



VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Tuesday, June 9, 2026 – 7:00 PM
Village Hall – 400 Park Ave., River Forest, IL

You may submit your written public comments via email in advance of the meeting to: sjansen@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: 816 4491 8569 or by clicking [here](#). If you would like to speak during public comment, please email sjansen@vrf.us by 4:00 PM on Tuesday, June 9, 2026.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Public Comment
3. Adoption of Meeting Minutes for May 12, 2026
4. Commissioner Updates
5. Bird City Illinois and Migratory Birds
6. Pollinator Week Proclamation
7. Green Building Guide
8. TerraCycle
9. Communications and Staff Reports
 - a. Village Project Updates
 - b. Communications
10. Schedule Next Meeting – July 14, 2026
11. Adjournment

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2026**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, May 12, 2026, at 7:30 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 7:34 PM. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Co-Chair Charrette, Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioners Kadlec, Avalos, Hoyt, and Schaider.

Absent: Commissioner Beckman and Student Commissioner Stierwalt

Also Present: Staff Liaison Seth Jansen

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Lillian Ryan, a 4th grader at Lincoln School delivered comments encouraging the Village to address global warming, reducing litter and pollution, protecting wildlife, and encouraging reuse and conservation. Lillian encouraged reducing use of fossil fuels and planting more trees. She encouraged voters and consumers to make decisions based on what is good for the Earth.

The Commission offered thanks to Lillian. Commissioner Avalos also noted other students had made public comments in support of sustainability initiatives at the most recent Board meeting. Co-Chair Lennon noted that a lot of what was raised is in line with the goals of the Commission to change people’s behavior. Commissioner Hoyt suggested greater coordination between what the school district environmental clubs are doing and what the Commission is working on.

3. ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Kadlec made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Avalos, to approve the meeting minutes from April 14, 2026.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chair Charrette, Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioners Kadlec, Avalos, Hoyt, and Schaider.

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Beckman

Motion Passes.

4. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

Mr. Jansen noted that the Board had just appointed two new Commissioners, stated that newly appointed Commissioner Beckman was unable to attend the meeting, and introduced Commissioner Schaider. Commissioner Schaider introduced himself, his career, and his time has a River Forest resident.

Commissioner Avalos mentioned the public comments from the Board meeting that requested public recycling and compost containers near public garbage cans. Commissioner Avalos noted the difficulties, particularly with regards to contamination of recycling containers with waste. Mr. Jansen provided background on the public comments at the Board meeting, with the focus to be on the new park at the corner of Lake St. and Park Ave. Mr. Jansen described the plan for the park and the funding and servicing of cans at the park. Mr. Jansen highlighted other items discussed at the Village Board meeting relating to sustainability, including approval of the community aggregation program. The Commission discussed installation of public recycling receptacles and ways to limit contamination. The Commission discussed the drop off composting locations and the curbside composting program. The Commission discussed the Heritage Square project and how community feedback will be incorporated as the project is built out. Co-Chair Lennon encouraged the Village to have plantings be education and information at the site to promote native plants for the Village.

5. BIRD CITY ILLINOIS AND MIGRATORY BIRDS

Co-Chair Charrette discussed the Big Sit event at the Forest Preserve for World Migratory Bird Day. Co-Chairs Charrette and Lennon and Commissioner Hoyt discussed species spotted at the event. Mr. Jansen provided background for the Bird City Illinois project to Commissioner Schaidler.

Commissioner Hoyt introduced the protocols for the Nighthawk Monitoring Project, discussing the volunteers who have already committed, the program length, and the actions for monitor nighthawks beginning June 1st. The project area will cover Oak Park, River Forest, and some surrounding areas. The Commission discussed the assignments of volunteers and tools to help identify nighthawk activity.

Commissioner Hoyt recapped the Big Sit event held at the Forest Preserve and offered his thanks to their staff for the work. The Commission discussed the upcoming bird walk event at Thatcher Woods and the upcoming book discussion at the River Forest Library.

Mr. Jansen briefly introduced the Bird City Proclamation draft, sharing the template text provided for communities as well as two community examples that incorporated locally specific items into the proclamation. Mr. Jansen solicited feedback from the Commission to develop a proclamation for the Village over the summer months. The Commission offered initial thoughts, indicated they would provide feedback, and timeframe for development.

Co-Chair Lennon and Commissioner Hoyt discussed how feedback on the focal species monitoring would progress and how the data of the project will be compiled and summarized.

