

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
REGULAR VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES
Monday, September 12, 2022**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Board of Trustees was held on Monday, September 12, 2022, 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 7:04 p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: President Adduci, Trustees Bachner, Gillis, Vazquez, Johnson, Brennan, O’Connell, Village Clerk Keller

Absent: None

Also, Present: Village Administrator Brian Murphy, Assistant to the Village Administrator Matthew Walsh, Management Analyst/Deputy Clerk Elijah Bebora, Fire Chief Thomas Gaertner, Police Commander James Greenwood, Assistant Finance Director Keke Boyer, Director of Public Works and Development Services Jeff Loster, Village Attorney Greg Smith.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Adduci led the pledge of allegiance.

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Lorraine Kozon, resident at 1142 Forest Avenue, has lived in the Village for 32 years. She stated that a local dog, Lucy, was hit by a car the previous week. She is asking for action regarding the traffic on Division Street, which is being used as an east/west thoroughfare. She remarked that there are motorists who drive by her street with loud mufflers and loud music. She commented that she would like the Village Board to do something to mitigate the increased traffic on Division Street and Augusta Street. She stated that she recommends the Village install speed bumps, and increase police presence.

Village President Adduci stated that there is a Village-wide traffic study that will look into ways to calm traffic throughout the Village.

4.ELECTED OFFICIAL COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee Bachner started with a land acknowledgment. She stated that residents can still donate to LemonAid. She stated that wanted to acknowledge that today is National

Policewomen Day and thanks all policewomen for their service. She stated that the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Chairpersons are reviewing consultant proposals.

Trustee Gillis stated that she would like to congratulate all who participate in the LemonAide event. She commented that the proceeds from the fundraiser will go to Maywood Fine Arts and Kindness Creators. She stated that she would like to Congratulate President Adduci on being the incoming Illinois Municipal League President.

Trustee Vazquez stated his congratulations to President Adduci on being the incoming Illinois Municipal League president.

Village Clerk Keller stated that he had no new comments to add to the public record.

Trustee Brennan congratulated President Adduci on being Illinois Municipal League President. She remarked that she congratulates all who participated in the LemonAid fundraiser and the Village staff that helped. She commented that residents can still donate on the www.9-11lemonaid.com website. She stated that she heard residents' concerns about the Lake and Lathrop development from the last meeting and whether the company is on schedule. She commented that she went to the developer's website and stated that the calendar they published on the website doesn't match the progress on the development site. She stated that it is important that the situation with the developer doesn't reoccur and the developer falls behind schedule. She stated that she would like to see the developer present at Village Board meetings to provide updates monthly.

President Adduci commented that she saw no issue with asking the Developer to come to future meetings to provide updates.

Administrator Murphy commented on the progress of the Developer, mentioning that there was a strike that did hold up some progress. He remarked that the Village has put the Developer on notice regarding the site and its cleanliness.

Trustee Johnson stated that he will be attending the Illinois Municipal League conference with the other Village Trustees. He remarked that the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group Chairs have been reviewing proposals from various Diversity Equity and Inclusion consulting firms. He stated that he is proud that the firms which submitted proposals are excited to work with the Village.

Trustee O'Connell stated that he congratulates all who attended the LemonAid event. He stated his congratulates to President Adduci on being the Illinois Municipal League President. He remarked that during the last rain event, leaves were falling and he urges residents to keep the catch basins clear on the street. He commented that residents should avoid placing garbage, especially bulk items on the streets the day before garbage pickup.

Village President Adduci stated she thanks the Police and Fire department for participating in the LemonAid fundraiser. She commented that the Food Truck Rally was a great success and the Village was a sponsor. She remarked that she had dinner with the Federal Transit Authority Chairperson and other railway leaders and it was a great meet and greet because the Village has transportation needs. She commented that she congratulates the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee on moving the Request for Proposal process forward. She stated that Dominican University is in the planning phase for their 100-year anniversary celebration. She commented that she thanks everyone for their kind words in congratulating her as the new Illinois Municipal League President.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Village Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – August 22, 2022
- b. A Right-of-Way Encroachment Waiver and Agreement for an Irrigation System in the Public Right-of-Way with the Property Owners at 610-612 William Street.
- c. A Right-of-Way Encroachment Waiver and Agreement for an Irrigation System in the Public Right-of-Way with the Property Owners at 946 Clinton Place.
- d. A Right-of-Way Encroachment Waiver and Agreement for an Irrigation System in the Public Right-of-Way with the Property Owners at 558 Forest Avenue.
- e. Monthly Department Reports
- f. Accounts Payable August 2022 - \$1,647,009.53
- g. Village Administrator’s Report

MOTION by Trustee Bachner to approve consent agenda items A-G. Second by Trustee Johnson.

