

## Development Review Board

Thursday, July 16, 2020, 7:30 pm

### **Packet Contents**

1.     Revised Drawings, dated July 10, 2020
2.     Consultant and Staff Memoranda  
          Houseal Lavigne Associates  
          River Forest Police Department  
          River Forest Fire Department  
          River Forest Public Works Department
3.     Letter from the River Forest Township Assessor

Bonnie Brae + Thomas Avenue Development		
Summary of Development Requirements and Requested Variations		
(Items that require a Site development Allowance are in RED)		
ZONE DISTRICT R-4		July 10, 2020
Description	Required/Allow	Provided
Lot Size (square feet)	More than 26,136	27,681 SF
Lot Coverage	Less than 70%	69%
Lot Area Per 1 Dwelling Unit (square feet)	2,800 SF	1,456 SF
Front Setback (West)	20'	20 feet
Side (North)	3'	5 feet
Side (South)	3'	12 feet
Rear (East)	27'-8"	8 feet
Building Height	45'	42 feet
FAR	1.5 (41,521 SF)	1.29 (35,712 sf)
Rear Yard Area (square feet)	4,152 SF (15%)	1,296 SF
Parking (per Dwelling Unit)	2.5	2
Guest Parking	4	2







SOUTH ELEVATION



John Conrad Schiess  
Architect + LEED AP

400 Ashland Avenue  
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architecture +

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OWNER:

**Bonnie Brae Construction, LLC**  
Art Gurevich  
3528 Walnut Ave.  
Wilmette, Illinois 60091  
(847) 728-0584 phone  
(847) 728-0585 fax

REVISED FOR PD: 7/10/20

REVISED FOR PD: 7/2/20

REVISED FOR PD: 3/27/20

ISSUED FOR PD: 2/7/20

ISSUED FOR DRB: 10/24/19

ISSUED FOR DRB: 08/30/19

ISSUED FOR REVIEW: 03.11.19

Date

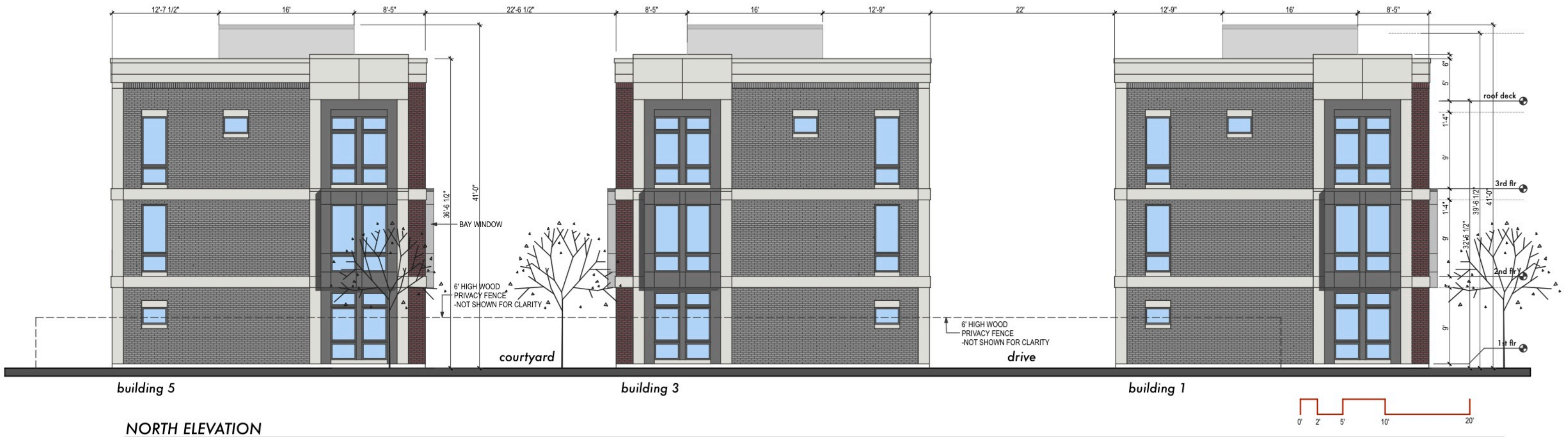
BONNIE/THOMAS  
DEVELOPMENT

1110 Bonnie Brae  
River Forest, Illinois

Sheet Title  
ELEVATION

A3.2

Sheet No.