6. POLLINATOR WEEK PROCALMAATION

Mr. Jansen briefly introduced the draft Pollinator Week Proclamation. Co-Chair Lennon offered suggested edits, citing a redundant “Whereas” clause in the draft proclamation. Commissioner Hoyt requested that the proclamation identify specific milkweed planting

sites. Commissioner Schaidler inquired about available public planting sites; Mr. Jansen explained the pending grant application for plantings along the parkway near the rail lines. Commissioner Hoyt pushed for expanded milkweed planting, possibly at Village Hall. Commissioner Kadlec discussed milkweed planting locations on school district properties. The Commission discussed native planting sites and potential native planting sites owned and maintained by the Village and by other public bodies within the Village. Co-Chair Charrette inquired about confirming whether or not milkweed is planted within the bioswales and, if needed, request that milkweed be incorporated into new plantings. The Commission discussed specific species of milkweed ideal for planting at specific locations. Co-Chair Lennon inquired about the maintenance of native plant sites in the Village and the concern for cost of maintenance; Commissioner Hoyt discussed the importance of cultivation and management of any planting locations. The Commission also discussed the need to make sure it looks appealing to people for their to be support for such programs. The Commission discussed the cost of maintenance, need for consistent dedicated funding and potential use of volunteers to lower maintenance costs. Co-Chair Lennon inquired about the cost of regular maintenance is and what the size of other planting sites.

7. GREEN BUILDING GUIDE

Mr. Jansen summarized what he believed to be the consensus on the format of the Green Building Guide based on previous discussions at Commission meetings. Mr. Jansen discussed developing a survey to go out to locally licensed contractors to get an assessment of what electric appliances they are used to working with and those who are qualified to and comfortable within installing such products. The guide would be used to promote and encourage adoption of electric home appliances, and the survey would be used to compile of list of contractors who homeowners may wish to reach out to regarding potential installation. The Commission requested feedback from the Commission on the full list of appliances to include in the survey. Commissioner Avalos stated he could put together some ideas and bring it to the Commission, inquiring specifically if any specific certifications exist. Commissioner Hoyt inquired about if there is a record of who has installed a heat pump. Co-Chair Charrette asked if permit dates could also be included. The Commission discussed the range of appliances and if installation of certain appliances requires a permit.

8. COMMUNICATIONS AND STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Jansen summarized the quarterly LRS report, and the Commission discussed the data. Mr. Jansen gave an update to the Battery Network battery recycling program suggested by Co-Chair Lennon at the previous month's meeting, and the Commission asked about the specifics of collection protocols. Mr. Jansen provided an update on ongoing projects relating to sustainability. Commissioner Schaidler inquired about the permeable paver project details and the effectiveness of permeable pavers and rainwater storage and infiltration projects. Mr. Janse outlined the planned upcoming communications for the newsletter and social media.

Co-Chair Lennon wanted to know how to offer thanks to students who had come out and offered public comment to the Commission, asking the best way to acknowledge them. Commissioner Avalos suggested finding ways to further coordinate and work with the school

district and the sustainability clubs and green for good teams at each school. Commissioner Hoyt suggested potential quarterly invites for the groups to attend the Commission meetings to present.

9. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING – JUNE 9, 2026

The Commission reached a consensus to hold its next meeting Tuesday, June 9, 2026

10. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Schaider made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hoyt, to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 PM.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chair Charrette, Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioners Kadlec, Avalos, Hoyt, and Schaider.

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Beckman

Motion Passes.

Seth Jansen, Secretary



**Village of River Forest
Public Works and Engineering**

400 Park Avenue
River Forest, IL 60305
Tel: 708-366-8500

MEMORANDUM

Date: June 9, 2026
To: Sustainability Commission
From: Seth Jansen, Assistant to the Director of Public Works
Subj: Pollinator Week Proclamation Draft

At the May meeting, the Commission discussed the draft Pollinator Week proclamation put forward. The Commission specifically inquired about the planting of milkweed at Village facilities. Following the meeting, staff were able to confirm that swamp milkweed is planted in the Chicago Ave. bioswales. Further, the proposal put forward for the grant application for native plantings along Hawthorne and Central Ave including planting of butterfly milkweed at those locations. The attached draft proclamation has been revised to add an additional whereas clause (highlighted in the draft) to reflect this information. A "Whereas" clause identified as being redundant by Co-Chair Lennon at last month's meeting was also struck from the draft. Small grammar corrections have also been made to the draft. The final draft proclamation is intended to be adopted by the Board at their June 22nd meeting.

Motion: Recommend the Village Board approve a Proclamation recognizing June 22 through June 28, 2026 as Pollinator Week in the Village of River Forest

Attachment: Revised Pollinator Week Proclamation Draft



PROCLAMATION DESIGNATING JUNE 22 THROUGH JUNE 28, 2026 AS POLLINATOR WEEK

WHEREAS, River Forest is home to many native wildlife and pollinator species such as birds, bees, and insects which keep our environment healthy and biodiverse; and

WHEREAS, the Village of River Forest recognizes that human health ultimately depends on well-functioning ecosystems and that biodiverse regions can better support food production, healthy soil and air quality and can foster healthy connections between humans and wildlife; and

WHEREAS, the Village of River Forest is working to build a healthy, sustainable and wildlife-friendly community that brings the many benefits of nature to all corners of our community, including increasing native planting on public property; and

