



**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, November 14 – 7:00 PM**

A regular meeting of the River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Wednesday, November 14th, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was conducted in the Second Floor Conference Room at the River Forest Village Hall, 400 Park Ave., River Forest.

Roll Call and Call to Order

All present at roll call except Eric Simon and Mary Susan Chen

Mary Susan arrived at 7:05

Public Comment

None

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from August 14, 2018 and September 13, 2018 approved.

Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Chen represented the Commission on October 24 at the Dominican Farm to Campus event. At a table shared with One Earth Film Fest, she introduced students and staff to sustainability in the campus and beyond. She demonstrated composting, and reusable and dishwasher safe tableware (Wash and Go containers).

Commissioner Crothers met with David Murphy from Deep Roots to debrief on Green Block Parties and put together grant proposal to submit to Plan It Green. David has agreed to repeat next year. Commissioner Crothers also attended Park District's Board meeting on Monday night that had artificial turf on the agenda. Two other residents present. Ross Rolof and Cheryl Cargie asked a lot of questions. Asked Mike Sletten to define what is the problem that exists. Because of flooding on girls field at keystone – don't know if 10 games that were cancelled had to do with the flooding, no records. Will investigate whether there is an issue and investigate further whether putting a tank and better drainage would solve the problem – can they capture the water with the tank. Cost \$85,000 rather than proposed \$200,000 for artificial turf. Or can other types of clay be put down. And would artificial turf create expansion of any sports other than baseball. \$50,000 has been offered as a donation from a baseball family to put in turf – discussed whether appropriate to accept the \$50,000 and then spend \$150,000 in taxpayer dollars in order to get that. Pete Kuzmich suggested offering a loan to baseball community of the cost of putting in the turf and they would need to pay it back over many years. No environmental issues were brought up at this stage. No detailed minutes taken.

Commissioner Basney participated in the two hour honey extraction workshop at Dominican on October 20. Turnout of about 40 people with a number of kids aged 6 to 10 as well as adults. Ellen McManus did a great job and has a great student following. A good number of local beekeepers attended plus the nutrition lab at Dominican. Participants gave favorable feedback on the experiential learning, community building, connecting with local beekeepers. Expect to partner together on future events. Kids ages 6 to 10 as well as older people. This workshop was held to fulfill education requirement of bee ordinance.

John Anderson reported that permeable pavers were installed in alley between Keystone and Gale just north of Madison, with the support of a grant. The Chicago Avenue project is ongoing, hoping to complete paving on Friday. Former Commissioner Masalla pointed out plants that have been chosen are not on the list of salt tolerant plants. Dig Right In will be asked to look at plant list but deposit has been put on plants already. Other issues addressed were distance between native plants and older trees to ensure no competition among roots; exposure of current tree roots during construction; and plant height to maintain sightlines. Village will lock into a multi-year maintenance contract to take care of plants.

Commissioner Moller reported the Pumpkin Smash organized by the student sustainability club at Roosevelt Middle School was a smashing success. Almost 500 pumpkins (or 4,820 pounds) were kept off the streets and leaves swept to street so village doesn't have to pay for it. Roy Strom provided compost dumpster at no charge. Commissioner Moller is also talking to Mr. Bryant from LaGrange Sustainability Commission, who wants to know how we implement compost program.

Commissioner Cheng reported on attending the last Plan It Green at which community solar and other initiatives were discussed. She also reported briefly on ongoing efforts at District 90 to establish student sustainability clubs.

Commissioner Brennan attended the Midwest Water Reclamation District Sustainability Summit, annual event on Oct. 16 at the Stickney water reclamation plant. They sell a compost product made from biosolids. Commissioner Brennan also attended the Active Trans Bike Walk Summit held at Elmhurst Public Library with Cathy Adduci. It's a very active bicycle advocacy group in Chicago area. Three people from Oak Park cycling organization attended. Issues discussed included bike education bill that Rauner passed and tips for advocacy with elected officials. Broke up into role playing. Village wants to build bikability and walkability issue into comprehensive plan; tight timeframe.

Commissioner Crothers reported that the Wednesday Journal had two page spread about sustainability on November 7. It said Seven Generations Ahead implemented composting and zero waste efforts in D90 and green block parties in River Forest. Sue will reach out to Gary Cuneen about obtaining a correction.

Green Block Party Grant application to Plan It Green

Commissioners Crothers and Moller are working on block party budget and two year grant proposal to submit to Plan It Green. David Murphy has requested \$7800, including for an intern to help do installation so he can educate about healthy lawn since chemicals affect pollinator gardens. Request is for \$16,000 over two years. Commissioner Cheng to ask Gary Cuneen about timeframe for submitting grant proposal to Plan It Green. Commissioner Crothers will complete before she leaves.