John Conrad Schiess  
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Date

**BONNIE/THOMAS  
DEVELOPMENT**

1110 Bonnie Brae  
River Forest, Illinois

Sheet Title  
ELEVATION

**A3.3**

Sheet No.





John Conrad Schiess  
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BONNIE/THOMAS  
DEVELOPMENT

1110 Bonnie Brae  
River Forest, Illinois

Sheet Title  
ELEVATION

A3.4

Sheet No.



WEST ELEVATION

scale: 1" = 10'-0"



John Conrad Schiess  
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BONNIE/THOMAS  
DEVELOPMENT

1110 Bonnie Brae  
River Forest, Illinois

Sheet Title  
ELEVATION

A3.6

Sheet No.



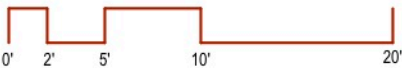


building 6

building 5

EAST ELEVATION

scale: 1" = 10'-0"



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BONNIE/THOMAS  
DEVELOPMENT

1110 Bonnie Brae  
River Forest, Illinois

Sheet Title  
ELEVATION

A3.6a

Sheet No.





## Memorandum

To: Lisa Scheiner, Assistant Village Administrator

From: John Houseal, FAICP  
Principal

Date: July 9, 2020

Re: Planned Development Review  
Bonnie Brae Place Townhome Development (REVISED)

---

Houseal Lavigne Associates has conducted a review of the revised proposed Bonnie Brae Place townhome planned development, located on the northeast corner of Bonnie Brae Place and Thomas Street. The proposed development consists of 18 three-story townhomes arranged in six buildings. Our review focuses on site planning, development, and zoning related aspects of the project. Our report includes the following sections:

1. Site Conditions and Surrounding Land-Use
2. Relationship to the Comprehensive Plan
3. Zoning Analysis
4. Building and Site Design
5. Circulation and Parking
6. Landscaping
7. Lighting
8. Conclusions

## 1. Site Conditions and Surrounding Land-Use

The Subject Property is approximately 0.635 acres in size (27,681 square feet) with 150' of frontage along Bonnie Brae Place, 184.53' of frontage along Thomas Street, and 150' of frontage along a 20'-wide public alley. The Subject Property is currently improved with a 34-car surface parking lot at the south end along Thomas; a 3-story, 6-unit apartment building on the north end; and two 3-car detached garages located along the public alley. The property is zoned R4, Multi-Family Residential.

The Subject Property is bounded by the following:

North: Adjacent, 2-story single-family residential (R4)

South: Across Tomas Street, 2-story multi-family residential (R3)

East: Across public alley, 4-story multi-family residential (R4)

West: Across Bonnie Brae, Concordia University 4-story/5-level parking structure (PRI)

## 2. Relationship to the Comprehensive Plan

The proposed Bonnie Brae Place townhome planned development is generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan Land-Use Plan designates the Subject Property as "multi-family residential". Multi-family residential areas are intended to consist of more than one unit or household per lot, and generally consist of townhomes, rowhomes, condominiums and apartments. The proposed townhome development is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's land use designation.

The proposed townhome development also generally supports some of the stated core objectives of the Comprehensive Plan as they relate to providing a balance of residential housing types and ensuring new development be compatible with the existing scale and character of the neighborhood. However, the removal of the older existing three-story brick apartment building is generally not supportive of the stated objectives of protecting and enhanced historic or architecturally valued structures.

In addition, in the Housing Affordability text, the Comprehensive Plan states, "*...the Village should seek to improve the condition of the existing affordable housing in the community and appropriately consider affordable units as a component of future residential development.*" The applicant has not indicated if the exiting residential units on the subject property are affordable and has not yet addressed whether consideration has been given to the provision of affordable units as a component of the proposed development.



