



## VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Wednesday, November 14, 2018 – 7:00 PM  
Village Hall – Second Floor Conference Room, 400 Park Ave.,  
River Forest, IL

### AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Public Comment
3. Adoption of Meeting Minutes from the 8/14/18 Sustainability Commission Meeting
4. Adoption of Meeting Minutes from the 9/13/18 Sustainability Commission Meeting
5. Commissioner Reports on Meetings
6. Green Block Party Grant application to PlanItGreen
  - a. Presentation at 12/5/18 PlanItGreen Leadership Breakfast
7. Questionnaire
8. Bike/Walkability in Comprehensive Plan
9. Sustainability Commission Goals
10. Pumping Station Audit
11. Natives on Chicago Avenue bumpouts
12. SEIN NREL Preview, SolSmart
13. Schedule Next Meeting – Tuesday December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018 – 7:00pm
14. Adjournment



**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST  
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, August 14, 2018 – 7:00 PM**

A regular meeting of the River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, August 14, 2018 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 7:05 PM. Present at this meeting were Commissioners Brennan, Moller, Simon, Crothers, Cheng and Basney. Commissioner Chen was absent.

Meeting minutes from the 7/10/18 Sustainability Commission Meeting were adopted.

**Public Comment**

No Public Comment

**Commissioner Report on Meetings**

Commissioner Cheng reported that she attended PlanItGreen meeting, discussion included updates from Marc Burger that SREC's are delayed. The issue about questionable marketing tactics by Solar companies was also discussed. Zero waste was discussed including issues with school milk cartons (waxy paper cartons) not being accepted by many recycling companies. Commissioner Moller informed everyone that Strom is still accepting these however Waste Management which serves District 97 is not. Commission had a discussion about how people would need to be asked to take these out of their recycling when the time comes to not contaminate the recycling stream.

Commissioner Moller shared that she has great information about micro plastics from the program in Bali that she participated in, this information will be shared in detail at a later date.

Commissioner Basney provided updates on Party in the Park which was also attended by Mary Susan who both helped with Sort it Out stations. He was impressed with the behavior of attendees in sorting out waste. Commissioner Basney also attended the Trailside Museum edible garden event. He also reported on a call he had with Peggy McGrath with Go Green Oak Park. The conversation was about a resolution 3 communities have signed and what our options are as home rule, it is thought that it doesn't have an effect. Multiple bills are at the State level right now regarding pesticides and lawn signage. John Anderson updated the Commission that the RF Building Department is working on consolidating landscaping, snow removal and pesticide applicator permits.

Commissioner Brennan also attended the Trailside Museum event and reported that it went very well. She also presented at RF Parks Board meeting the previous night regarding artificial turf.

**Landscaper/Chemical Permits, Pesticides, Mosquito Abatement**

Commissioner Basney is taking the lead on Landscaper/Chemical spray permits, pesticide-related legislation, Beekeeping Ordinance an assisting SCG with RF Garden initiatives and mosquito/larvacide issues. In regards to pesticides, there are currently multiple bills with multiple stakeholders at this point.

Commissioner Basney will be working on beekping, he was introduced to Ellen McManus from Dominican and will be meeting with her. The goal s to coordinate educational events under the bee ordinance. Events will include honey harvesting and winterizing bees. Commissioner Brennan started discussion on how to publicize these events including the idea of having the local paper write article in advance of events.

Commissioner Basney will work with Commissioner Crothers on mosquito larvacide information and research including talking to other communities to see what they are doing. It was reported that Hinsdale does targeted spraying and works with a private firm.

Commissioner Brennan informed Commissioner Basney about Women in Green event where she met someone with Morton Arboretum that talked about a tree tour of RF. She will get Andy in touch with her. Commissioner Cheng brought up that it would be a good idea to do this as part of future Green Block Parties, show people what trees are on their block. John Anderson informed the commission of a tree inventory map that is accessible via the vrf.us website.

### **Green Block Parties**

Commissioner Crothers led a short discussion about native gardens, Native gardens should be a multi-year project as people better understand it, see them and it catches on. Commissioner Basney had the idea of a mobile native garden, less permeant and a potential future option and demonstration of what it is and how to do it. Commissioner Crothers will talk about this subject more next month.

### **GRC Reporting & Tracking Task Force**

Commsioner Brennan reported that she has signed up for the Mayors Metropolitan Caucus Environment subcommittee, GRC reporting and tracking task force. They have had 1 meeting. Task force is looking at demos of software platforms to track and report metrics and will make a recommendation to subcommittee. Brennan met RF resident, Shannon Roberts, who does this for her work as a sustainability office with a major company. She is willing to work with us and Brennan is putting her in touch with Edith Makra from MMC. She is going to try and come to the next task force meeting to help advise. This is potentially a very rich platform for communities, residents and municipal leaders.

### **Community Gardens & Native Planting Project**

Commissioner Basney informed the commission that a new sign was created and installed due to the issue of stolen peppers from the community gardens. Commissioner Brennan called out Mary Massala for doing an amazing job on the gardens project.

Basney is working with the park district on planting natives at entrance of priory park. John Anderson informed the Commission that the Chicago Ave bump outs will be planted with natives and will let the Commission know the details. Brennan asked about the square footage of natives.

### **Village Energy Calculation**

Commissioner Simon will work with John Anderson on getting the information required to calculate how much residents are paying to cover the Villages energy costs. This is part of a project to determine eventual ROI's on community solar or municipal solar projects.

### **Artificial Turf Report & Recommendation**

Commissioner Brennan reported that there was a meeting last night with the park district, the information the Commission has provided was well received, it was a truncated summary of the full report. Soccer,

softball and baseball representatives at meeting are in support of artificial turf. There was a discussion about whether teams want artificial turf or just improvements to existing surfaces. Park District not consider this until March due to other obligations. Private funds (\$50k) have been pledged to help with softball field conditions. Commissioner Simon asked what our role is from this point. Brennan answered that we will stay involved to provide advice and research. Park board asked for entire report and informed meeting participants that this was preliminary since we don't know any details of the project or products that will eventually be proposed. No response from Parks Foundation but they have been provided the report – it is felt they consider this a Parks Board matter. Brennan would like to improve report but not until we have more information on Park Districts plan. Park District made it clear that the first priority is indoor space for recreation and they can't do both right now. This will come off the regular agenda and an update will be provided every few months or as needed.