Commissioner Crothers asked if we can create garden maps like the tree maps. John Anderson said yes and indicated we can probably list plant species and link to photos when people click on a garden link.

Want measurements from this to be counted towards River Forest's contribution to Plan It Green, Chicago Climate Charter and Greenest Region Compact.

Gardens include rain gardens on Chicago, pollinator gardens on parkway, herb garden, pumping station community garden plots for rent, inspirational edible gardens, monarch gardens

Questionnaire Results

Commissioner Cheng highlighted some initial action items based on preliminary review. The results should be reviewed more closely to determine other action items.

- Follow up with those willing to volunteer – Beth and Mary Susan. Beth to provide contact info to Mary Susan who will reach out to them. Beth also to provide responses from those who said interested in volunteering.
- Promote awareness of website
- Promote awareness of village energy savings

Some noteworthy areas people expressed interest in:

More information on waste diversion and how to properly recycle.

- Opportunities for condo dwellers to recycle and compost
- Electric cars – there is interest but not necessarily in paying for what is needed
- Interest in conserving open spaces

John Anderson noted only 47% interested in more about flood mitigation yet it's a major issue. Because of timing of survey, the topic may not have been at top of mind. Village will be spending a lot to address this. Alleys and native plants along Chicago are intended to ease stress on sewer systems. Chemical runoff creates algae blooms. Promote what village is doing to lead the way.

Commissioner Brennan pointed out that 1,673 voted in 2017. We had a 10% response rate from those who are active, so the responses can be considered representative.

Bike/walkability in comprehensive plan

John Houseal working on plan by Thanksgiving. Katie and Andy putting together group of avid bikers to provide input. Have 3 or 4 people interested in being on task force.

Safe walking routes to school – just applied for IDOT grant to implement recommendations. Estimated cost is between \$150,000 to \$180,000 because of signage and striping.

Sustainability Commission Goals

Commissioner Crothers highlighted that almost all the goals in the open space/ecosystems area have been achieved or are on their way to being achieved. Her detailed report is included in the packet.

Pumping Station Audit

John Anderson met with ComEd on pumping station facility assessment prepared by ComEd. Did not agree with recommendations to change HVAC system with advanced controls; they didn't go look to see whether the relatively new unit already has those. A lot of recommendations are about lighting, which village plans

to address as lights need to be replaced. Will add controls related to occupancy. Need to look at main big recommendation about retrofitting the older water tower pump.

Chicago Avenue bump outs

Plantings will be put closer to trees not at corner. Could take awhile to establish, although putting in plugs not seeds. Suggestion to put in signage while plants are becoming established, explaining that village is planting native plants to mitigate flooding. When the plants are put in, could help If an interactive education event takes place to show what plants look like now and what they will eventually look like; perhaps in coordination with Trailside; and if media is invited.

Energy initiatives

Sol Smart process has started with Commissioner Simon and John Anderson attending biweekly meetings to work towards getting Bronze designation for village. John Anderson said first step has to do with permit process for solar panels in terms of time it takes and fees. There are eight topics and conference calls will be held every two weeks. It is work for village staff but they are doing it.

Another initiative to become educated about and involved in is NREL's (National Renewable Energy Lab) SEIN (Solar Energy Innovation Network). Commissioner Simon will not have time to do this but Commissioner Cheng is interested in learning about it.

Other Business

Commissioner Moller reminded that holiday lights recycling will be available.

Commissioner Moller said the Park District asked about collaborating again on Des Plaines River Cleanup, with the Recycling Extravaganza on same date. But the River Cleanup is taking place at Thatcher pavilion, a different location that is not as visible or accessible. Commissioner Moller proposes going back to the church lot location and picking a consistent date each year (first weekend in May). Arbor Day also happens right before that weekend and the village will be doing tree planting and Commissioner Basney is working on tree tour that day.

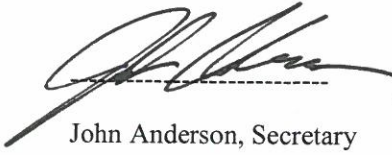
Commissioner Chen asked John Anderson to print out length booklet from EHHI relating to turf issues. She can send e-copy to anyone interested. A suggestion was made to try to have a sustainability shelf at the library for materials of interest.

Commissioner Crothers, who will be departing from the commission, stated how proud she is of what has been accomplished in the village on sustainability, including the formation of the commission, and thanked her colleagues. Commissioner Brennan noted that on the 26th the Village Board will honor Commissioner Crothers and the commissioners will gather afterward to raise a glass to celebrate and thank Commissioner Crothers for her service.

Next meeting: Tuesday, December 11

Respectfully Submitted:

Signature Line

 1/8/19

John Anderson, Secretary

Signature Line

 1/8/19

Kathleen Brennan, Chairman
Sustainability Commission

Date: 1/8/19