### 3. Zoning Analysis

The Subject Property is zoned R4: Multi-Family Residential. The proposed townhome (single-family attached) uses are permitted uses in the R4 District. The proposed new townhome development must be approved as a planned development.

Below is a compliance analysis of the zoning regulations, as applied to the proposed Bonnie Brae Place townhomes.

#### 18-Unit Townhome Development – R4 Zoning Analysis

<u>Regulation</u>	<u>Required</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>SDA</u>
Min Land Area .....	2,800 sf/unit.....	1,456 sf/unit .....	<b>1,344 sf/unit SDA required</b>
Lot Area .....	26,136 sf .....	27,681 sf .....	none
Lot Width .....	150' .....	150' .....	none
Lot Coverage .....	70% max.....	69% .....	none
Max FAR .....	1.5 (41,521 sf) ..	1.35 (37,472 sf) .....	none
Building Height.....	45' .....	42' .....	none
Front Setback (west) .....	20' .....	20' .....	none
Corner Front Setback ....	25' .....	12' .....	<b>13' setback SDA required</b>
Rear Setback .....	27.67' .....	8' .....	<b>19'67' SDA required</b>
Rear Yard Area .....	4,152 sf (15%) ..	1,296 sf (4.6%) .....	<b>2,856 (10.4%) sf SDA required</b>
Side Setback (north).....	3' .....	5' .....	none
Resident Parking .....	45 (2.5/unit) .....	36 (2/unit) .....	<b>9 parking spaces SDA required</b>
Guest Parking .....	4 .....	2 .....	<b>2 guest parking spaces SDA required</b>

#### SDA Summary Assessment

As identified above, the proposed Bonnie Brae Place townhome planned development requires several development allowances. The 18-unit townhome development requires six (6) site development allowances (SDA) - one (1) SDA is required for overall density, three (3) for bulk standards (setbacks, lot coverage, yard area); and two (2) for parking. While all SDAs deserve careful consideration, some requested SDAs are more significant and reflect a greater departure from the underlying zoning development standards.

The SDAs for minimum land area (density), south and east setbacks, and rear yard area for the 18-unit townhome development are significant and collectively indicate that the proposed “development intensity” may be too much for the site and generally not reflective of the

intended development character desired by the Village, as reflected by the zoning standards and established character of surrounding residential. If the development provided larger setbacks along Thomas and the public alley, less density, and a site plan where the garages were less prominent, it may better fit the subject property and the context of the neighborhood. The proposed density in and of itself is not necessarily too much for the site, but as a townhome development with the proposed configuration, the site is a challenge.

The SDAs required for resident parking is less of a concern, as providing 2 parking spaces per unit is appropriate. And although the development is deficient 2 guest parking spaces (4 are required and 2 are proposed), the 2 designated guest parking spaces proposed are aided by the fact that there is now additional opportunity for some guests to park in the six driveways accessing the public alley along the rear of the site. The driveways off the alley are 8'-9' deep and 16' wide, accommodating a parallel parked car adjacent to the public alley. While not an official parking space, these areas can be effectively used to accommodate additional parking, although cars parked here would have to be moved to allow ingress and egress to the designated resident parking spaces in the garages for buildings 5 and 6.

#### **4. Building and Site Design**

The overall design of the townhouse development is attractive when viewed straight on from Bonnie Brae, but views into the garage/auto court area from Thomas Street and when driving northbound on Bonnie Brae are less than ideal. The applicant has mitigated views into the garage area to some extent by narrowing the driveway, increasing the setback along Thomas, increasing the setback along Bonnie Brae, and adding additional landscaping adjacent to the driveway to decrease line of sight to the garages from public streets. These changes to the site plan have resulted in an improved appearance for the development as viewed from Bonnie Brae and Thomas.

##### Overall Site Plan

The proposed site plan and orientation of the buildings creates an attractive view from the front along Bonnie Brae. The applicant has improved the landscaping, increased setbacks, narrowed the driveway, and added more architectural interest to the south facades to further enhance the Thomas frontage along the south of the development. The proposed building arrangements results in views into the auto court and garage area that is not ideal, but the applicant has improved the Thomas frontage and limited views into the garage areas through a combination of minor site changes.