WHEREAS, pollinators play an important role in maintaining a healthy ecosystem. Local plant species, wildlife, and urban agriculture all depend on pollination from bees, butterflies, and other insects; and

WHEREAS, pollinator species are in decline due to habitat loss and the use of pesticides, causing species like the monarch butterfly to decline significantly in the past 25 years; and

WHEREAS, National Pollinator Week is a national initiative that offers opportunities to individuals and communities to help restore native habitat, support local pollinator species; and

WHEREAS, the Village of River Forest has planted swamp milkweed and other native pollinator plants along the Chicago Ave. bioswales and will continue to work to identify resources and funding opportunities to expand native plants on public land in the Village, including along the Village maintained parkways along the elevated rail line; and

WHEREAS, the Village of River Forest will continue to support local, state and national efforts that protect, restore, and conserve habitat for pollinators, as well as foster a greater connection between residents and wildlife.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, CATHERINE ADDUCI, President of the Village of River Forest, do hereby proclaim June 22, 2026, through June 28, 2026, as Pollinator Week in the Village of River Forest, and encourage all residents to participate in community activities that support and celebrate pollinator protection.

IN WITNESS, THEREOF, I have hereto set my hand officially and caused to be affixed the seal of the Village of River Forest, this 22nd day of June, 2026.

Catherine Adduci, Village President



Village of River Forest Public Works and Engineering

400 Park Avenue
River Forest, IL 60305
Tel: 708-366-8500

MEMORANDUM

Date: June 9, 2026
To: Sustainability Commission
From: Seth Jansen, Assistant to the Director of Public Works
Subj: Green Building Guide

In recent months, the Sustainability Commission has been working to develop a Green Building Guide focused on electrification of home appliances. Included in the guide will be a list of contractors who perform permit-required electrification work. At the May meeting of the Commission, the Commission requested a review of specific permit data to get an understanding of what requires a permit for installation and how many installations have occurred where a resident has switched from natural gas to electric.

Often, switching out a fossil fuel appliance for an electric appliance does not require a permit. **However, all residents looking to switch to electric appliances should consult a qualified electrical contractor to perform an electric load calculation to help determine if the electrical panel has sufficient amperage to handle the power demands of moving to an electric appliance, such as an induction stove, heat pump water heater, or electric clothes dryer. Any electrical panel or outlet upgrade will require a standard electrical permit.** Because other appliances upgrades do not require permits, aside from any necessary electric upgrade, permitting data is limited to the installation of heat pumps. Performing a cursory search, 21 permits have been issued within the Village of River Forst which include installation of a heat pump, with most being issued since 2023.

The goal of the proposed contractor survey is to identify qualified contractors capable of performing the work sought by residents. Because permitted work is limited to heat pump installation, the pool of contractors to which the survey is sent can likely be limited to HVAC and Mechanical contractors licensed with the Village. The survey will be entirely voluntary and explicitly state it is for the purpose of connecting residents with qualified contractors. In addition to asking HVAC contractors if they perform heat pump installations, Village Building Department staff recommended an additional question asking how contractors handle determining the electric load for the installation: perform the calculation themselves, utilize a subcontractor, or have the resident seek an electrical contractor prior to installation.

With Commission feedback and approval, staff will develop and disseminate a survey for HVAC and Mechanical contractors in order to identify which ones perform heat pump installations. Staff will further incorporate the recommended disclosure (in bold above) and question from the Village Building Department to include the resulting guide, to make residents aware of the requirements.



**Village of River Forest
Public Works and Engineering**

400 Park Avenue
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MEMORANDUM

Date: June 9, 2026
To: Sustainability Commission
From: Seth Jansen, Assistant to the Director of Public Works
Subj: TerraCycle

A resident contacted the Village inquiring if the Village and the Sustainability Commission would be interested in Village Hall being a collection point for a TerraCycle program. TerraCycle is a volunteer-based recycling platform that collects items that are generally not recyclable through resident recycling programs. TerraCycle has a number of free recycling drop off programs; these are often sponsored by specific corporate partners who only accept items for their own brand. However, some collection programs accept all brands. Three programs were specifically suggested because they collect all brands: the Gillette Recycling Program, which collects all brands of blades, razors, and plastic packaging; the Colgate Oral Care Free Recycling Program, which collects all brands of oral care products and packaging; and the GoGo squeeZ Free Recycling Program, which collects all brands of squeezable snack plastic pouches and their caps. Additionally, the Taco Bell Sauce Container US Recycling Program collects all brands and types of empty sauce packets and containers 2 ounces or less. There is currently a waitlist for the Colgate and GoGo squeeZ sponsored programs.

After being enrolled into a program as a collection point, TerraCycle provides free printable shipping labels, but the Village would be responsible for the collection receptacles and any other program logistics. It is still undetermined where the collection point would be or how the exact logistics of it would work with regards to things like preventing contamination. Commission input and feedback is sought with regards to potential participation in the program.