### **Deep Roots**

Commissioner Brennan reported that the Trailside event was the first one and it went very well. A local congregation is interested and other conversations are also being had – more information will be provided when available.

### **SC Survey**

Commissioner Chen reported that we are 179 respondents, the goal is 270 which is 10% of RF households.

### **Mid-Year Review of Goals - Education**

Commissioner Brennan explained to Commissioner Basney the goal setting exercise that was held at the onset of the commission last year.

Commissioner Cheng provided an update on the education goals:

- About once a month communication with John/Village on updates.
- Tier 1 Goals
  - Revamped organization of RFSC page.
  - Looking to submit electronically certain forms like Healthy Lawn pledge.
  - Can we report on traffic to page. That way we can establish a baseline and figure out what content and changes are driving more traffic to page. Otherwise we are asking village staff to change pictures that no one is looking at.
  - Site is more dynamic in content.
  - For next year - More storytelling.
  - Waste section is next big update.
- Tier 2 Goals:
  - Example of library event with middle schoolers that led to publicity and more impact from 2 students.
  - Conversation on ideas for funds that girls donated.
  - 8th grade education was successful. Village, rooftop solar, Dominican / community garden.

Commissioner Moller asked if Cheng would change any goals? Cheng responded that they are just scratching the surface and felt the first year goals are appropriate. On the programming side a change would be place to create more hands on content such as a workshop series.

Commissioner Brennan reported that Dominican reached out to have commissioners on sustainability panel. Commissioner Moller will do presentation on micro plastics.

### **Other Business**

Commissioner Brennan provided Commissioner Chen's update on Sort-it-Out stations. Volunteers are needed for touch a truck on Saturday September 15<sup>th</sup>, 10/6 Concordia Homecoming game and carnival, Lemonaid and making tracks.

Social hour with Oak Park Environment Committee is scheduled for 8/28 at commissioner Moller's home, will be confirmed by end of week.

Commissioner Simon provided update on SolSmart. Mindy Agnew is our OP contact for us to get more information on the program since they are a SolSmart Gold community.

Commission had conversation on Roosevelt Student donation on how to use the gift.

Gary Cuneen will be joining our October meeting to talk to us about PlanItGreen. Commissioner Cheng has reached out to Gary.

Next meeting has been changed to 9/13 up in the community room due to conflict with Lemonaid event on 9/11.

Meeting adjourned 8:56 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

*Signature Line*

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John Anderson, Secretary

*Signature Line*

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Kathleen Brennan, Chairman  
Sustainability Commission

Date: -----



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

A regular meeting of the River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Thursday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was conducted in the Second Floor Conference Room at the River Forest Forest Village Hall, 400 Park Ave., River Forest.

**Call to Order/Roll Call**

All present except for Chair Brennan. Commissioner Moller will Chair the meeting in Chair Brennan's absence.

**Public Comment**

No public comment.

Commissioner Moller has started a meeting and events calendar for September and October 2018. The calendar will be updated for next few months and included as an attachment to the Commission's agenda each month. The calendar will include substantive meetings that Commission members are attending, it will also track time commitment of members. For example, the calendar includes upcoming talk the Commission Moller is attending at Brookdale.

**Commissioner Reports on Meetings**

Commissioner Moller attended the recent Illinois Recycling Task Force meeting. The Task Force met to discuss coming up with recycling standards because of contamination issues and the request for haulers to start tagging bins. The Task Force is also pushing for clearer communication of what does not get recycled. There has been an increase in needles and sharps being put into recycling bins and it is a real problem. Commission Moller will also be incorporating some guidelines for Village recycling on to website. Next meeting in October.

Commissioner Basney will be meeting with Senator Harmon next week to discuss local and community pesticide issues, the status of the Farm Bill and local negative impact of the Senate proposed bill that includes pesticide pre-emption provision. Since this meeting will also be with Peggy McGrath, Commission Basney will also be discussing will also be following up on whether the Village should consider a non-binding resolution like Oak Park and Evanston calling up on the Illinois General Assembly to

amend the Pesticide Act to remove the section which preempts municipal and county regulation of the use of pesticides.

Commissioner Crothers met with residents with respect to request for feedback on the Community Gardens. She plans to discuss details further in Community Garden and Native Planting Project portion of meeting.

Separately, Commissioners Basney and Crothers will be attending the Village Board of Trustees Meeting on Monday September 17<sup>th</sup> to be available for comment regarding the Commission's recommendation, if approved at tonight's meeting, that the Trustees and Village President sign-on to a letter to be sent to Chairmen of House and Senate Committees on Agriculture to oppose a provision in the House Farm bill that would preempt local pesticide protections.

Commissioner Basney read excerpts from an email that summarizes the pre-emption issue and the call to action from various pesticide protection groups including Beyond Pesticides.

***A motion to vote was made by Commissioner Crothers "to recommend that the Village Board of Trustees send a letter to the Chairmen of Agriculture Committees in opposition to the pre-emption provision."***

***All Commissioner approved the motion.***

Commission Chen reported that District 90 Green for Good efforts are underway, including the activities of student sustainability clubs at each of the schools. Stipends have been provided for teacher sponsors at each of the 3 schools and the groups are currently scheduling a meeting with the Administration to communicate their initiatives.