The placement and design of the trash enclosure is appropriate and easily accessible.

The location of the guest parking and internal sidewalk also provides building separation and an attractive pedestrian circulation and flow through the site, connecting to public sidewalks along Bonnie Brae and Thomas.



### Architectural Detail/Facade

The west/front facades along Bonnie Brae (building 1 and 2) are attractive with appropriate levels of architectural detail and interest, as are the courtyard facing facades of building 3, 4, 5 and 6. The south façades of building 2, 4, and 6 along the Thomas Street frontage, although the side or end of the buildings, function as the front of the buildings along Thomas Street. The applicant has provided additional architectural detail to the south facades, including horizontal banding, varying material and color, and a new 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor “bridge” providing additional living space above the driveway coming off Thomas Street. This new “bridge” component not only provides for larger residential units, it provides additional visual interest along Thomas Street. This ground floor “passthrough” is a new look and feature for the development.

To improve the rear facades of the building on the garage door elevations, the applicant has provided additional minor architectural enhancements with change in material, color, horizontal and vertical banding.

### Building Materials

The buildings materials appear to of high quality, primarily consisting of face brick (two different colors), cast stone, and pre-finished cement board around some of the windows. The applicant should provide a sample of the building materials to be used, to demonstrate the compatibility and appropriateness of the proposed application and massing intended for the building. The proposed material, colors, and applications should provide and overall attractive appearance for the buildings.

## **5. Circulation and Parking**

### Circulation

Access to the proposed on-site parking for buildings 1, 2, 3 and 4 is sufficient, and parking off the alley for buildings 5 and 6 is easily accessed. The 22’ building separation between units 1 and 3 and buildings 2 and 4 is appropriate for accommodating vehicles accessing the site and moving into and out of the individual garages. The 22’ separation, together with the balcony overhang, would be problematic for emergency vehicles (fire engine) accessing the site.

Together with sidewalks along Bonnie Brae and Thomas, the on-site/interior network of sidewalks provides adequate access throughout the development.

### Parking

For the proposed 18-townhomes, a total of 45 parking spaces (2.5 per unit) are required for resident parking and 4 spaces (1 per every 5 units) are required for guest parking. The applicant is proposing 36 parking spaces (2 per unit) for resident parking and is providing 2 designated guest parking spaces. Although less than required by Village zoning, 2 spaces per unit for resident parking is appropriate. The proposed 2 guest spaces is less than the 4 required, but is workable for the development, as the six units along the public alley can all accommodate an additional parked car (guest parking) in the individual driveways for the garages. The location of 2 designated guest parking spaces works as proposed.

## 6. Landscaping

For a development of this size in this neighborhood, high quality and abundant landscaping is essential. The three primary areas for landscaping are along the Bonnie Brae frontage, in the courtyard between buildings 3 & 4 and building 5 & 6, and along the Thomas Street frontage. In general, the proposed landscaping is attractive and appropriate given the proposed site plan. The mix of landscape material, placement, and installation size will result in attractive setbacks/yards along Bonnie Brae and Thomas, and an attractive courtyard between buildings 3 & 4 and 5 & 6.

Additionally, the applicant has narrowed the driveway off of Thomas and has better landscaped the areas near the driveway at the southern corners of buildings 2 and 4. This additional landscaping and narrower driveway will help to mitigate line of sight to the garage doors of building 1, 2, 3, and 4, which should significantly improve the appearance of the development when the southern edge of the development is viewed from Bonnie Brae and Thomas. The proposed Hydrangea and Jamar Arborvitae near the driveway and south side of the buildings 2 and 4 are well placed and the right size to provide verticality while accommodating safe sightlines for cars entering and exiting the site. The vertical landscaping elements along Thomas will improve the appearance of the southern elevations of the development by providing visual landscaping interests in front of the building facades.

## 7. Lighting

The proposed exterior lighting for the development seems appropriate and will likely conform to the Village code, but a photometric plan was not available for review.

