



**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST  
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, April 10 – 7:00 PM**

A regular meeting of the River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, April 10, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was conducted in the Community Room at the River Forest Forest Village Hall, 400 Park Ave., River Forest.

**Roll Call and Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. Present at the meeting were Commissioners Brennan, Cheng, Chen, Crothers, Masella, and Moller. Absent: Commissioner Simon

**Public Comment**

None

**Adoption of Meeting Minutes from March 13, 2018 Meeting**

Minutes were approved with several corrections.

**Commissioner Reports on Meetings**

- Commissioner Brennan gave a presentation to the Chicago Bar Association Environmental Committee, along with the mayor of Oak Forest and Evanston Sustainability Coordinator. They are further advanced and funded. River Forest's efforts were well received.
- Commissioner Moller attended the Illinois Environmental Committee Commission on water at the University of Illinois.
- Commissioner Crothers attended the Volkswagen Mitigation Plan meeting on behalf of Eric. Illinois has \$108 million paid by VW for illegal car emissions that must be used.

**April 8 Sustainability Commission Event at River Forest Public Library**

*Report:* Each Commissioner spoke for several minutes about their areas of focus and how they became interested in serving on the Commission. About 40 people attended, nine of whom signed up for additional information or to help. Commissioner Cheng reported positive feedback from attendees.

Commissioner Cheng asked if it would be possible to have a sustainability commission email address to use to follow up on offers of help and communicate with residents in future. John

Anderson indicated staff would have to have access to the address. *To Do: John Anderson will look into feasibility of setting up sustainability commission email address.*

The Commissioners thanked Gina Latinovich for her work putting together the library lobby display. *To Do: Commissioner Crothers will take pictures of the display and put together a thank you for Gina Latinovick, to be covered by the Commission's budget.*

The Commissioners also thanked Sue Quinn and Francisca Arnold at the library; Ellen McManus from Dominican who brought beekeeping information and local honey samples to the event; and Village trustees Patty Henek and Tom Cargie for their attendance and support.

Commissioner Brennan shared feedback she received from the trustees. Trustee Cargie shared that all the Commissioners are compelling speakers with passion for the issues. Trustee Henek recommends the presentation be offered once a quarter or twice a year and noted the complementary interests among the Commissioners. She is willing to work with the Commission to further inform residents; she shared ideas such as having high school students make videos. She also said the passion of the commissioners is inspiring and appreciated reminders that even small steps make a difference.

Two commissioners shared discussion of issues with attendees. Sue Quinn, Director of the River Forest Library expressed to Commissioner Chen continuing interest in getting solar on top of library. Discussion ensued on feasibility issues of meeting June deadline for solar grants under Future Energy Jobs Act. Commissioner Crothers connected with Christy Hunt from First Presbyterian about helping them set up sorting for zero waste at their large block party; Christy Hunt mentioned Terra Cycle, a place that recycles items like toothpaste tubes, soap and deodorant packing and has dropoff available at the Sugar Beet Coop.

### **Community Garden at the Pumping Station**

*Report:* Commissioner Masella reported that work is moving ahead on the community garden near the pumping station, a joint project of the Park District of River Forest, the Commission, Public Works and residents Scott and Linda Street. The Park District will open registration for people to begin renting plots on May 15. Based on Commissioner Masella's discussions with Julie Samuels who runs a Chicago area community garden, the option of making the layout more homey and curvilinear is being investigated, and renters will be encouraged to hold social activities which are important for a community garden to thrive. Soil testing will be conducted to baseline of any chemicals.

Discussion ensued about pros and cons of doing a press release and coordination with Park District. *Consensus: Wait until some plots have been planted and then have a ribbon cutting type of event to which the media can be invited.*

There was also discussion of how to publicize to apartment and condo dwellers, including reaching management companies.

Commissioner Cheng asked for clarification of difference between this and the Augusta and Keystone community garden. It was explained that both are owned by the Park District but the

one at Augusta is a foraging herb garden open to any residents; maintenance is the Park District's responsibility but the Sustainability Commission has been involved in helping to plant it and this year Roosevelt 8<sup>th</sup> graders may do so as part of sustainability week tour.

