



RIVER FOREST DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD MEETING AGENDA

A meeting of the River Forest Development Review Board will be held on Thursday, August 4, 2022, at 7:30 P.M. in First Floor Community Room of the Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue, River Forest, Illinois.

Physical attendance may be limited with Development Review Board officials, staff and consultants having priority over members of the public. Public comments and any responses will be read into the public meeting record. You may submit your public comments via email in advance of the meeting to: Matt Walsh at mwalsh@vrf.us. You may view or listen to the meeting by participating online or via telephone. Join the meeting at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85311450521> using meeting ID: 853 1145 0521, or call (312) 626-6799 and use meeting ID 853 1145 0521.

- I. Call to Order/Roll Call
- II. Minutes of the June 16, 2022 Development Review Board Meeting
- III. Approval of Findings of Fact and Recommendation of the Development Review Board:
Application #23-002: Application for Major Amendment to an existing Planned Development for improvements at Keystone Park (River Forest Park District)
- IV. Public Comment
- V. Adjournment

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD MEETING MINUTES
June 16, 2022**

A meeting of the Village of River Forest Development Review Board was held at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 16, 2022, in the Community Room of the River Forest Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue, River Forest, Illinois.

I. Call to order

Chairman Martin called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Chairman Martin, Members Fishman, Shoemaker, Yanaki.

Absent: Member Crosby, Davis, McCole

Also Present: Assistant to the Village Administrator Matt Walsh, Village Attorney Gregory Smith and Village Planning Consultant John Houseal.

II. Minutes of the May 19, 2022 Development Review Board meeting

A MOTION was made by Member Fishman and SECONDED by Member Yanaki to approve the minutes of the May 19, 2022, Development Review Board Meeting.

Ayes: Members Fishman, Yanaki, Chairman Martin.

Nays: None

Abstain: Member Shoemaker

Motion Passed.

III. Application #23-002: Application for Major Amendment to Existing Planned Development for improvements at Keystone Park (River Forest Park District)

a. Public Hearing

Assistant Walsh swore in all attendees wishing to speak at the public hearing.

Chairman Martin invited the applicant to the podium. Park District Board President Lynn Libera introduced the project. President Libera stated the tennis courts are in desperate need of replacement, and this was seen as an opportunity to improve Keystone Park East as a whole.

Park District Executive Director Mike Sletten addressed the Board and began a presentation. Mr. Sletten detailed the project, including the movement of the tennis practice hitting walls, the reorientation of the tennis courts and the creation of a new basketball area. The proposed plans also include the relocation of batting cages from the current location to two new locations closer to the baseball and softball fields. A flagpole will be installed as part of the project.

One of the batting cage nets will be temporary and only open for the baseball and softball seasons.

Mr. Sletten then listed the benefits of the project. There is a decrease in impervious surface and in chain link fencing. The proposed plan only includes five light poles, whereas the current park has eight in the courts area. The proposed plan also includes additional space between the courts, and drainage will be improved. The proposed site plan also includes additional space for future development.

Mr. Sletten detailed the landscape plan. Most of the landscaping will be located near the drainage swale on the north side of the park. Seventeen trees will be removed due to the project, totaling 194 inches of diameter. The Park District proposes to replace that total at Keystone Park and other sites throughout the park system.

Todd Abrams, the civil engineer for the project, detailed the drainage plans for the site. The current site drains without any restrictions, but there are restrictions in the proposed plans for the drainage swale. Mr. Abrams went on to explain the photometrics of the plan. There is less spillage and there are no foot candles 25 feet from the tennis courts. Photos of the proposed lighting fixtures and poles were shown.

Member Shoemaker asked for details on the tree removal plans. Mr. Sletten mentioned that there are a lot of ash and hawthorn trees, however there are a few large trees that will come down along Central Avenue. Member Yanaki asked for clarification on several aspects of the project, including lighting. Mr. Abrams explained that the proposed light pole height is the industry standard and the optimum height.

Member Fishman expressed concern about the light glare at the courts. Mr. Abrams stated that the reduction in light poles should help. Mr. Sletten confirmed that the lighting hours would not be changed. Mr. Sletten restated that there were no current plans for the open space on the proposed site plan, however it would fit additional platform courts.

There was some discussion about the necessary site development allowances. Chairman Martin indicated that the application should have included the allowances. Chairman Martin then asked for more information about the drainage swale, and Mr. Abrams explained that there would be native plantings in the swale.