## 8. Conclusions

The proposed Bonnie Brae Townhomes planned development clearly intends to provide a quality residential product for River Forest, and multi-family residential development is appropriate for this location. The proposed buildings are comprised of quality materials and the front facades are relatively attractive and provide sufficient architectural detail and interest. The applicant has also made changes to improve the appearance of the Thomas Street facades and rear facades of the building with additional architectural detail and interest. While the use is generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, several Site Development Allowances (SDAs) are required to provide relief from the underlying R4 District zoning standards.

**Density, Setbacks, and Site Plan** – The applicant is proposing double the allowed density for the R4 District (9 units permitted, 18 units proposed). While some increase in standard R4 density is appropriate, the number and significance of requested SDAs may indicate that there may be too much being proposed for the site for a townhouse development of such orientation.

- Density – double permitted number of units – 9 permitted; 18 proposed
- Corner (Secondary) Front Setback (Thomas Street) – 25' required; 12' proposed
- Rear Setback (public alley) – 27'8" required; 8' proposed
- Rear Yard Area (adjacent to public alley) – 4,152 sf required; only 1,296 proposed



**Thomas Frontage** – The side elevations along Thomas Street function are a prominent frontage and visual presence for the development. Although lacking the level of detail and interest as the Bonnie Brae frontage, the applicant has significantly improved the appearance along Thomas Street with improved architectural detail and interest, increased setbacks, enhanced landscaping, a narrower driveway, and narrower building separation. The collective impact of this revisions results in a much better appearance along Thomas Street.

**Parking** – Although the development requires site development allowances for parking, the number of resident parking spaces is appropriate and the guest parking, with the ability to park in the driveways along the alley, should be adequate.

**Affordable Housing** – The Comprehensive Plan states “...the Village should seek to improve the condition of the existing affordable housing in the community and appropriately consider affordable units as a component of future residential development.” The applicant has not indicated if the exiting residential units on the subject property are affordable and has not yet addressed whether consideration has been given to the provision of affordable units as a component of the proposed development.

**Access and Circulation** – The proposed access and on-site circulation provide convenient access to designated parking areas. On-site pedestrian circulation is also well designed for the site.

**Landscaping** – In general, the proposed landscaping is adequate given the proposed site plan, including the narrower driveway and additional landscaping along Thomas to provide vertical interest and better mitigate prominent views to the garages.

**Overall** – The Subject Property is an ideal location for multi-family/townhome development. The quality material and construction of the proposed development is appropriate. While the overall proposed density is not necessarily too much for the site, the fact that it is a townhouse development in this configuration is challenging and requires significant relief. The number and severity of the site development allowances (SDAs) indicate that consideration should be given to modifying key components of the development to make it a better fit for the site, possibly including a reduction of the total number of units and possibly amendments to the placement of building as a result of fewer units.

# Village of River Forest

## POLICE DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM



**TO:** Lisa Scheiner – Asst. Village Administrator

**FROM:** James O'Shea - Chief of Police

**DATE:** July 8, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Development Application – Bonnie Brae and Thomas

---

I have reviewed the updated Bonnie Brae and Thomas planned development application, and do not foresee any concerns from a law enforcement/public safety perspective. During the of review of the updated application/plans, no new or subsequent issues regarding emergency vehicle access, parking and traffic flow, or other safety related matters were identified.



## MEMORANDUM

TO: Lisa Scheiner  
Assistant Village Administrator

FROM: Kurt Bohlmann  
Fire Chief

DATE: July 10, 2020

SUBJECT: 1111 Bonnie Brae Townhome construction project

After a review of the construction project at 1101-1111 Bonnie Brae, there are a few issues that we need further clarification.

1. We still recommend re-numbering the units from their last proposal to coordinate the address line-up with the rest of the village.
2. We would still like to see a detail of the utility layout coming into each unit to avoid having all the utilities coming into each unit in the same area.
3. Fire Marshal Kevin Wiley had a couple of conversations with John Schiess where John outlined a couple of ideas. One involved altering the Thomas side of the building with a "Bridge" to connect buildings 2 and 4 with a structure that would essentially limit access to units 10, 11 in building 4 and provide very limited access to building 3 to the north. After further discussions, John removed the bridge as well as changing all the present 5-foot balconies to "Julian" balconies. This would give the fire department over 22 feet clearance down the drive aisle. John told Kevin that he would send the latest proposal on Thursday July 9, 2020 but we did not receive that new proposal.