Roll call:

Ayes: Bachner, Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, Johnson, O’Connell

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

6. CONSENT ITEMS FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION

None

7. RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

a. Zoning Board of Appeals

i. Floor Area Ratio Variation Related to the Construction of a Two Story Addition at

934 Park Avenue – Ordinance

MOTION by Trustee O’Connell to approve the floor area ratio variation related to the construction of a two story addition at 934 Park Avenue. Second by Trustee Johnson.

Steve Rynienicz, Architect at Studio R, stated that the building is an 1895 Victorian house that is well maintained and in its original state. He remarked that the issue is that the house is tall and the third floor was built out when they purchased the home 29 years ago. He commented that the owners would like to age in place but the attic in the house is built out and it is taking up the area where the owners could build out of the house. He commented that the owners would like to demolish the existing second floor laundry room and add a two-story addition that is 17 feet deeper from the existing west wall of the home. He stated that the variance is including the area that is covered by the attic space, which is not in use. The two neighbors to the north and south have homes that extend westward, into their backyards, well past 934 Park Avenue’s existing west wall. This addition requires a variance to the ordinance restricting total square ft of living space vs lot size of 40%.

Janet Helwig, co-owner of the home spoke to the present usage of the home and how they want to add space where it is needed. He commented that a future owner would just tear it down to get a more modern floor plan, which the present owners are trying to prevent.

Curtis Helwig, co-owner of the home indicated that the neighbors are in support of the proposed variance

Village Clerk Keller noted that many homes have third floor living space that is not included in their square footage number, and that the lot size where this home sits is 220’ deep and that this addition would not be taking up any significant space in the backyard.

Trustee Vazquez asked the owners if their home is a designated historical home.

The Helwig’s stated that their home is in the historical district, but the home is not designated as historic.

President Adduci described what a historic and/or significant home is within the Village and how that could help preserve older homes.

Steve Rynienicz spoke to how difficult it is to add square footage without the variance given.

Trustee O’Connell spoke to the history of granting, or not granting, these variances and that this one makes sense. He commented that he appreciates the fact that the neighbors agree with the variance.

Trustee Vazquez spoke to previous cases on this variance and noted that the Zoning Board did give uniform approval for this property. He commented that he also appreciates the present west boundary of the property and that the neighbors all are extended beyond it.

Trustee Gillis thanked the homeowners for maintaining the home.

Roll call:

Ayes: Bachner, Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, Johnson, O'Connell

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

ii. Off-Street Parking Variation at 138 Keystone Avenue – Ordinance

MOTION by Trustee Vazquez to approve an off street parking variation at 138 Keystone Avenue. Second by Trustee Gillis.

Betsy Weiner, owner of 138 Keystone, stated that she would like to tear down the garage on their property because they currently have a large garage next door on a property they also own. She commented that she and her husband bought the property next door three years ago with the intent to preserve the green space and combine the two homes in the future. She remarked that the property next door is a smaller house which they presently rent out. She commented that the three car garage provides parking for themselves and the house next door and tearing down the other garage would preserve green space. She stated that the garage on their property is in poor shape and is a dangerous structure. She remarked that they want to remove the old garage and replace it with a green space for their family and neighbors to enjoy.

Clifford Radatz, Village Building Official, commented on the ordinance regarding the requirement of two enclosed parking spaces for every dwelling and how the ordinance has been in the past.

Trustee Vazquez asked how actively the Village has enforced this code for covered parking.

Trustee O'Connell asked if there was an intent to combine the two properties. And Trustee O'Connell stated that the newer garage is on the rental property and that the garage that is being torn down is on the owners property.