Mr. Sletten explained that the flagpole would be lighted. Member Shoemaker asked if the Park District would consider moving the south batting cage to save trees along Central Avenue. Mr. Sletten responded that they were tight for space.

Member Shoemaker expressed concern about the safety of the drainage swale. Mr. Abrams explained that the swale would only hold water during significant rains, and would drain quickly. Mr. Sletten mentioned that there are similar swales at Priory Park and Keystone Park West that are not fenced.

Chairman Martin asked for Village staff comments. Assistant Walsh shared that there are no concerns, aside from minor engineering comments that are being addressed through the permitting process.

Chairman Martin invited Village Planner John Houseal to the podium. Mr. Houseal explained that although this is a simple request, it needs to be scrutinized because of the impact recreational activities can have on neighboring properties. Mr. Houseal confirmed that the proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Houseal explained why site development allowances are required. Mr. Houseal explained that this is not the first case that an applicant has left out the request for allowances, and in other cases the applicants amended the application. Mr. Houseal explained that 50' setbacks are required along Central Avenue and Lake Street because the neighboring zoning is R2, even though the railroad right of way neighbors the property. A 25' setback is required for the east property line. Allowances are required for any structure within those setbacks, including the battings cages and court fencing.

The four allowances detailed included; 25.38' for the batting cages setback along Lake Street, 42' allowance for the batting cages along Central Avenue, 37.53' allowance for the basketball court fencing along Central Avenue and 20.49' allowance for the tennis court fencing along the east property line.

Mr. Houseal addressed the earlier comments regarding the glare from the lights at the courts. Mr. Houseal mentioned that there has been significant loss of tree canopy along Central Avenue, and that should be considered. Mr. Houseal also recommended that the Park District work with the Village to calibrate the lights upon installation. Mr. Houseal stated that there should be additional bike racks included.

Member Yanaki stated that the loss of use should have been included in the report, because the existing open space will be replaced by the drainage swale.

Bob Ray, of 830 Keystone, addressed the Board. Mr. Ray shared his thoughts on the layout of the pickleball courts, as he is a player. Mr. Ray encouraged the plans to line the courts a certain way so that they did not adversely affect tennis players on a certain side.

Mr. Sletten confirmed that staff would work with the Village for calibration. Mr. Sletten detailed the comments from the public meetings. Mr. Houseal confirmed that he did receive a public notice for the project during Board discussion of public input.

b. Discussion, Deliberation, and Recommendation

Chairman Martin asked the Board for a potential recommendation and to share any concerns. Member Shoemaker reiterated her concern about the loss of trees and the safety of the swale. Chairman Martin stated his concern was the replacement of trees.

Attorney Smith reminded the Board that municipalities' zoning authority is narrowed when reviewing proposals from public bodies.

c. Approval of Findings of Fact and Recommendation of the Development Review Board

Attorney Smith listed the conditions for approval; (1) that the lighting hours would not change from the previously approved, (2) that Park District staff would work with the Village to calibrate the lights and (3) trees would be replanted within a calendar year.

A MOTION was made by Chairman Martin and SECONDED by Member Fishman to recommend approval of the amended site development application and the findings of fact.

Ayes: Members Fishman, McCole, Yanaki, Chairman Martin.
Nays: None
Motion Passed.

IV. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

V. Adjournment

A MOTION was made by Member Fishman and SECONDED by Member Yanaki to adjourn the June 16, 2022, meeting of the Development Review Board at 8:25 p.m.

Ayes: Members Fishman, Shoemaker, Yanaki, Chairman Martin.
Nays: None
Motion Passed.

Respectfully Submitted:

Matt Walsh, Secretary

Frank R. Martin
Chairman, Development Review Board

Date

**FINDINGS OF FACT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD
VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST**

August 4, 2022

RE: Application # 23-002, an Amendment to a Planned Development –
Keystone Park – 7920 Central Avenue, River Forest, Illinois

PETITIONER: River Forest Park District

APPLICATION: For amendments to a previously approved Planned Development to
construct tennis and batting cage area improvements (7920 Central
Avenue, River Forest, Illinois) (“Property”)

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION: On May 1, 2022, the Petitioner submitted an application to the Village of River Forest for an amendment to the previously approved Planned Development for the Property, which was amended during the public hearing (as amended, the “Application”). The Application requests permission to construct tennis court and batting cage area improvements on the Property. The Application was received and processed by Village staff in accordance with the Village of River Forest Village Code.

