



**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, March 13 – 7:00 PM**

A regular meeting of the River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, March 13 at 7:00 P.M. The meeting was conducted in the Community Room at the River Forest Village Hall, 400 Park Ave. River Forest.

Roll Call and Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM. Present at the meeting were Commissioners Brennan, Moller, Simon, Chen, Crothers, Masella and Cheng.

Public Comment

Public Comment by Oak Park resident, Peggy McGrath on pesticide use. Ms. McGrath shared information on Dr. Vrain's lecture regarding the harmful use of glyphosate and GMOs. The lectures are at Trinity High School River Forest, April 10 and in Evanston. April 12. Ms. McGrath also put forth a request to the RF Board to adopt a resolution calling on the Illinois General Assembly to repeal the section of the Illinois Pesticide Act, which preempts counties and municipalities (even those with home rule powers) from regulating pesticides more stringently than does the state. Evanston and Oak Park are only municipalities so far that have signed a resolution. Ms. McGrath also shared several books and shared papers she recommends if anyone interested in reading further *White Wash*, *The Hidden Half of Nature*, *Follow Your Gut* and *Dirt is Good*

Adoption of Meeting Minutes from 2/13/2018

Sustainability Commission Meeting minutes approved with changes.

Commissioner Report on Meetings

Commissioner Masella attended Chicago Community Garden Association annual seminar. Presenter, Julie Samuels is from Oak Park. Comm. Masella has been working with John Anderson, Mike Sletten and RF residents, Linda and Scott to establish a community vegetable garden. Possible locations are the SW corner of pumping station or empty lot across from Village Hall. PD will add community gardening to their summer programs, and the SC will organize the gardeners. Commissioner Chen suggested Dominican has space too for a garden. Social tasks will need to be planned. RF resident, Linda spoke up and added that she has been working on a draft sign up sheet as well as, rules and regulations (such as guideline on pesticides) that she borrowed from other communities. More information later.

Commissioner Crothers reported that there would be a resident committee for the vegetable gardens. Commissioner Crothers continued that One Earth Film Festival was very successful, and there were lots of sold out screenings including the Good Earth Greenhouse. The movie *Straws* was shown at Thatcher Woods and in Park Ridge. Park Ridge has a program called SLURP (straws literally upon request please) or SIPS (simply eliminate plastic straws); these may be programs to consider in the future. Andrew Edwards from Roosevelt Middle School won the Young Filmmakers Middle School category and was honored at Village Meeting last night with an achievement award.

Commissioner Cheng reported she met with Roosevelt Middle School teacher, Anna Daly regarding sustainability week tour for the 8th graders. Feb. 20 went to PlanItGreen meeting. Gary Cuneen shared Rain Ready proposal, a project related to neighborhood flooding. Other topics at the meeting were solar initiatives, zero waste core team developing; the high school conducted a waste audit. Comm. Cheng also attended Illinois Green Alliance meeting that discussed Energy Efficiency Ambassadors. IGN performs all of the LEED certification for buildings. They have developed a program for energy ambassadors, they offer training March July-2018. The training tests out smart technology that could be shares with your community. Commissioner Cheng offered the training to other commissioners and said she may pursue the course herself.

Commissioner Brennan reported she attended the Mayor's Caucus meeting with Commissioner Moller at Grays Lake Waste Management Facility. The topic was recycling best practices, Comm. Moller did a brief presentation to the group on RF recycling efforts. Comm. Brennan reported she attended several One Earth Film films including Gateway Bug with President Aducci. Also attended Inconvenient Truth sequel and learned about Climate Reality Project founded by Al Gore and met Forest Park resident, Lucia Whalen, who is working on sustainability there. Next Wednesday she will be part of Chicago Bar Associate Environmental Committee panel. Also announced that this is the one-year Anniversary of being named a commission and so brought a cake to celebrate.