Commissioner Simon attended the recent MMC subcommittee meeting on the proposed community solar purchasing program. Simon noted that solar projects are complicated and community projects have not happened yet as they are a huge challenge for developers where there is currently massive oversupply and poor profit margins. There are many projects proposed. MMC is playing with the idea of a clearinghouse concept where MMC approaches developers, negotiates with developers and puts together a very compelling program to attract participants. Simon noted that if the Village did a community solar purchasing program independently, it would need to hire attorney, consultants, are restrictions naturally exist as one participant is not able to oversubscribe to a project (i.e. unable to own more than 40% of any one project). As an alternative, a low-cost option is being considered to offer residents clean renewable energy and offer this through a cooperative type arrangement through the MMC. Benefits of this would be economies of scale and this would lower rates for residents. There is a follow up meeting on Tuesday and more to come. MMC members are in support of this. This could be very beneficial to a community like River Forest is the cooperative can set terms and negotiate on behalf of member groups. Commissioner Moller asked if there is a timeline and Commissioner Simon replied "definitely not imminent as ComEd has not yet selected projects. Simon thought that we are talking 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2019 about something

coming to fruition. It is a very exciting initiative as there would be serious buying power and all caucus communities would be able to participate. However, it remains theoretical and needs more legs before we can start figuring out position and recommendation to the Board. Mark Pruitt, Energy Consultant for MMC would take the lead on this.

John Anderson discussed the upcoming Chicago Avenue project with green infrastructure. Native plants and rain garden going in in the Spring. John has a list of all of the plants going in. Part of the project is bump outs at various intersections to help with crosswalks and leave a bigger parkway. Storm water will go into rain gardens. Stone underneath the rain garden, native plants soak up rain water. Less water in the sewer, less back up. Commissioner Chen suggested that this is highlighted in website.

### **Preemption in the Farm Bill and Landscaper/Chemical Spray Permits**

Per John Anderson's recent discussions with the Building department, there is a process in place now for Landscaper/Chemical Spray Permits. We are waiting for all businesses to be compiled on a list and checking to see if permitted in Village. Commissioner Crothers has a list that she compiles and will continue to provide to John. When businesses re-up for license, they will need to provide substantiation of a state license to spray chemicals. Commission Crothers also proposed consolidating separate lists of licensed contractors to one list for easier tracking. The Building Department would also be notifying existing businesses that are permitted about the new permitting process. John Anderson clarified that some contractors are not permitted for chemical spraying and that there is a requirement if you are applying pesticides or apply chemicals, you need to have a state license. The Building Department reissues licenses on a calendar year basis in January.

### **Green Block Parties and Deep Roots Gardens**

Commission Crothers discussed Village Green Block Party activity. It was noted that there are 9 green block parties on the schedule for this weekend and 1 non-green block party.

86% green this season, 28 block parties are permitted and 24 are green. It was note that there are only 5 sort it out stations available for the block parties and additional will need to be lent out or paper signage can be attached to existing neighborhood bins.

Commissioner Moller will provide Commissioner Chen with email that includes the paper signage. The sort it our stations are first come, first serve so first 5 will get them and last 4 will not have sort it out stations. There are existing signs that can be used for 4 without sort it out stations and participants can attach these to their bins. Commissioner Crothers noted that 4 of the green block parties this weekend will be installing gardens and that this is the second consecutive weekend of doing 4. A total of 13 pollinator gardens have been installed this season. The pollinator gardens are unable to be planted too close to parkway trees, so some have not come about. However, the season goal was 6 new gardens, so the program has been a tremendous success. John Anderson asked Commissioner Crothers if she can send to him all applicable addresses and pictures of the gardens.



An update was made on the Deep Roots Gardens Project. Commissioner Crothers showed some pictures of the new pollinator gardens. Pictures from past events are included with the letter in response to application so everyone sees what they look like. Whoever is organizing the block gets the pictures. Pictures on website actual and no longer concept pictures. Positive feedback from participants about how the gardens are looking. Commissioner Simon commented that neighbors on his block were apprehensive at first but very delighted with results.

Commissioner Cheng asked if we can get some press on this.

To date, 5 of 6 inspiration gardens have been awarded and or/installed, including the Temple in River Forest, Trailside Museum, and residents.

The Green Block Parties and Deep Roots Gardens Project have been great so far. Each Green Block Party has a sort it out station and many have gardens. The cost for the gardens was mostly funded from a grant awarded from the Big Idea contest. Each garden cost is \$100+, not including labor. David Murphy will be paid for labor time. These projects make sense to continue next year but will need to investigate funding/grant money for next year. Commissioner Crothers and David Murphy will do a review meeting and debrief about next season. Deep Roots may apply again next year for Big Idea Grant

Commissioner Crothers also commented that there haven't been many new pledges made as part of the "Healthy Lawn, Healthy Family" initiative and that some have fallen off. A bigger push may be needed to extend to new participants.

### **PlanItGreen Update**

Commissioner Cheng noted that the next meeting is Tuesday. The main update is that the Commission has invited Gary Cuneen, who is guiding PlanItGreen's solar initiative to its October meeting. The big question is how we can mutually support each other's goals. How can the Village obtain similar grants as Oak Park? Commissioner Cheng suggested that we need to start with a Foundational understanding of PlanItGreen's goals and objectives, its interaction with the Community Foundation and that their actual workplan needs to be reviewed.

In addition, one of the key questions is understanding the funding stream. PlanItGreen is funded by the OPRF Community Foundation. Does the Village also contribute to the Community Foundation? John Anderson thinks no. The Community Foundation has community wide goals, the Village has goals and we need to find common goals or points of interaction.

PlanItGreen has a Solar Consultant and wants introductions to Village congregations to see if any want to participate in solar projects. Currently efforts are underway to put enough critical mass together for form group for community solar. But currently, parallel

conversations are going on with respect to solar initiatives. If there is anything that the Commission would like Gary to discuss, members should let Commissioner Cheng know.

In summary, Gary Cuneen in Oct can share with us how best we can collaborate.

### **Tree Tour Project with Morton Arboretum Expert**

Commissioner Basney introduced the idea of a Village Tree Walking Tour that was discussed during a recent gathering with Oak Park's Environmental and Energy Commission. Basney has already spoken with Emily Okallau, Community Trees Project Coordinator at the Morton Arboretum, about leading the tour. The first year would be a walking tour and the vision is a tour can be created that can be biked through the Village as a tourist event. A tour would need to be created with trees that have already been inventoried. The Village has already mapped many trees in a database [on website at Public Works/Forestry/Tree Location Map]. There is interest from the Commission in this event. Commissioner Basney hypothetically liked the idea of scheduling the first tour on Arbor Day morning in the Spring to tie in to the group meeting at the tree planning event at a local school. Commissioner Simon then took us all on a website tour of the tree database.

