



VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING

Wednesday, May 4, 2022 – 6:00 PM

Village Hall – 1st Floor Community Room, 400 Park Ave., River Forest, IL

AGENDA

Physical attendance at this public meeting may be limited with Commission officials, staff and consultants having priority over members of the public. Public comments and any responses will be shared with the Commission. You may submit your public comments via email in advance of the meeting to: Matt Walsh at mwalsh@vrf.us. You may listen to the meeting by participating in a Zoom conference call as follows, dial-in number: 312-626-6799 with meeting ID: 812 1874 3954 or visit <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81218743954>. If you would like to speak during public comment, please email mwalsh@vrf.us by 4:00 PM the day prior to the meeting.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Public Comment
3. Approval of Meeting Minutes – March 2, 2022
4. Chamber of Commerce Update
5. Continued Discussion Regarding Business Community Retention/Support Strategies and Communication
6. Continued Discussion Regarding Planning, Zoning, Comprehensive Plan, Corridor Study, and TIF Districts
7. Discussion of Future Meeting Dates and Times
8. Other Business
9. Executive Session
10. Adjournment

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
March 2, 2022**

A meeting of the Village of River Forest Economic Development Commission was held on Wednesday, March 2, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. in the 1st Floor Community Room of Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue, River Forest, Illinois.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Cuyler Brown, Katie Lowes, Carr Preston, Rajendra Chiplunkar, Walter Wahlfeldt, Liz Holt, Tim Brangle

Absent: Robert Graham

Also Present: Village Administrator Brian Murphy, Assistant Village Administrator Lisa Scheiner

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

a. February 2, 2022

A MOTION was made by Wahlfeldt and SECONDED by Brangle to approve the February 2, 2022 meeting of the Economic Development Commission. MOTION PASSED by unanimous vote.

b. February 14, 2022

A MOTION was made by Brown and SECONDED by Preston to approve the February 14, 2022 meeting of the Economic Development Commission. MOTION PASSED by unanimous vote.

**4. CONTINUED DISCUSSION REGARDING BUSINESS COMMUNITY RETENTION/
SUPPORT STRATEGIES**

Village Administrator Murphy, Chairman Brown, and Commissioner Holt reviewed the program that will be launched to provide six-month memberships for all businesses located in River Forest. There was unanimous support for the program.

Commissioner Holt shared information about the Chamber's workforce development survey: (https://dom.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_equfzZOxS06XIc6) as well as some Chamber events and programs. Chairman Brown requested that future agendas include a Chamber update.

There was discussion about outreach to businesses through regular Village newsletters. The communications would be targeted at existing businesses as well as promoting of development opportunities.

5. DISCUSSION REGARDING PLANNING, ZONING, COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, CORRIDOR STUDY, AND TIF DISTRICTS

Consensus from the Economic Development Commission to proceed with modeling tools and zoning analysis, with a focus on the Madison Street and North Avenue corridors.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

8. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Lowes and SECONDED by Commissioner Wahlfeldt to adjourn the March 2, 2022, meeting of the Economic Development Commission at 7:23 p.m. MOTION PASSED by unanimous vote.

Executive Directors Notes

Prepared for the River Forest EDC meeting scheduled for May 4, 2022.

SUCCESSFUL EVENTS!

| | |
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|  <p>SAVE THE DATE!</p> <p>SPEED NETWORKING</p> <p>SPRING EDITION</p> <p>MARCH 16, 2022 5PM - 7PM</p> <p>OAK PARK RIVER FOREST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE</p> | <p>Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SOLD out event - 84 tickets sold, 64 people attended (76% attendance) - Great partnership with OPRF Community Foundation! <p>Feedback Survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 94% of attendees responded - 90% said they would attend another speed networking event (10% said maybe) - 75% rated the event as 10/10 - 14% rated event as 9/10 |
|  <p>Save the Date!</p> <p>Boost Your Healthcare Network</p> <p>5pm - 7pm ?? March, 2022 Riveredge Hospital</p> <p>COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLNESS FAIR</p> <p>OAK PARK RIVER FOREST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE</p> | <p>Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 37 people registered, 25 people showed up - Great energy in the room and fantastic networking with the LinkedIn activity - Great to have Affinity Group co-chairs & Event co-chairs all in one location! - Thanks to Riveredge for hosting and providing all food and drinks <p>Feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Those who attended loved it! - We were surprised at the low turn-out |

Membership

- Village of RF approved complimentary 6mo membership to every business in RF AND every new business license in 2022. Marketing campaign to start May 1, 2022.