Commissioner Moller reported she attended the Mayor's Caucus event at Waste Management, met with Commissioner Simon with D90 regarding Solar in Your Community (more from Comm. Simon) and attended OPRF Community Foundation's Big Idea event.

Commissioner Chen reported she has been spending a lot of her time on the OPRF Community Foundation's Leadership Lab project which is on waste diversion but she did get to six One Film Earth Film Fest Screenings and met with Comm. Cheng on the sustainability survey.

Commissioner Simon reported a meeting with Casey Shepp of MicroGrid and Anthony Cozzi of D90 to discuss the viability of solar installations at the schools. Cozzi reported there are over 40 different roofs at the district, all different materials and age. Even if all the roof space were covered with panels only 30% of D90's energy would be supplied. It is evident that to bring solar to RF many institutions would have to cooperate in order to apply for the Solar in Your Community grant money. The grants are due in June and it is not likely that a project of this magnitude could be organized so quickly. Work will continue on looking at other options to bring renewable energy options to RF.

Peter Kuzmich from Park District added that Park District considered solar panels and it was too expensive and there was an issue with the railroad proximity to the Park District building.

Bee Ordinance Update

Latest document was sent to Commission Crothers. She is working on FAQs. One requirement for a permit is a plat of survey. The question was asked how does a resident get a plat of survey if they do not have one since it is costly to have it done? In addition the ordinance states there is a \$500 violation fee if someone doesn't have a plat of survey and is keeping bees. John Anderson replied a resident could request a plat of survey from the Village. If the Village doesn't have one the next step is the county and if not the county a new plat would have to have it created. John Anderson added that the Village never goes straight to a fine, violations are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Sustainability Forums at Library

March 18 Commissioner Simon will be speaking about the commission after Dr. Treptow's presentation. April 8 meet your commissioner event at the library; Commissioner Cheng will get flyer to the group to help promote the event. Will need to be doing planning off line. Library is providing refreshments. Panel style introduction, say something about your goal area and something about yourself.

We will also need to work on bulletin board. Display, will be up the first 2 weeks of April. Commissioner Moller will call Gina Latinovich who has offered to help on graphic design needs and will meet with Comm. Cheng on content. Dominican will also be at the event with honey tasting.

PD Artificial Turf

Pete Kuzmich, Treasurer of Park District, was invited to attend the meeting to present information on the Park District's consideration for artificial turf. HE reported that the last 2 years there has been interest in turf for the softball field at Keystone and possibly Constitution Park next to Roosevelt. The Park District never did any research until the River Forest Baseball Organization made a hard push and came to the PD with a proposal to pay for ½ of the cost of the turf for an infield at Keystone Park approximately \$50,000. The Park District felt that if turf was to be installed they did not want to just do an infield for baseball so they began to consider a larger area. The PD has met with OP Park District, Fenwick and Forest Park Park District regarding their artificial turf. Feedback has been positive; the big benefit is playable hours. On a 50-degree day in February the field could be used. Oak Park said huge amount of use and the durability is big. He added that the life span of turf is 8-12 years. The PD also believes that the safety concern is not an issue since the material has changed from shredded tires to ground athletic shoes. Commissioner Chen, says she could not find information on the Nike Grind (the material name for turf made from athletic shoes) since it is proprietary. Mr. Kuzmich says there is no action at this time planned for the PD and welcomed feedback from the Sustainability Commission.

Commissioner Simon said we have not clarified a position, we want the PD and residents to be informed but it is not our role to be for or against the installation. Commissioner Crothers objected that we should provide information and education on the information that is out there so that residents can make a decision. She asked when would it be timely to share information that the commission has already compiled on artificial turf, such as Commissioner Chen's white paper? She added that there are issues around artificial turf, cost, maintenance, irrigation, what to do with old turf.

Commissioner Moller asked what were the results of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District's, survey of the installation. Kuzmich said that they approved installation and said that drainage from the turf would flow into the sewer system.