### **Community Garden and Native Planting Project**

Commissioner Crothers discussed the Village's community plots/gardens. There was a complaint from neighbor that she did not know that this garden was going in and it appears that there was a discrepancy in timing of communication from Park District to neighbors about the plantings going in. Some of the concerns regarding the community garden at the Pumping Station is why do certain individuals have rights the use this property as well as issue with the height and size of the sign. The sign itself notes that this is a community garden but do not trespass or vandalize gardens. Mark in Public Works turned around the sign quickly. The sign is very tall so there have been some complaints. May install a smaller sign. The garden plots do not impact sledding in the winter as the land is public and multipurpose. A silver bench installed for those with disabilities to garden. Some have commented that the current bench would be replaced with a nice park bench. Complaints that spigot as free water for participants but actually spigot is on auto system and gets turned off at night. Commissioners Crothers and Moller met with neighbors and would rectify any significant issues including assisting in more transparency in communication from the Park District. Except for some complaints from neighbors and some valid issues that come up, this initiative has been a huge success with lots of community collaboration. There was a great end of season harvest event with some Trustees and Park District Board members in attendance.

Other updates included that native plants will be installed on sledding hill at Keystone and space by butterfly mural. Hawthorne and Franklin is another spot that is being considered. Mary Masella has been working very hard and has designed plantings and a plan. There is still the ability to take pictures in front of the butterfly. The design does

not harm this. A few hundred dollars for plants. A question was brought up about who would maintain the native plant gardens. They would most likely be planted in the Fall.

### **Mid-Year Review of SC Goals – Waste**

Commission Moller presented a mid-year review of goals regarding waste and she stated that she has run the numbers. There has been a push for more composting sign-up. There are 249 subscribers for composting. The goal is 10% of Village households or 270. Moller commented that some statistics on waste reduction can be misleading. For example, Oak Park includes leaves and special collections in diversion statistics.

This year, River Forest has had a big jump in organics and has added recycling and electronics extravaganza events.

Moller cautioned that waste numbers overall continue to rise. Recycling tons have dropped off a bit. There has been lots of changes in recycling and we are doing ok, but it is hard to change habits. We are average, it's an educational thing. Need to push composting. Education on how to dispose properly of hard items. Moller said that she will continued to talk to Roy Strom on how we can make recycling cleaner, tag carts and stressed that we shouldn't focus only on diversion but more on education. Composting and overall reduction in waste are the things to concentrate on. Commissioner Cheng noted that she wants to understand 50% diversion rate goal better. Moller commend that you segregate waste into organics, compost, recycling and landfill. How of much of this is not going to landfill is considered the diversion rate. Historically the diversion rate is 33%-37% but overall waste levels continue to increase.

Commissioner Crothers asked the following questions:

What is the goal? Have everyone reduce their waste? Have less landfill?

What are thoughts on increasing compost? There is so much food waste. How do we move the numbers? Offer compost cart or shared bins to every single household in River Forest?

Commissioner Moller stressed the importance of more opportunities for folks to recycle hard to dispose of items, promotion of recycling events and promotion of reusable items. It is also important to use and communicate helpful metrics. Moller suggested more education about single use plastics and that there are events on this topic at the library.

Commissioner Moller will share numbers with the other Commission members.

### **Upcoming Events:**

*Concordia Homecoming and Carnival 10/6/18*

Commissioner Chen note that she has order 3 sort it out bins for the Football game and has had conversations with a Professor and Organizer. Curbside compost carts will also be available. There will be volunteers at the bins. What about Concordia students?

*Makin' Tracks 5K Run 9/15/18*

This is a Park District event and they will put out bins. Fenwick and Concordia students are expected to volunteer.

*Dominican Beekeeper Workshop 10/20/18*

Commissioner Basney coordinating logistics with Professor Ellen McManus at Dominican. Commission will assist with promoting the event by preparing a flyer and general educational outreach.

*Symposium at Dominican 9/25/18*

This is a panel discussion that will include Commissioners Crothers and Moller. Waste and pesticides, perhaps native planting all to be on the agenda.

*Recycling Extravaganza at the Green Fair 9/25/18*

**Schedule Next Meeting – Tuesday October 9, 2018 – 7:00pm**

**Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 8:53pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

*Signature Line*

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John Anderson, Secretary

*Signature Line*

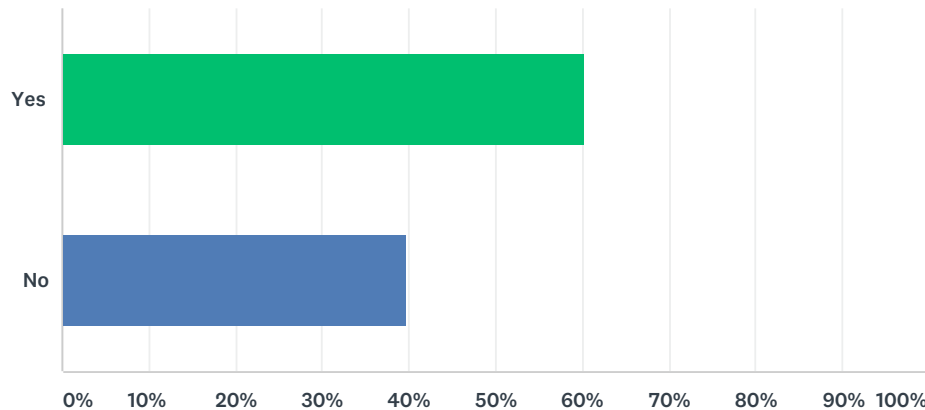
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Kathleen Brennan, Chairman  
Sustainability Commission

Date: -----

**Q1 Did you know that the Village of River Forest approved a Sustainability Commission in 2017? The Commission advises the Village Board on sustainable practices to conserve natural resources, protect the environment, and enhance resident health.**