- We will work first to target Health & Wellness businesses (who will get an 80% discount on vendor registration for the [May Health & Wellness Fair](#)) followed by home-based businesses.
- Our take-out lunch program - [Take-out Stake-out](#) - will also focus on restaurants.
- We have a robust New Member on-boarding program - [CLICK HERE](#)
- Great opportunity for RF biz to celebrate *anything* with a [Ribbon Cutting](#)!

- Number of new members joining organically is also growing!


| YEAR | NO OF NEW MEMBERS WHO JOIN ORGANICALLY |
|---------|--|
| Q1 2019 | 4 |
| Q1 2020 | 8 |
| Q1 2021 | 13 |
| Q1 2022 | 24 (of a total of 49) |

Around the Villages & Advocacy

- NEW Advocacy page on our website - [CLICK HERE](#). Great resource for community to see how much work we do to advocate for businesses! Highlighted in the 4th newsletter of every month.
- Chamber ED will be attending two half day sessions on D,E,I & anti-racism training - May 19 & 26.
- Continue with excellent open rate of 30%-34% of [our weekly free e-newsletter](#).

Chamber Blog - Did you know we have one? [CLICK HERE!](#)

Mayoral Proclamation for Chamber of Commerce Week

| | |
|---|--|
|  <p>Illinois Celebrates Chamber of Commerce Week September 11-17, 2022 www.iacce.org</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - September 11 - 17, 2022 is Chamber of Commerce Week. - logo (left) can be used on all our marketing - We will request mayoral/village president proclamation from both OP & RF - A gubernatorial proclamation has also been submitted to Governor Pritzker's office. Which we can share. - Recommended by the Executive Committee to be approved by the Board of Directors |
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First Annual Juneteenth Parade

- Sunday June 19, 2022
OPRF Chamber will participate in this event. We will need volunteers!

UPCOMING EVENTS

- All of our upcoming programs and events are on our [Chamber Website calendar](#) or on [social media \(Facebook\)](#).



**Community
Health & Wellness
Fair**

Presented by:
 **RUSH**
OAK PARK HOSPITAL

**VENDOR & SPONSOR
REGISTRATION
NOW OPEN!**

Sunday | May 15 | 11am - 2pm
FFC Oak Park, 1114 Lake Street

**COMMUNITY
HEALTH and
WELLNESS
FAIR**

Reconnect with your health & wellbeing.



TOPIC SUMMARY

The Covid pandemic has brought into sharp focus the interconnectedness of technology and the daily machinations of our economy. Now more than ever we are doing business on-line and in a virtual world. But do our communities have the infrastructure to continue to grow in these areas? What can we glean from trends in consumer spending? How has the world of property development (including design & construction) been impacted? And how can the arts contribute to navigating this world?

At a hyper-local level, small businesses cannot predict current consumer trends, struggling business owners don't know how to reposition themselves, and thriving businesses are unnerved, not able to predict risks nor plan for them.

Where is our economy at *right now* and where will we be in the next 5, 10 or 20 years?

This panel discussion will take a deep dive into understanding current trends in areas of key economic indicators - purchasing power, construction & development and broadband infrastructure. A facilitator will delve into how these areas are interconnected and weave through the insight and potency of an arts perspective on our new reality.



Village of River Forest

Madison Street Redevelopment Project #1

Request for Expression of Interest

Executive Summary

The Village of River Forest (“Village”) is offering the opportunity to team with the private sector to redevelop key properties within the Madison Street Corridor, a vibrant mixed-use area that spans the River Forest and Forest Park communities. The Village is seeking expressions of interest from a developer or development team to undertake the redevelopment of an assemblage of properties, including three Village-owned properties, along Madison Street between Lathrop and Ashland Avenues.



Background and Opportunity

The Madison Street Corridor is an active downtown district drawing from a range of surrounding communities including River Forest, Forest Park, Oak Park, Maywood, Riverside, Elmwood Park, and others, and serves as a primary retail, restaurant, entertainment, and residential core. Across River Forest and Forest Park, Madison Street is home to a diverse mix of venues with dozens of restaurants, retailers, shops, and more. The Development Site is located toward the western edge of the Madison Street Corridor, between Lathrop and Ashland Avenues, with the potential to become an important anchor development to the corridor and a signature gateway into River Forest.

The Village's Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2019, assessed the Madison Street Corridor as a key opportunity and priority for potential reuse/redevelopment across a range of uses and configurations. The Comprehensive Plan highlighted some of the issues common to parcels along many urban corridors, namely the limitations due to lot depth and resulting constraints to efficient, sizable footprints attractive to today's tenants, parking, and overall site flow. Further, the Comprehensive Plan offered possible solutions through the incorporation of adjacent alleys and lots immediately behind corridor parcels to increase depths, parcel sizes, and overall viability.