Commissioners Brennan and Crothers asked if the PD has considered other options such as cork? Commissioner Brennan asked if any commissioner could go on site visits. Kuzmich said questions are valid and welcomes a point of view. He added that the PD doesn't any future site visits planned. He added that some in community say that kids will be playing on turf in the future and should practice on it now and the artificial fields offer more playing time. He stated that we can go ahead and send white paper, and he will investigate a timeline on a decision for turf and if there are discussions coming up at any Park District Board meetings that we could attend. Commissioner Crothers says that we need to make sure that any studies that are submitted need to be academic and not industry or environmental group studies.

IPM Initiative

IPM meeting with Park District, Jeff Swano from Dig Right in and Ryan Anderson from Midwest Pesticide Actin Center as well as Commissioner Crothers were in attendance. Mike Sletten and John from Public Works will continue forward, there were suggestions of alternative natural products to be used. Lost some fields to grubs, PD Executive Director, Mike Sletten was not too concerned says they always have grubs. Park District Board member Cheryl Cargie is the point person to continue monitoring the progress of the IPM

Roosevelt Sustainability Week

Will report next time, the event is the last week of May

Deep Roots Big Idea-Project

The Commission is going to work with Deep Roots on presenting information on native plants and chemical free lawns at this year's Green Block Parties. They are also going to plant 6 free vegetable gardens in River Forest to help create awareness of using your lawn for growing food and the benefits of native plants. Deep Roots was not the winner of the \$50,000 Big Idea award but were awarded \$10,000 as a runner up because the idea was so popular, Deep Roots will also be involved in helping promote the Healthy Lawn/Healthy Family Campaign.

Chemical Applications On Lawns

Commissioner Masella and Crothers are reviewing the permit process for Lawn Care Providers. They are working with the Village to secure proof that employees have been certified in the use and application of chemicals to lawns. By state law any employee applying chemicals to lawns have to be certified. The commission would like to make sure that this law is being followed, due to the high use of chemicals on lawns and the threat these chemical can pose to the Des Plaines river due to run off.

Old/New Business

Sustainability Commission Survey-Commissioner Moller will clean up document and send it around for final comments and then will send to John Anderson for formatting. Would like to include in President Aducci's April newsletter.

Commissioner Brennan announced that we would not be ot applying for COMED grant; the Park District is applying instead.

Commissioner Brennan asked for help to locate old bike path maps that are supposedly around which could help in the research being done on the bike path plans. Commissioner Simon volunteered.

Commissioner Cheng requested that the SC have an email address and have one commissioner who could monitor it. John Anderson will look into this.

Website-Commissioner Cheng reported if there is consensus we should move ahead with changes that have discussed and that work will continue on formatting the SC information on our page.

Recycling Extravaganza-Commissioner Moller reported that the event is April 21 she has met with the Park District and they are providing a port-o-potty and hand washing station since the Depot is closed. Their crew will also help with setting and taking downs tables. Commissioner Moller does not expect the event to be as busy as past events since electronics will not be collected. It is expensive to collect the electronics and she decided to promote Roy Strom Refuse's curbside electronic pick up instead. She hopes to have a conversation in the future about collecting electronics for Village residents that is clearly laid out. Commissioner Moller will be sending out a Sign Up Genius for anyone who can volunteer that day.

Commissioner Crothers shared information about signing T-Mobile's petition for cell providers to commit to renewable energy. She passed out a card for anyone interested.

Commissioner Brennan shared Cam Davis' name for the write-in candidate for the Water Reclamation District. He did not make the ballot since the vacancy was due to a commissioner death after ballots were printed. Please consider Cam Davis if no write-in the position is appointed by the Governor.

Next Meeting: Tuesday April 10

Adjourned at 9:15 pm

Respectfully Submitted:

Signature Line

John Anderson, Secretary

Signature Line

Kathleen Brennan, Chairman
Sustainability Commission

Date: -----