Answered: 181 Skipped: 0

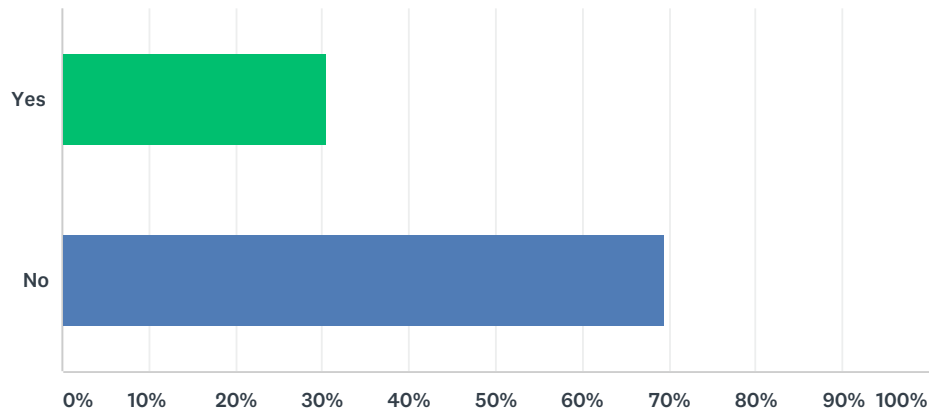


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	60.22%	109
No	39.78%	72
TOTAL		181

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	How come we don't have community gardens? a fitness path for elders? an indoor pool for year round fitness....really care for the trees inthe parkway	5/9/2018 4:24 AM
2	Now I know -- thank you!	4/24/2018 9:24 AM

**Q2 Did you know that you can visit the Village's new website at [vrf.us/sustainability](http://vrf.us/sustainability) to learn about the Commission's four areas of focus – energy, waste, water and open spaces/ecosystems – and actions you can take in these areas?**

Answered: 180 Skipped: 1

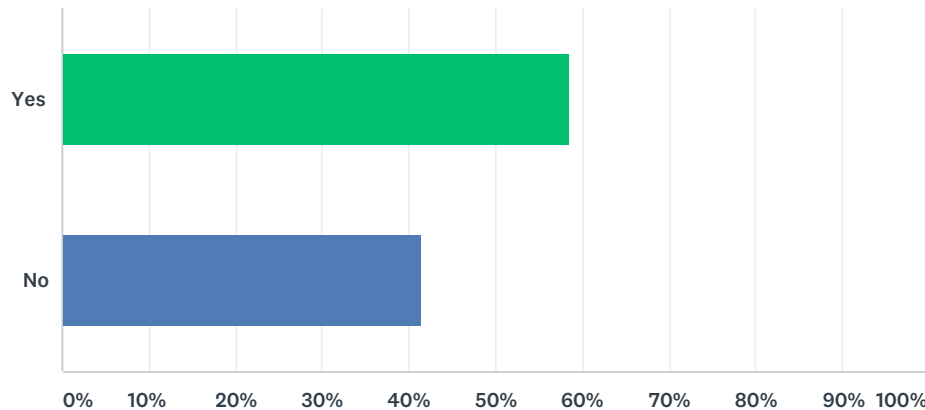


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	30.56%	55
No	69.44%	125
TOTAL		180

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I only found out about this when I booked the block party though -- glad to know its there	7/12/2018 8:33 AM
2	I think I recall vaguely but we need regular reminders	5/15/2018 10:40 AM
3	Now I know -- thank you!	4/24/2018 9:24 AM
4	But I only know this because I attended the Sustainability Commission open meeting in April.	4/16/2018 11:07 AM

**Q3 Did you know there is a Green News section of the Village President's monthly e-newsletter with information about upcoming green events and activities? (If not, keep scrolling down the next time you get the e-newsletter!)**

Answered: 181 Skipped: 0

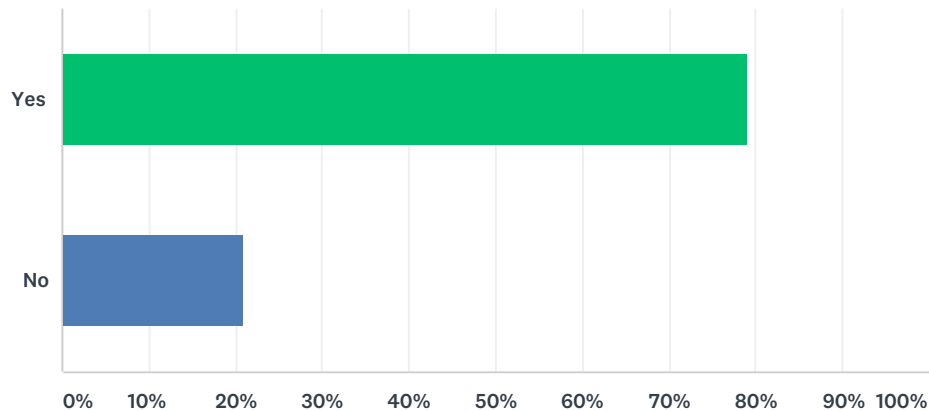


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	58.56%	106
No	41.44%	75
TOTAL		181

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	i see occasional updates via Facebook but not sure am subscribed via email to a newsletter	7/11/2018 8:37 PM
2	how does one sign up for such a newsletter?	5/22/2018 11:24 AM
3	We check out everything with Recycling.	4/29/2018 5:10 PM
4	Now I know -- thank you!	4/24/2018 9:24 AM

**Q4 WASTE:** Did you know River Forest has a curbside compost pick up program? The service allows you to compost all organic matter: yard waste, all food scraps (including proteins), food-soiled paper, and yard waste without having to use brown bags and stickers. Signing up is easy visit [vrf.us/curbside-composting](http://vrf.us/curbside-composting). Sign up by April 30 and get the first month free.