Recognizing this important opportunity, the Village has proactively assembled properties over the last four years, including a commercial property along Madison Street and two residential properties to the north, with the goal of facilitating their repositioning, reuse and/or redevelopment. In addition to the Village-owned properties, there are two adjacent commercial properties that remain privately owned. The Village believes that combined, they could offer a wider range of redevelopment options, though the Village equally believes the properties under its control offer scenarios that could work on their own or through a phased approach that accommodates potential expansion should other adjacent sites become available.



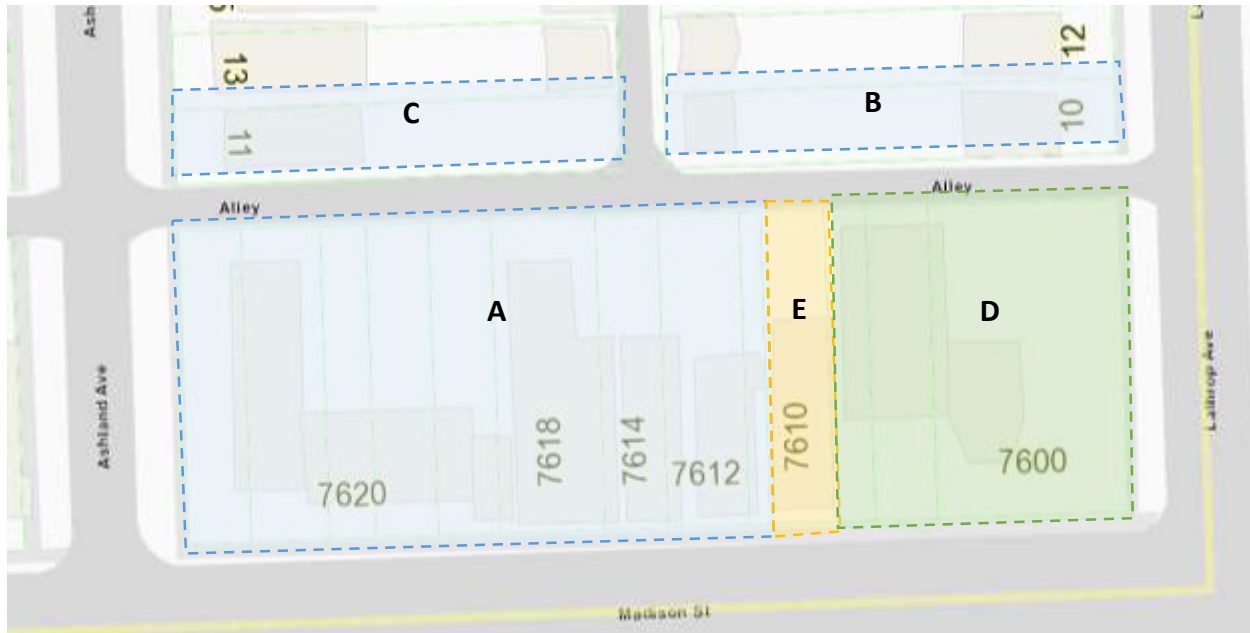
The Village of River Forest established a tax increment financing (TIF) district in 2016 on the entire length of its Madison Street corridor to enable additional tools for redevelopment. The Madison Street TIF district is expected to enhance the economic viability, productivity, appearance, and function of this corridor by encouraging investment and revitalization of existing properties. Future incremental value can be an incentive to development.

Further, the Villages of River Forest and Forest Park also teamed up to improve the overall aesthetic environment of the Madison Street corridor in 2016. Streetscape improvements included the installation of median planters, brick pavers, decorative light poles, pedestrian lighting, planter boxes, planter medians, benches, and more.

The Village is interested in continuing to move key projects forward within the TIF district, particularly exploring the market for development of the Village-owned properties. Having received interest and unsolicited proposals for these sites, the Village would now like to also offer the opportunity publicly and gauge interest from the broader development/investment community. As such, the Village is conducting an Expression of Interest solicitation to 1.) raise awareness of the unique assembly and offering, and 2. to garner interest, ideas, concerns, recommendations, refinements and/or questions from members of the development community who may have interest in a possible development project.

The Development Site / Parcels

The desired project area consists of five parcels including three under Village control (A, B, C) and two adjacent parcels (D and E) under private ownership.



Parcel A

7620, 7618, 7614, 7612 Madison (former Lutheran Children Family Services building)

29,125 square feet

Measures 233' x 125'

Owner: Village of River Forest

Current Zoning: C2 Commercial

Notes: Comprised of one original building and three additions including a two-flat on the eastern side of the subject property.

