



VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, July 11, 2017 – 7:00 PM

A regular meeting of the River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, July 11, 2017 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 7:00 PM. Present at this meeting were Commissioner Moller, Commissioner Simon, Commissioner Susan Chen, Commissioner Crothers, and Commissioner Credi and Commissioner Masella.

Public Comment

Scott Kreher, Dominican University, stated his concern about possible restrictions imposed if the Village were to implement an ordinance prohibiting bee keeping. He described his role as associate professor of biology and the success of the four bee hives located on the Dominican property.

Commissioner Credi asked Mr. Kreher how far off of the walkway the hives were located. Mr. Kreher stated that these are kept about twenty feet from the walkway. Commissioner Credi also asked at what point is a hive too big and what is the smoker for? Mr. Kreher stated that smokers are to make the bees more docile, many hives don't need a smoker and hopefully there would be a bee yard.

Ellen McManus, Dominican University, stated many bees don't survive the winter, the bee hives on Dominican are important for students to learn about ecology, and the environment.

Bill Gee, 807 Forest Avenue, stated the he is a part of the West side Apiary Exchange (WAX) and he applauds the idea of an ordinance. He said that there should be careful consideration of treating someone who is stung, that Epi pens are not appropriate for everyone.

Cheryl Munoz, 349 Ashland Avenue, stated that she had three hives on her business property and her son was with her there, she said she has chickens in Oak Park where she lives.

Commissioner Credi stated that they would like to get an idea as to how many people currently have beehives in river Forest.

Debbie Becker, 819 S. Euclid Avenue, Oak Park, stated that there are approximately six or seven bee keepers in Oak Park. Many of the bees do not survive the winter; there is a three percent survival rate. There is a neighbor in Oak Park that is allergic has to register with a doctor's note.

Bruce Faland stated that he has been bee keeping all his life and doesn't feel threatened by the bees.

Walter Wahlfells, 1414 Bonnie Brae, stated that he is not a bee keeper, but he wanted to say that he supports bee keeping as a resident.

Maureen Huston, 631 Edgewood Place, stated that she is severely allergic to bees, but she is a bee keeper.

Discussion: Commission Goals & Projects

There was discussion among the commissioners regarding when the report for beekeeping/chickens is due. It was confirmed that at the August 8th meeting a recommendation for bee keeping will be ready for discussion. Sue Crothers said that she has begun to create a draft ordinance on bees based on ordinances from Evanston, Oak Park, Riverside and Saint Charles and that includes addressing the points brought forward by the research of Mary and Mindy. Sue, Mindy, and Mary will continue to work on the draft ordinance recommendation and will email their recommendation by August 1st for the commission to review and discuss at the August 8th meeting with the goal that the commissioners will put a recommendation forward to the Village Board.

It was discussed that some members felt there was more urgency to the bee discussion. We all felt that deadlines should be reiterated after meetings so that members are clear about a plan and that we are being considerate of the time commissioners are putting in to other meetings and research. Moving forward when there are reports etc. due it was recommended that meeting notes be sent out so that everyone has a clear understanding of when and what information is needed.

Discussion of when it is proper to email other commissioners. John Anderson explained that documents can be shared via Dropbox and/or emailed as long as there is not a reply to the email. Individuals can reply to the sender but not the group. The reason for sharing documents is so that they can be reviewed before meetings but discussion by more than 2 members at a time should not take place.

Not all members had copies of all the goals that were submitted and some were brought to the meeting. Each was in a different format. It was decided that the goals should follow the format that Eric Simon used pulling the PlanItGreen goals and then applying them to a RF goal. Julie Moller will create a template and share it with Katie Brennan upon her return. She will work with Katie to format the goals and strategies and send them to everyone before the next meeting.

Sue Crothers shared that she attended the Mayor's Caucus Environmental Committee meeting downtown. She presented information on RF sustainable programs. She said it was a good meeting and was proud of the work RF has been doing.

Sue also shared a logo that RF resident, Gina Latinovich, created for the Commission. Members selected the one they liked. Sue will work with the Village on the proper way to get this implemented and will then work with Mindy to make sure she has it for any website/communication she is working on.

Mindy Credi shared the information she researched regarding keeping chickens. The chicken discussion will continue.

Mary Susan had a question on the proper way to handle residents who may approach her and ask her to look into something through her role as a commissioner. John Anderson commented that she should direct them to him with their concern or they should attend a meeting of the Village Board or Commission at which time they can make their concern/comment public. Other members asked that Village staff share any protocol that should be followed or guidelines that the Village has for commissioners.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 P.M. All commissioners voted in favor of the motion. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted:

Signature Line

John Anderson, Secretary

Signature Line

Kathleen Brennan, Chairman
Sustainability Commission

Date: -----