

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2026**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, August 11, 2026, 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-Chair Lennon, Commissioners Kadlec, Avalos, Hoyt, Beckman, Schaidler, and Student Commissioner Stierwalt

Absent: None

Also Present: Staff Liaison Seth Jansen, Co-Chair Charrette (attending virtually)

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

3. ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES

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

Roll Call:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Not Voting: Co-Chair Charrette

Motion Passes.

4. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

Commissioner Schaidler discussed attending the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus Greenest Region Compact event as part of Chicago Climate Week. He inquired about if the Village had a formal sustainability plan. Mr. Jansen provided general background including the previous Commission documents, the Village's adoption of the Greenest Region Compact, and the Climate Plans prepared by the UIC graduate classes on behalf of the Villag in 2024. Commissioner Schaidler suggested reviewing the Greenest Region Compact, indicating what the Village has already taken, and developing a plan moving forward while using the Compact as a template. Commissioner Hoyt suggested using the Compact to recognize what has been completed and recommend certain standards for the Village based on Compact recommendations, providing clarity, certainty, and guidance for issues that may arise for the Village and its residents. Commissioner Schaidler inquired about the process for reviewing the Compact and Mr. Jansen indicated he would include this as a formal agenda item over the coming months. Co-Chair Lennon mentioned the Village sustainability survey and suggested keeping the focus toward the interest of residents and keeping residents engaged and participating. Mr. Jansen indicated he would share the community survey, the UIC Climate Plans, and the Greenest Region Compact information. Co-Chair Lennon suggested sharing

the spreadsheet which analyzed the feasibility and completion of the UIC Climate recommendations.

5. BIRD CITY ILLINOIS AND MIGRATORY BIRDS

Mr. Jansen indicated he had shared the raw data and one page summary provided by Commissioner Hoyt regarding the nighthawk monitoring project. Commissioner Hoyt indicated that Commissioner Beckman had helped compile the data, analyze it, and put together the one-pager. Commissioner Hoyt stated that an ornithologist he had been corresponding with indicated the monitoring may provide new information about the Common Nighthawk, specifically how they use natural spaces when near urban areas. Commissioner Hoyt stated that the ornithologist shared suggestions on how to continue the observations next year and how the information can be used to develop habitat conservation recommendations. With this information, Commissioner Hoyt indicated he is working on an application to present the findings at the Wild Things Conference next February in Rosemont. The deadline for the application is September 13th and the Conference is looking for community focused projects and projects focused on habitat stewardship. Commissioner Hoyt inquired about timeframe for Bird City Illinois application, as he would like to include this as part of the application packet. Co-Chair Lennon inquired about how we can take the data and turn it into recommendations; Commissioner Hoyt stated he would like to review academic literature and speak with experts over the winter before developing any formal applications. Co-Chair Lennon suggested recommendations or informational material for roofing permits to encourage gravel flat-top roofs. Commissioner Hoyt indicated specifically engaging with District 90 prior to the Roosevelt Middle School roof replacement project. The Commission discussed the permitting process, roofing materials, and the best time to engage with local institutions to encourage preservation of gravel rooftops for nighthawk nesting habitat conservation. The Commission agreed on advising local institutions about sharing information to encourage buildings with flat rooftops to preserve their existing gravel roofs. Commissioner Hoyt had suggested turning the Common Nighthawk into a local mascot or branding campaign to promote conservation of habitats, in a manner similar to the Plovers near Montrose Beach in Chicago. Commissioner Hoyt noted the recent newsletter and social media post regarding fall migration beginning. Commissioner Kadlec suggested continuing to engage with the Forest Preserve on the project and share the results with them. The Commission discussed ways to continue to engage with other institutions. Commissioner Beckman indicated he will create a google sheet to share the data with the Commission. The Commission discussed sharing the data with other entities and creating charts from the data. Co-Chair Lennon suggested getting some initial information out in an upcoming newsletter and social media post; Mr. Jansen indicated he could also include the photo of the nighthawk observed nesting on the roof of Roosevelt Middle School.