Answered: 176 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	78.98%	139
No	21.02%	37
TOTAL		176

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I don't like the curbside pickup. End of the house is better. The overall appearance of our Billage looks terrible when these are put out early, ripped into or bits left.	8/21/2018 5:57 AM
2	Too expensive. Can we start a neighbor share program ?	8/3/2018 2:08 PM
3	Yes but the service is spotty. Recently my compost was not picked up about 3 x in 5 weeks	7/11/2018 7:28 PM
4	LOVE IT!!!!	5/23/2018 4:33 PM
5	Why should this be an xtra cost garbage costs high enough!!	5/15/2018 1:23 PM
6	Ridiculously expensive	5/15/2018 12:26 PM
7	how does this work for condominiums	5/9/2018 4:24 AM
8	We love our curbside compost. Thank you!	5/8/2018 6:20 AM
9	Not available to condo dwellers	5/4/2018 5:03 PM
10	Can they pick up in my alley?	4/29/2018 1:34 PM
11	I live in Oak Park therefore I'm unfamiliar with River Forest's program but Oak Park's program is very similar.	4/17/2018 3:40 PM
12	Can our church avail itself of this service? What is the cost for a church to participate?	4/17/2018 1:23 PM
13	Would not apply as I live in a condo.	4/16/2018 8:25 PM
14	---	4/7/2018 6:18 PM



## River Forest Sustainability Commission - “Did You Know” Questionnaire

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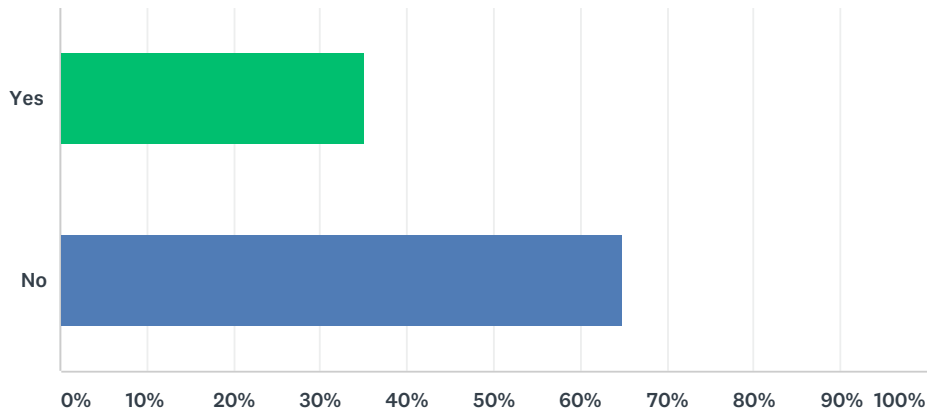
What is the cost?

4/6/2018 4:45 PM

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**Q5 ENERGY:** Did you know the Village is saving over \$20,000 per year in taxpayer money through its recent conversion of all streetlights to LED bulbs? You can save energy and money in your own home by contacting ComEd at 888-652-2955 for a FREE personalized energy assessment that includes free and discounted energy-saving products.

Answered: 179 Skipped: 2

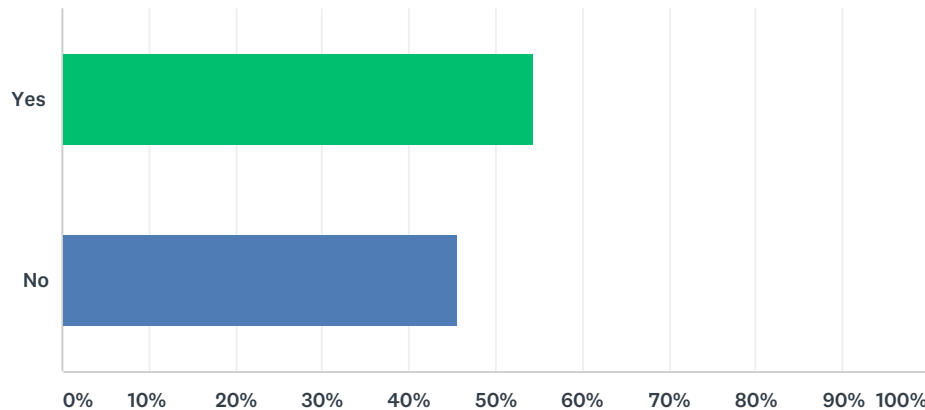


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	35.20%	63
No	64.80%	116
TOTAL		179

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	My question is -how if the Village collecting the energy efficient bulbs that burn out? On the side of the base it says the bulb contains mercury and should be disposed of properly (my interpretation is not in the regular garbage). I believe most if not, all the light bulbs now are this type - over time that could add up to a lot of mercury in the landfills. How are do they get recycled?	7/13/2018 1:40 PM
2	knew about the village's LED conversion; didn't know about the free energy assessment	7/12/2018 8:33 AM
3	Didn't read about it but noticed the bulb change.	5/22/2018 7:10 AM
4	knew about led lights in village; not about comed program	5/16/2018 8:07 AM
5	Knew about street lamps but not residential.	5/15/2018 10:40 AM
6	Is that \$20,000 figure verifiable, or is it an estimate?	5/15/2018 8:44 AM
7	This is great!	5/9/2018 10:16 AM
8	Wonderful! I know now!	5/5/2018 9:36 AM
9	Please put 2 more lights on William between holly court, and Lake	4/29/2018 1:34 PM
10	Now I know -- thank you!	4/24/2018 9:24 AM

**Q6 WATER:** Did you know you can collect rainwater for your lawn and garden needs by purchasing a rain barrel at cost from our Metropolitan Water Reclamation District [www.mwrd.org](http://www.mwrd.org)? By collecting water you are also helping reduce storm water run-off and save money!

