

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD MEETING MINUTES
July 10, 2025**

A meeting of the Village of River Forest Development Review Board was held at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 10, 2025, in the Community Room of the River Forest Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue, River Forest, Illinois.

I. Call to order

Chairman Crosby called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. Upon roll call, the following people were:

Present: Chairman David Crosby, Members Jane McCole, Mary Shoemaker, Elias Yanaki, and Corina Davis and Maryanne Fishman

Absent: Members Ron Lucchesi

Also Present: Assistant Administrator Jessica Spencer, Deputy Clerk Luke Masella, and Attorney Anne Skrodzki

II. Minutes of the May 15, 2025, Development Review Board Meeting

A MOTION was made by Member McCole and **SECONDED** by Member Shoemaker to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2025, DRB Meeting.

By a voice vote, the motion passed.

Chairman Crosby opened the public hearing for the Priory Park application.

Attorney Skrodzki swore in those who wished to testify.

III. Public Hearing Regarding The Application by the River Forest Park District to Amend Planned Development Ordinance #2643 Regarding Priory Park

Executive Director Mike Sletten and Carl Bade, Parks Commissioner, presented the project for Priory Park. Director Sletten noted that the current price of the project is about \$800,000 and the Park District has the full amount of the project on hand.

Member McCole asked about an image of the shelter; Director Sletten explained they are planning to create the same structure at Constitution Park.

Member McCole clarified the number of benches to be installed onsite. Director Sletten pointed to them in his presentation.

Member McCole asked where the AED would be installed. Executive Director Sletten pointed out the approximate location on his presentation.

Member McCole asked about the Police Department's request for security cameras. He responded that the cameras were included in the plans for this site as well.

Member Fishman asked how many trees are being moved. Director Sletten responded that there are four (4) trees which would be replanted in different parts of the property. She asked about the some additional tree removals she had recently noticed at the Park, Director Sletten said that was part of the annual tree replacement program and not tied to this project.

Member McCole asked about the parking variance for this site. John Houseal, Village Planning Consultant, responded that there have not been any changes to the park which would require a site plan amendment to the existing parking requirement. Member Shoemaker asked whether the Park District has control over the entire parking lot. Mr. Houseal and Director Sletten clarified that ownership is divided, with a part belonging to Fenwick and part to the Park District.

Chairman Crosby asked for John Houseal to explain his findings to the Board. Mr. Houseal explained what he reviewed regarding the application and how it cooperates with the Village's Comprehensive Plan, in addition to other planning factors.

Member Fishman asked about a screen going around the splashpad. Member McCole read the passage that she believed Member Fishman was referring to, and Mr. Houseal clarified that the "screening" mentioned pertained to the proposed building.

Member Shoemaker asked about the ownership of the adjacent ball field – Director Sletten confirmed that the ball field is owned by the Park District.

Member Yanaki asked about the parking requirements. Mr. Houseal discussed the evolution of the play equipment and how the changes have allowed for the space to be better used without increasing the parking needs.

Assistant Administrator Spencer reviewed the Village staff memo and the requested waivers to the application. There were no site development allowances requested on this project.

Chairman Crosby asked for any members of the public to provide comment

- Mary Rose Smith – she spoke against the splash pad installation (specifically), citing concerns about the risk of injury and liability.
- Elanor Smith – she spoke against the splash pad installation, noting the drowning risk. She also noted the slippery surface of the playground equipment by wet children.

Chairman Crosby invited Director Sletten to respond. He noted there were several public meetings held leading up to this public hearing. Regarding the safety of the splashpad, he noted that the Park District's insurance provider has been consulted and reviewed this application.

Chairman Crosby asked about the decision to install a splashpad. Director Sletten said it came from community surveys over the years, feedback from residents in general interactions, etc. He said that splashpads have frequently come up and was part of the Park District's Master Plan that was originally published almost 3 years ago. He noted that while a pool was cost prohibitive, this seemed like something that would be acceptable by most residents.

Ms. Smith noted that she didn't receive a notification via mail, Assistant Administrator Spencer clarified that the requirement was 500 feet from the property line, which included about 75 addresses. Ms. Smith restated her concerns that the splashpad did not fit the aspirations of the Village.

Commissioner Bade stated that the people he spoke to were excited about the splashpad at this location.

Member Davis stated that she is very excited about the splashpad.

Chairman Crosby closed the public portion of the public hearing. He asked for questions from the Board; there were none.

Chairman Crosby noted that his children are excited about the prospect of having a splashpad as well.

A MOTION was made by Member McCole and SECONDED by Member Fishman to approve the application by the Park District to amend the Planned Development Ordinance #2643 regarding Priory Park.

Ayes: Chairman Crosby, Members McCole, Shoemaker, Yanaki, Davis, and Fishman

Nays:

Abstain:

By a vote of 6-0, the motion passed.

Chairman Crosby asked for a motion to approve the Findings of Fact

IV. Approval of the Findings of Fact for Application 26-0001, Priory Park

A MOTION was made by Member Fishman and seconded by Member Shoemaker to approve the Findings of Fact for the Planned Development Amendment to Ordinance #2643 Regarding Priory Park pending conformance to the considerations set forth in this Hearing and review by the Village Attorney and the Chairman.

Ayes: Chairman Crosby and Members McCole, Shoemaker, Yanaki, Davis, and Fishman

Nays:

Abstain:

By a vote of 6-0, the motion passed.

V. Public Comment

There was none.

VI. Adjournment

A MOTION was made by Member Davis and SECONDED by Member McCole to adjourn the July 10, 2025, meeting of the Development Review Board at 8:19 p.m.

By a voice vote, motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jessica Spencer

Jessica Spencer, Secretary