Mr. Jansen outlined the draft proclamation and the information included in the packet regarding the proclamation. Commissioner Hoyt indicated he could potentially provide more example applications and indicated he would provide suggested edits prior to the next meeting. The Commission discussed the compiled documentation for the Bird City Illinois certification. The Commission discussed the timeframe for submitting the application, with the intention of submitting before the end of the calendar year. The Commission discussed future activities, including annual World Migratory Bird Day events, continued focal species

monitoring, and identifying additional actions that the Village and the Commission may choose to undertake. Commissioner Hoyt recommended submitting after determination of participation the Wild Things Conference

6. GREEN BUILDING GUIDE

Mr. Jansen outlined the final draft of the Green Building Guide on Electrification webpage, incorporating edits suggested by the Commission at the previous month's meeting and the suggested edits that Commissioner Beckman had sent him. Mr. Jansen outlined the updates made to the draft graphics the Commission reviewed last month and provided the results of the HVAC contractor survey, which had limited results. Mr. Jansen further outlined changes made to the Sustainability Guide on the Village website, including changes to previous guides to heat pumps and induction stoves. Mr. Jansen outlined the plan to promote the guide through the newsletter and social media.

7. WEST COOK WILD ONES WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

Co-Chair Charrette shared the West Cook Wild Ones Wildlife Corridor Map. The map shows voluntarily submitted native plant gardens. The Commission discussed the map and ways to share and highlight private native gardens in the Village and surrounding area. The Commission discussed ways to highlight specific homes and homeowners for their native gardens. Co-Chair Charrette also suggested providing information for landscapers who install native gardens. Co-Chair Charrette indicated she has identified a provider for milkweed seeds and is developing a design for the envelopes for the milkweed seed giveaway planned for this fall. Commissioner Kadlec discussed the importance of residents sharing their stories and testimony for their native plants to encourage others to begin planting native species. The Commission discussed engaging with the Library to host a panel of native garden homeowners and landscapers over the winter.

8. ELECTRONICS DROP OFF: PCS FOR PEOPLE

Co-Chair Charrette noted the flyer Co-Chair Lennon had distributed with Oak Park Temple collecting old computers for reuse. Co-Chair Charrette had suggested having a pilot program with the Village as a collection point and engaging with other faith-based institutions to expand and promote the program. Co-Chair Charrette indicated that PCs for People will provide a box for collection and will pick it up when full. Co-Chair Charrette suggested having a collection drive during the holidays and discussed the list of materials accepted for reuse. Co-Chair Lennon suggested coordinating with other institutions to have multiple drop-off locations and to promote it across organizations. Student Commission Stierwalt suggested having a collection box at OPRF to collect Chrome Books from graduating seniors at the end of the school year; Student Commission Stierwalt indicated he would raise it to the school for a collection next May.

9. COMMUNICATIONS AND STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Jansen outlined the quarterly waste report and indicated that he has stopped trying to find any correlation between tonnages of waste, recycling, or compost. Co-Chair Charrette asked Mr. Jansen to recap the Board of Trustees conversation regarding opt-out composting. Mr. Jansen provided a brief overview of what was discussed by the Board and the initial options put forward by LRS for the new waste hauling contract. Co-Chair Charrette

requested and Mr. Jansen indicated he would include the information that had been provided to the Board in next month's meeting packet.

Mr. Jansen provided a summary of ongoing Village sustainability-related projects including the Public Works Garage solar panel installation and the Village Hall permeable paver parking lot projects. Mr. Jansen summarized and the Commission discussed the addition of native plants to Heritage Square. Mr. Jansen provided a general update on the Heritage Square project, including the installation of the garbage/recycling/compost receptacles initially requested by a local student to the Village Board. The Commission discussed the species identified for the native planting site and potential milkweed options to install there. The Commission discussed including signage for the planting site.

Mr. Jansen outlined the upcoming planned communications for the newsletter and social media. The Commission discussed newsletter topics and identified dates to run specific information, including on the Bird City efforts and milkweed seed giveaway.

10. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING

The Commission reached a consensus to hold its next meeting Tuesday, September 8, 2026

11. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Avalos made a motion, seconded by Co-Chair Lennon, to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM.

Roll Call:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Schaidler

Not Voting: Co-Chair Charrette

Motion Passes.


Seth Jansen, Secretary