BACKGROUND: Petitioner is an Illinois park district. The Property is Petitioner’s Keystone Park. Petitioner has operated a park on the Property for many years.

The Property is located within the PRI Public/Recreational/Institutional Zoning District. Development and use of the Property is regulated by a Planned Development issued by the Village in Ordinance 3036, as amended by Ordinance 3384 and minor amendments from time to time. The Property is generally surrounded by residential uses.

Petitioner proposes in the Application to replace and reconfigure five (5) tennis courts, relocate tennis hitting walls, relocate batting cages, relocate basketball hoops, install a new storm water drainage swale along Lake Street and install a lighted flag pole, all of which will occur east of Keystone Avenue (as presented in the Application, collectively the “Project”).

APPLICATION: The Applicant seeks the following four (4) site development allowances under the Village of River Forest Zoning Ordinance (“Zoning Ordinance”):

	Zoning Ordinance	Proposed	SDA Requested
Front Yard – Lake Street Batting Cages	50 feet	24.62 feet	25.38 feet
Front Yard – Central Avenue Batting Cages	50 feet	8 feet	42 feet
Front Yard – Central Avenue Basketball Court Fencing / Enclosure	50 feet	12.47 feet	37.53 feet
Side Yard – East Property Line Tennis Court and Basketball Court Fencing / Enclosure	25 feet	4.51 feet	20.49 feet

PUBLIC HEARING: At the public hearing before the Development Review Board (“DRB”) held on June 16, 2022 (“Hearing”), representatives of Petitioner presented the Application. At the duly and properly noticed Hearing, testimony was taken and heard by the DRB on the Application. All persons testifying during the Hearing were sworn prior to giving testimony. All persons wishing to be heard were allowed to engage in cross-examination of the witnesses and provide testimony on their own behalf.

Following a presentation by Petitioner and its contractors, reports by various Village staff, and public comment from all who wished to speak, if any, the Development Review Board (“DRB”) voted, 4 to 0, to recommend approval of the Application to the Village President and Board of Trustees, with the conditions set forth below (together the “Conditions”).

FINDINGS: The DRB, based upon the evidence presented at the Hearing, and pursuant to Section 10-19-3 of the Village Code, makes the following Findings regarding the Application:

A. The proposed use or combination of uses is consistent with the goals and policies of the comprehensive plan.

The Property is located in the PRI Public/Recreational/Institutional Zoning District. Overall, the Project is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, the DRB finds that the construction of the Project will meet the Comprehensive Plan’s desire that the Petitioner provide high quality recreational opportunities for the community and maintain high quality recreational facilities in the Village. The Project is also appropriate under the Comprehensive Plan because it is anticipated that it will not have a negative impact on the residential neighborhood in which the Property is located. The DRB finds that this standard has been met.

B. The establishment, maintenance, or operation of the use or combination of uses will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, comfort, morals, or general welfare of the residents of the Village.

Testimony at the Hearing from the Petitioner and Village staff demonstrated that the Project would not result in any condition that would be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, comfort, morals, or general welfare of residents in the Village, so long as the Conditions are met. The DRB finds that this standard has been met, so long as the Conditions are met.

C. The proposed use or combination of uses will not diminish the use or enjoyment of other property in the vicinity for those uses or combination of uses which are permitted by this zoning title.

The testimony showed that the Project will not diminish the use or enjoyment of properties in its vicinity, as the Project is set back from adjacent properties. No evidence was presented to the contrary. For these reasons, the DRB finds that this standard has been met, so long as the Conditions are met.

- D. **The establishment of the proposed use or combination of uses will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding properties for uses or combination of uses otherwise permitted in the zoning district.**

The proposed improvements in the Application are consistent with other improvements and uses in the PRI Public/Recreational/Institutional Zoning, including other parks operated by the Petitioner. The Project would not impede the adjacent residential uses and would enhance recreational opportunities for Village residents. The surrounding neighborhood has been fully developed for a number of years. Based on this evidence, the DRB finds that this standard has been met, so long as the Conditions are met.

- E. **The proposed use or combination of uses will not diminish property values in the vicinity.**

Evidence presented by the Petitioner suggested that there would be no diminishment of property values in the vicinity of the Project, and no testimony or evidence to the contrary was presented to the DRB. For this reason, and for the additional reasons stated above in Standard C., the DRB finds that this standard has been met.