Trustee Gillis asked if there is a timeline to tear down the rental property.

Trustee O'Connell stated that the owners built a new garage on the rental property in

anticipation of the owners combining both properties and using the new garage solely.

Trustee Vazquez brought up the additional conditions that the Village Attorney included. Specifically, Mr. Vazquez questioned whether the Village staff would catch the condition that the variance would not carry with title to the property.

Village Attorney Greg Smith clarified the additional conditions for granting this variance.

Trustee Vazquez had a question regarding the transfer of the property and Mr. Smith further clarified how the title would have to clear if a purchase came through without the variance noted.

Trustee O'Connell remarked that if the conditions are met, then he would agree to the request.

Motion by Trustee Vazquez Amend the motion to add the following conditions. *The Variation is personal to the Petitioner and the Variation shall not run with title to the property. Prior to the transfer of the property from the petitioner to another owner, the petitioner shall build a two-car, or larger, garage on the property. The Village shall not issue any transfer stamps for the conveyance of the property until and unless a two-car, or larger, garage is built on the property.* Second by Trustee Gillis.

Roll call:

Ayes: Bachner, Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, Johnson, O'Connell

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

iii. Amendments to the River Forest Zoning Ordinance Regarding Regulation of Solar Energy Collections Systems – Ordinance

MOTION by Trustee Johnson to approve amendments to the River Forest Zoning ordinance regarding regulation of solar energy collections systems. Second by Trustee O'Connell.

Assistant to the Village Administrator, Matthew Walsh gave a brief review of the ordinance and the regulations for ground and roof mounted systems.

Trustee Brennan asked about multi-unit buildings and Mr. Walsh indicated that this ordinance includes multi-unit buildings.

Trustee Brennan added comments regarding roofs in the Village and which are

appropriate for solar panels.

Roll call:

Ayes: Bachner, Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, Johnson, O'Connell

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

9. NEW BUSINESS

a. Minor Amendment to a Planned Development Permit for the Installation of Ornamental Metal Fencing at Priory Park

MOTION by Trustee Vazquez to amend a minor amendment permit for the Installation of the Ornamental Metal Fencing at Priory Park. Second by Trustee Gillis.

Village Administrator Murphey explained the amendment and that the new fencing would direct people toward the existing path.

Roll call:

Ayes: Bachner, Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, Johnson, O'Connell

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

b. Amendment to Title 4 of the River Forest Village Code Regarding Building Codes Applicable in the Village of River Forest – Ordinance

MOTION by Trustee O'Connell to approve an amendment to Title 4 of the River Forest Village Code regarding building codes applicable in the Village of River Forest. Second by Trustee Gillis.

Director Loster described the changes in the proposed ordinance updates. Primarily this amendment updates the building codes to the 2018 standards.

Trustee Johnson asked if anything in the ordinance references monitoring of residential sprinkler systems. Mr. Loster said it does not.

Roll call:

Ayes: Bachner, Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, Johnson, O'Connell

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

c. Amendment to Section 4-2-1 of the River Forest Village Code Regarding Fees for Building Permit Extensions – Ordinance

MOTION by Trustee Vazquez to approve an amendment to section 4-2-1 of the River Forest Village Code regarding fees for building permit extensions. Second by Trustee Gillis.

Village Administrator Murphy described the amendment to the Village Code for fees for building permits. Mr. Murphy indicated that there are ample lengths to building permits and extensions are not needed. And, the Village remains a good place to do business.

Village Administrator Brian Murphy stated that the proposed ordinances change the fee structure for non-single-family residential units. Currently, single-family and commercial properties have a generous schedule for contractors which ranges from 15-20 months. After a thorough review, Staff thinks that it makes sense to amend the fees for commercial and non-residential structures in order to keep projects moving forward. Village Administrator Murphy stated that the Village remains a very business friendly community

Roll call:

Ayes: Bachner, Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, Johnson, O'Connell

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn by Trustee O'Connell, Seconded by Trustee Johnson. The Village Board of Trustees Meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Roll call:

Ayes: Bachner, Gillis, Vazquez, Johnson, O'Connell, Brennan

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

Jonathan Keller, Village Clerk