When these issues are addressed and with the current information provided, I believe this project will not require any substantial changes to the Fire Departments response or ability to protect this structure.



## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** July 7, 2020

**TO:** Lisa Scheiner, Assistant Village Administrator

**FROM:** John Anderson, Director of Public Works

**SUBJECT:** 1101 Bonnie Brae Planned Development

---

Based on the documents provided within the 6/18/20 submittal packet, the Department of Public Works would like to offer the following comments regarding the 1101 Bonnie Brae planned development project:

1. Though material staging/phasing has been provided, the following items should be addressed:
  - a. The construction phasing indicates that the buildings along the alley will be the last to be constructed. This would seem to indicate that the alley will be heavily utilized for construction access. Given that this alley was just reconstructed last year, it is recommended that the only site access be provided off of Thomas St (through the proposed driveway apron). This may require that Phase 3 be constructed first, followed by Phase 2 and then Phase 1.
  - b. It is noted that a portion of the parkway on Thomas St is proposed to be used as material storage. This may require that the sidewalk and parkway be enclosed within the construction fencing for the sake of safety. This should be discussed to determine the full impact of the parkway.
2. It is recommended that an agreement be established which indicates that snow removal operations shall not utilize any portion of the public-right-of way, nor shall it impact the two guest parking spaces available on the site.
3. It should be noted that a hydraulic analysis was performed on a previous iteration of this development to analyze impacts to the Village's water system and it was determined that there are no off-site improvements required to accommodate the proposed development. Additionally, the surrounding sewer infrastructure has been reviewed and Staff does not believe that off-site sewer improvements will be necessary. Though the site plan has changed since these analyses were performed, it is believed that the existing water and sewer infrastructure remain adequate for the currently submitted site plan as the current layout proposes one fewer townhome unit than when the analyses were performed.



4. It is recommended that *all* utility service locations be approximated throughout the site as part of the utility layout planning, including gas/electric/communications. Given the site constraints, this will be necessary in order to establish feasible areas for water and sewer utilities.
5. Due to the close proximity of the east side of the development site to the recently installed permeable paver alley there is a need to ensure any damage to the alley due to construction will be restored properly. The Village and Applicant will need to determine a form of security in an amount (to be determined at a later date) and with conditions that are agreeable to both the Village and Applicant that will be utilized to cover the cost of public infrastructure damaged as a result of the planned development construction activities.



## RIVER FOREST TOWNSHIP

Caring | Connection | Community

July 9<sup>th</sup> 2020

**Supervisor**

Carla Sloan  
708.366.2029

**Assessor**

Pamela Kende  
708.366.2787

**Clerk**

Abby Schmelling  
708.771.6159 x234

**Trustees**

Helene Connolly  
Holly Economos  
Mark Kelty  
Karen Taubman

**Mental Health/GA  
Administrator**

Avis Rudner  
708.771.6159 x270

**Senior Outreach  
Coordinator**

Cathaleen Roach  
708.771.6159 x234

Dear River Forest Village Development Review Board,

It has come to our attention that the owner of 1111 Bonnie Brae has possibly committed fraud. He is currently under investigation with the Cook County Assessor's Office and possibly the Cook County State's Attorney. I do not believe at this time he knows he is being investigated. Please do not interfere with or let him know he is under investigation.

During River Forest Township's assessment appeal period with the Cook County Assessor they filed an appeal stating that the building PIN # 15-01-403-019-0000, commonly known as 1111 Bonnie Brae, River Forest, IL 60305 was vacant. The appeal was based on total vacancy. The Assessor had valued the property at 109,063. The vacancy appeal reduced the building value to 21,889. The River Forest Township Assessor's office has 1st hand knowledge that the building was occupied at the time of the appeal and is still currently occupied. This appeal result shifts the tax burden of 87,175 assessment onto to the rest of the property owners of River Forest. Using 2020 tax rates that comes out to an amount of \$27,062.00

Regards,

Pamela Kende, CIAO  
River Forest Township Assessor