- F. **Adequate utilities, road access, drainage, police and fire service and other necessary facilities already exist or will be provided to serve the proposed use or combination of uses.**

There are adequate utilities, road access, drainage, police and fire services, and other Village services, to serve the improvements set forth in the Application. No evidence was presented suggesting or establishing that the Project would be hampered by a lack of utilities, road access, drainage, police or fire services. The DRB finds that this standard has been met.

- G. **Adequate measures already exist or will be taken to provide ingress and egress to the proposed use or combination of uses in a manner that minimizes traffic congestion in the public streets.**

Given the nature of the proposed use, no material traffic impacts are expected due to the Project. The Application does not propose any changes to ingress or egress to and from, or parking on, the Property. The DRB finds that this standard has been met.

- H. **The proposed use or combination of uses will be consistent with the character of the Village.**

The Project is consistent with the character of the Village, the Petitioner's long term use of the Property and the Village's desire for improvements and investment in community institutions. Based on the evidence presented, the DRB finds that this standard has been met, so long as the Conditions are met.

- I. **Development of the proposed use or combination of uses will not materially affect a known historical or cultural resource.**

There are no historic or cultural resources affected by the Project. Based on the evidence presented, the DRB finds that this standard has been met.

- J. **The design of the proposed use or combination of uses considers the relationship of the proposed use or combination of uses to the surrounding area and minimizes adverse effects, including visual impacts of the proposed use or combination of uses on adjacent property.**

The Project is a use that is compatible with the existing recreational uses of the Property. The use will allow for enhanced recreational activities, including tennis, baseball and basketball. The design of the Project is complimentary to the other uses on the Property and to the surrounding area as a whole, so long as the Conditions are met. There was no evidence or testimony presented suggesting that adverse effects would result if the Project was built and put into use. Based on the evidence presented, the DRB finds that this standard has been met, so long as the Conditions are met.

- K. **The design of the proposed use or combination of uses promotes a safe and comfortable pedestrian environment and individuals with disabilities.**

The pedestrian environment would be enhanced by the addition of the Project. No testimony was presented at the Hearing demonstrating that there was any risk to pedestrians based upon the improvements requested for approval in the Application. Based on the evidence presented, the DRB finds that this standard has been met, so long as the Conditions are met.

- L. **The applicant has the financial and technical capacity to complete the proposed use or combination of uses and has made adequate provisions to guarantee the development of any buffers, landscaping, public open space, and other improvements associated with the proposed use or combination of uses.**

Evidence presented in the Application demonstrates Petitioner's financial and technical ability to complete the Project. There are no apparent adverse impacts on buffers, landscaping, public open space, and other improvements associated with the Application. Based on the evidence presented, the DRB finds that this standard has been met.

- M. **The proposed use or combination of uses is economically viable and does not pose a current or potential burden upon the services, tax base, or other economic factors that affect the financial operations of the Village, except to the extent that such burden is balanced by the benefit derived by the Village from the proposed use.**

Petitioner has produced evidence that the construction and operation of the Project are economically viable. The DRB finds that there is no evidence the proposed use would increase the burden on Village services, the Village's tax base, or other economic factors that affect the financial operations of the Village. Based on the evidence presented, the DRB finds that this standard has been met.

- N. **The application meets the additional standards for multi-family housing in Section 10-19-3(O) of the Zoning Ordinance, except to the extent site development allowances have been granted.**

Based on the evidence presented, the DRB finds this standard to be inapplicable to the Application.

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CONDITIONS: The DRB's recommendation that the Application be approved is subject to the following Conditions:

1. The Project shall be built in substantial conformity with the Application and approved plans.
2. The Property shall continue to be subject to the hours of lighting previously approved by the Village President and Board of Trustees, which are lighted until 11:00 p.m. for the platform tennis courts and 10:00 p.m. for the tennis courts and basketball courts.
3. After completion of the Project, the Petitioner shall meet and confer with the Village and neighbors of the Property from time to time regarding any glare and other complaints related to lights on the Property, and the Petitioner shall from time to time calibrate the lights and adjust shielding on the lights to reduce glare and related complaints.
4. The Applicant shall comply with the Village's requirements for tree replacement for trees removed as part of the Project, and the Petitioner shall plant replacement trees within one (1) year of the Village President and Board of Trustees' approval of the amendment to the planned development for the Project.
5. The Project shall comply with the landscaping requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION: Based upon the foregoing Findings, the DRB, by a vote of 4 to 0, recommends to the President and Board of Trustees that the Board approve the Application, including the SDAs, so long as the Conditions are met.

Signed: _____
Frank Martin, Chairman
Development Review Board
Village of River Forest

Dated: _____