Answered: 173 Skipped: 8

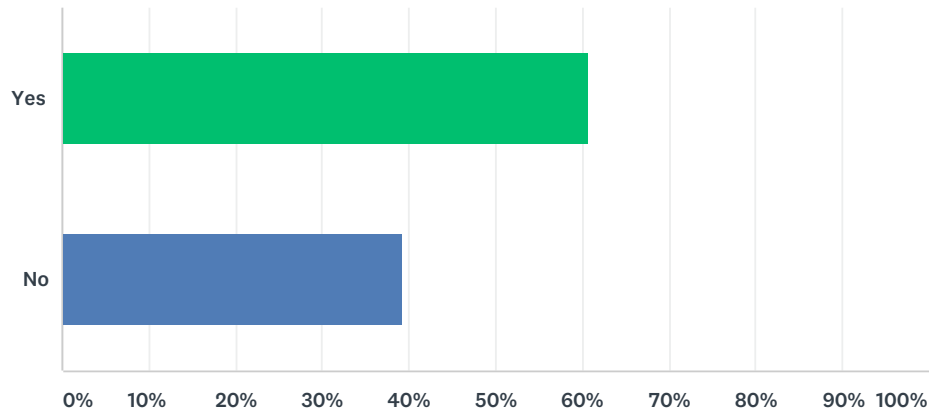


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	54.34%	94
No	45.66%	79
TOTAL		173

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I have a rain barrel	8/21/2018 5:57 AM
2	Did not know about payment back	7/11/2018 8:37 PM
3	i dont have a garden so even i do i dont care(:	5/29/2018 5:50 PM
4	I was unaware of those; I will sign up shortly.	5/9/2018 10:16 AM
5	how do the rainbarrels work	5/9/2018 4:24 AM
6	I live in a condominium	5/4/2018 5:03 PM
7	Now I know -- thank you!	4/24/2018 9:24 AM
8	I assume.	4/17/2018 3:40 PM
9	N/A	4/16/2018 8:25 PM

## Q7 OPEN SPACES: Did you know you can reduce your family’s chemical impact on our land and our river by taking the “Healthy Lawn/Healthy Family Pledge?” Click here to learn more.

Answered: 175 Skipped: 6

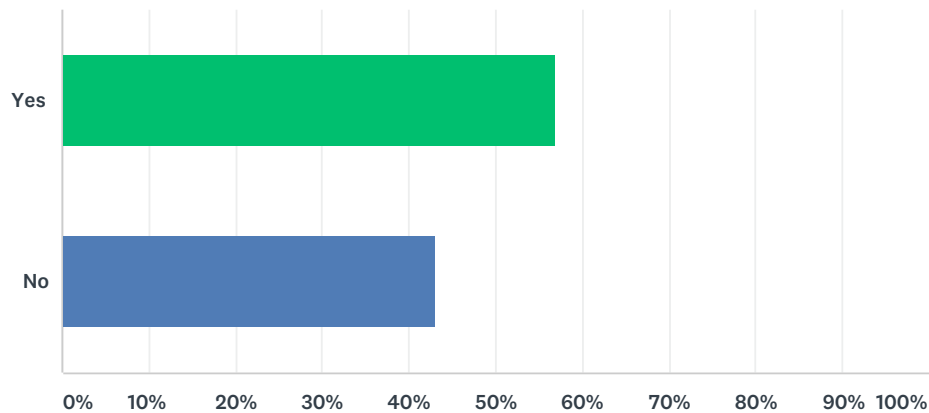


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	60.57% 106
No	39.43% 69
TOTAL	175

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	how does that work for condominiums	5/9/2018 4:24 AM
2	I live in a condominium. Have you contacted these buildings in the community?	5/4/2018 5:03 PM
3	Needs to register as I already use chemical free.	4/29/2018 1:34 PM
4	N/A	4/16/2018 8:25 PM

## Q8 OPEN SPACES: Did you know that there is a Community Herb Garden located at Keystone and Augusta? Any resident can help themselves to a variety of herbs for preparing their favorite dishes.

Answered: 176 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	56.82%	100
No	43.18%	76
TOTAL		176

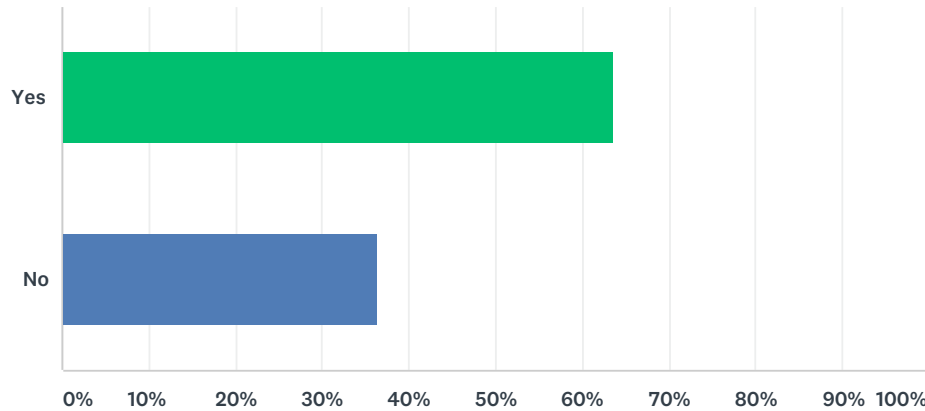
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I love the garden at Keystone and August-a true community garden. I'm disappointed that the grass at the pumping station was all cut up for \$25. personal gardens. Then all the junky chairs, benches and odd fencing was added. It looks terrible. Also that village staff offer free water and are seem maintaining it. Now in the winter our little ones will be sledding into mud-very sad for very little return.	8/21/2018 5:57 AM
2	Awesome	7/16/2018 4:41 PM
3	Awesome	7/16/2018 4:40 PM
4	So cool!	7/14/2018 10:42 PM
5	I just learned this!	5/23/2018 4:33 PM
6	sounds great	5/22/2018 11:24 AM
7	Love this!	5/22/2018 7:10 AM
8	I did not know that anybody can help themselves to the Herbs. That's good to know.	5/9/2018 8:11 AM
9	is that big enough for a 2 square mile village?	5/9/2018 4:24 AM
10	It's wonderful - Thank you	5/5/2018 8:33 AM
11	I knew it was there but thought it was only for that neighborhood	5/3/2018 10:07 AM
12	I walk by it all of the time. Nice to see it in full bloom.	4/29/2018 5:10 PM
13	Now I know -- thank you!	4/24/2018 9:24 AM
14	This is lovely!	4/16/2018 11:07 AM
15	That's fantastic!	4/7/2018 6:48 PM
16	This is a great thing. Many thanks!	4/7/2018 6:18 PM

