckman

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioners Kadlec and Schaider

Motion Passes.

7. GREEN BUILDING GUIDE

Mr. Jansen outlined the memo he provided for the Commission, indicating that standard electrical permits are the only permits required for any electrical appliance switch aside from heat pump installation. Mr. Jansen shared the recommendation from the Building Department regarding determining electrical amperage when a resident is making the switch to an electric appliance. Mr. Jansen outlined the contractor survey that would be sent out to HVAC contractors to see which contractors perform heat pump installations. The survey would be voluntarily and would also ask how the electrical load calculation is determined. Commissioner Avalos stated he thought the guide should list the full list of appliances that can be electrified. The Commission discussed the general outline of the guide. Mr. Jansen indicated he would put out the survey prior to next month's meeting. The Commission discussed including information on Solar Panel installers and for Electric Vehicle Charging Station installers.

8. TERRACYCLE

Mr. Jansen outlined the suggestion that was brought to him regarding the Village potentially participating in Terracycle and serving as a collection point for recycling of specific items. Mr. Jansen highlighted some of the free programs available and indicated what Terracycle would provide and what the Village would need to provide. The Commission discussed, and Co-Chair Charrette suggested this could be an opportunity to partner with the school district for the pouch collection program. Commissioner Hoyt thought this may be a way to invite in Green4Good or the Environmental Club to take the lead and have a collection box in the school. The Commission discussed potential contamination of collection points and the need for buy-in by these groups. The Commission agreed to wait until fall and then engage with the school organizations on the topic. The Commission suggested starting small with some sort of collection drive and then expanding the program if it proves to be successful. The Commission discussed potential coordination with the elementary schools, with the high school, and with other potential places that could serve as collection points.

9. COMMUNICATIONS AND STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Jansen provided an update on the installation of new compost and recycling containers at the new corner park at Park and Lake. The Commission discussed the aspects of the project and how public and Commission would continue to be sought throughout

development of the park. The Commission inquired as to who will be servicing the containers; Mr. Jansen indicated that Village staff would to ensure proper disposal.

Mr. Jansen provided an update on the launch of the Battery Network participation, indicating that it will begin to be promoted through social media and the newsletter this coming week. Mr. Jansen further indicated that the information is already on the Battery Network website and he has received calls regarding disposal. The Commission inquired about how information on the types of batteries collected is shared. The Commission discussed the collection of medium format batteries, which are included and accepted as part of the collection.

Mr. Jansen provided a general update on the Public Works Garage solar installation project and the anticipated timeline for completion. Mr. Jansen indicated the permeable paver project at Village Hall will be underway later this year and that funding from MWRD was secured for the second phase of the permeable paver project.

10. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING – JULY 14, 2026

The Commission reached a consensus to hold its next meeting Tuesday, July 14, 2026

11. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Hoyt made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Beckman, to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 PM.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chair Charrette, Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioners Avalos, Hoyt, and Beckman

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioners Kadlec and Schaider

Motion Passes.


Seth Jansen, Secretary