Parcel B

10 Lathrop

5,408 square feet

Measures 181' x 30'

Owner: Village of River Forest

Current Zoning: R2 Single Family Residential Zoning

Notes: This is a single family residential home with a detached garage.

Parcel C

11 Ashland

5,335 square feet

Measures 178' x 30'

Owner: Village of River Forest

Current Zoning: R2 Single Family Residential Zoning

Notes: This is a two-flat residential property with a detached garage.

Parcel D

7600 Madison Street (Pete's Automotive)

14,175 square feet

Measures approximately 124' x 118'

Owner: Pete Collis

Current Zoning: C2 Commercial

Notes: Pete Collis is the owner of the business and property and has indicated that he does not want to sell his property at this time though the Village has had discussions with him.

Parcel E

7610 Madison Street

4,227 square feet

Measures approximately 124' x 26'

Owner: Pelafas Family

Current Zoning: Current Zoning: C2 Commercial

Notes: Two flat with business on the first floor and an apartment on the second floor – The property is owned by the Pelafas family who also use the building as their office for the realty business. The Village and the Pelafas family have discussed a possible purchase, but could not yet agree on terms.

Solicitation Intent / Recommendations for Response

While the Village controls a portion of the development site, the Village is looking for developers to opine on their interest in working on a project that encompasses some or all of the parcels. This is intentionally not yet a formal request for proposals (RFP), as the Village is looking initially for feedback on interest, key questions/concerns, the site, conceptual approaches/options, market, and sense of viability. The Village is not interested nor wishing to burden developers with full development proposal requirements but welcomes any material, written or graphic, which help provide this feedback (e.g. conceptual ideas, precedents, bubble sketches, and narratives).

The Village anticipates that a project of this size will required zoning entitled under the Village's planned development ordinance, which allows developers to seek relief from the Village's underlying zoning restriction while balancing the need for greater consideration of a development's impact on surrounding properties and the Village in general.

To provide further information on the Village's considerations, the Village suggests interested respondents take into account the following:

1. Phased approach – As previously stated, the Village owns three parcels and believes the entire site would offer the best development options. The Village encourages a dialogue between the developer and the owners of Parcels “D” and “E” to determine how and if deal terms could be agreed upon. For purposes of this process, the Village would assume these property owners are not selling at this time and look to facilitate a phased approach where said properties could potentially be redeveloped at a later time. Developers are encouraged to offer interest and feedback on the viability of developing just the three properties, the whole site, or a phased approach
2. Adaptive Reuse – While scraping the site for redevelopment is a possibility, the Village would entertain adaptive reuse of some or all the existing properties. The Village can provide some information regarding the conditions of the existing buildings and arrange property walk-throughs if interest warrants.
3. Concept/Program - The Village believes a mixed-use project (two to four floors) of ground-floor retail and residential or office above could fit contextually within the district.
4. Cost and Viability – While the Village aims to achieve a fair market return on the property it acquired, it is also willing to engage in a broader discussion regarding the needs of the development community to ensure a viable, high-quality project.
5. Sensitivity to the Neighbors – The subject property is near single family residential property and any development should be sensitive to that fact and aim to be congruous.
6. Affordable Housing – The Village recently approved an affordable housing plan and is interested in understanding the potential to integrate that into new development as well as the impact on development, viability, etc. The Village’s Affordable Housing Plan is available online at www.vrf.us/affordablehousing.
7. Integration of Comprehensive Plan – The Village’s Comprehensive Plan (adopted in 2019) and available online at www.vrf.us/comprehensive-plan discussed this area as follows: *This block serves as a gateway into River Forest and is a prime candidate for redevelopment. Several sites, including the former Lutheran Family Services properties, are likely and desirable candidates for redevelopment. The automotive repair use at the corner of Lathrop, although a successful business, is in need of enhancement – façade and signage improvements, and outdoor storage screening and landscaping. The sight is an appropriate candidate for possible relocation and redevelopment. Possible expansion of the commercial areas for commercial development should be considered given an appropriate and desirable development proposal.* The Comprehensive Plan offered possible solutions through the incorporation of adjacent alleys and lots immediately behind corridor parcels to increase depths, parcel sizes, and overall viability.

Response Deadline

Please offer your interest by July 9, 2021.

The Village is willing to discuss this further by email, phone, or possibly conduct a property walk-through if interest warrants. For more information, please contact Lisa Scheiner, Acting Village Administrator via email at lscheiner@vrf.us or by telephone at (708) 714-3520.

Related Links

[Village of River Forest Comprehensive Plan](#)

[Village of River Forest Affordable Housing Plan](#)

[River Forest Community Profile](#)

[Madison Street TIF District](#)

[Development Approval Process](#)

[Madison Street Development Site](#)