### **Bee Ordinance**

*Report:* Commissioner Brennan reported that the ordinance is now on the website and residents can apply for permits.

### **Turf**

*Report:* Commissioner Brennan reported that turf was discussed at last night's Park District meeting. The Park District is interested in the Commission's research but hasn't identified any specific vendors or products to research. *To do: Commissioners Brennan and Chen will continue to work on the draft white paper and share for review.*

### **Chemical application initiatives**

*Report:* Commissioner Crothers has discussed licensing of lawn care providers to apply chemicals with Eric Palm and John Anderson. The village attorney has indicated that the EPA is responsible for enforcing chemical permits. A change in village code is required in order for the village to enforce requirement of having state license to apply chemicals. Commissioner Crothers indicated President Adduci is supportive of bringing this issue to the Village Board. John Anderson indicated staff needs to determine how to track and enforce such a requirement, and evaluate the impact on staff time. Commissioner Crothers concurred with keeping things as simple as possible in order to minimize impact on staff time. *To do: John Anderson will work with staff on determining how to revise form to track and enforce chemical application status; Commission can then determine what recommendation to make regarding changing the village code to require chemical application permits.*

Commissioner Crothers is researching two state laws, one that pre-empts municipalities regulating chemicals more stringently, and one that requires signs notifying of chemical application to be larger. *To Do: Commissioner Crothers will continue research before making recommendations on what positions Sustainability Commission should take.*

Commissioner Crothers reported that an athletic coach at the last IPM meeting raised issues about use of fogging. She asked for help researching whether the village can by law do larvicide instead of fogging, which is more effective and cost-efficient; options were discussed. John Anderson indicated that the Des Plaines Valley Mosquito Abatement District uses both methods and that spraying is a last resort when West Nile is detected. *To do: Commissioner Masella to find out how Hinsdale handles mosquito abatement from village manager whom she know.*

### **Roosevelt 8<sup>th</sup> grade Sustainability Week**

*Report:* Commissioner Cheng shared that Anna Daly, the Roosevelt teacher, has organized the week around topic areas which are the Commission's goal areas (energy, waste, water, open spaces/ecosystems). Related tour stops take place on different days rather than all on one day as they did last year. *Consensus:* Commissioners generally concurred with the tour stops set forth

in the plan (community garden, village hall, Eric Simon's home to see solar panels, speaker by Roy Strom, possibly stop at bocce ball courts; with Dominican joining one of these stops) developed by Ms. Daly and shared by Commissioner Cheng. Commissioner Moller noted that last year there were some timing issues. *To Do: Commissioners Moller and Cheng to discuss logistics of tour stops after meeting.*

### **Deep Roots**

*Report:* Commissioner Crothers reported Deep Roots did not win the ORPF Community Foundation Big Idea but the funders came up with \$10,000 to support the project. Discussion of how Deep Roots can help with River Forest block parties is underway. The concept is to offer free native gardens on the parkways that attract pollinators; Commissioner Crothers shared drawings of different native garden designs. Commissioner Crothers and Chen are investigating a grant with the mayors caucus to further support this idea.

### **New Business**

It was agreed to defer discussion of all the new business items except purchase of a new Sort It Out bin to replace one that was lost last year.

*Approval: Commissioner Brennan moved to approve purchase of an entire new set rather than just one bin. Commissioner Crothers seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous.*

### **Other Business**

Commissioner Moller reported that for the April 21 Recycling Extravaganza, thanks to Eric, Cathy and John, the village has agreed to cover cost of electronics recycling for residents. The River Forest Citizens Corp, OPRF Community Foundation Future Philanthropists, Roosevelt and Roy Strom will be helping. The Park District and Village will send out reminders.

Next meeting: Tuesday, May 8 at 7 p.m.

Adjourned: 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

*Signature Line*

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John Anderson, Secretary

*Signature Line*

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Date: -----

Kathleen Brennan, Chairman

Sustainability Commission