## River Forest Sustainability Commission - “Did You Know” Questionnaire

17	This is great	4/7/2018 4:49 PM
18	Wonderfu!	4/7/2018 2:11 PM

## Q9 Would you be interested in having an electric car charging station in River Forest?

Answered: 173 Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	63.58% 110
No	36.42% 63
TOTAL	173

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	But worth considering - we have a hybrid car so partially electric. not sure what our next car will be.	8/3/2018 2:04 PM
2	There are a number in oak park so i don't think RF should spend money on right now--perhaps when more residents are driving electric cars	7/12/2018 8:33 AM
3	Do not need for me personally but I think it would be a good use, incentive, and message to community as a whole	7/11/2018 8:37 PM
4	My issue with electric cars is that unless it's solar sourced, you are still creating waste somewhere .	7/11/2018 7:28 PM
5	There is one located in OP by pumpkin moon. It would be interesting to find data about how helpful that is first and pricing	5/23/2018 4:33 PM
6	probably not a bad idea in future. However wouldn't rf residents charge at home? How many people come from elsewhere to rf in electric cars? would it cost taxpayers more \$\$ ?	5/16/2018 8:07 AM
7	Only if no Village \$\$ was used to install and maintain it!	5/15/2018 1:23 PM
8	If people want electric cars they should charge them on their own. Or they could make a short drive to Oak Park where the chargers seem not to be used very much	5/15/2018 8:44 AM
9	To offset costs to taxpayers, the station should have user fees associated with it. A driver pays for gasoline or funds their electric needs	5/13/2018 10:33 PM
10	How much with the electric car changing station cost? Will there be a charge to the owner for using it? Any idea what that would be? With the cost of the charge be reduced as more people use it?	5/9/2018 8:11 AM
11	Eventually we hope to own a hybrid so that would be great.	4/29/2018 5:10 PM
12	I drive an EV	4/27/2018 10:17 AM
13	Maybe. How much are the ones in Oak Park used? Is there demand or are you trying to create demand?	4/27/2018 10:14 AM

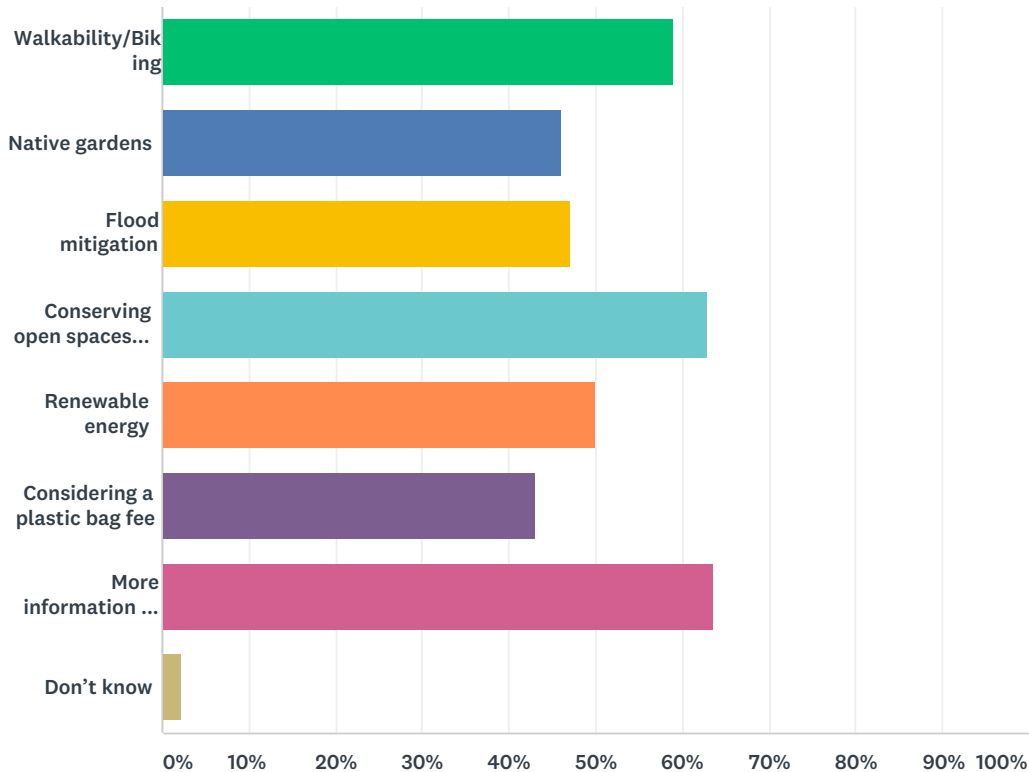
## River Forest Sustainability Commission - "Did You Know" Questionnaire

14	Not yet -- but I would support if others want a station	4/24/2018 9:24 AM
15	I would be interested depending on the area. I wouldn't want to lose anymore green space.	4/24/2018 8:40 AM
16	Not sure what that would entail. I Don't have such a car, but it peers that it would be useful for those that did an encouraging alternative vehicle choice	4/24/2018 7:56 AM
17	Meh.	4/9/2018 1:23 PM
18	Only if our property taxes don't go up.	4/7/2018 6:18 PM
19	Sure, for those who need it.	4/7/2018 2:11 PM



## Q10 What areas of sustainability would you like to see addressed in RF (select all that apply).

Answered: 176 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Walkability/Biking	59.09%	104
Native gardens	46.02%	81
Flood mitigation	47.16%	83
Conserving open spaces and/or gardens	63.07%	111
Renewable energy	50.00%	88
Considering a plastic bag fee	43.18%	76
More information on waste diversion and how to properly recycle	63.64%	112
Don't know	2.27%	4
Total Respondents: 176		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I would love more info on native gardens, trees and bees. I think we need to conserve our precious green spaces. It's okay to have a beautiful open green space-I don't think we need to utilize every little green space we have.	8/21/2018 5:57 AM
2	Encourage gardeners on their own property or use adjacent village parkways. No need to use open spaces for a few to have garden plots.	8/15/2018 11:22 AM

## River Forest Sustainability Commission - “Did You Know” Questionnaire

3	I wish the village could somehow offer or suggest home owners consider planting trees on THEIR property. So many trees have been removed and not replaced. The village does a wonderful job of replacing on the parkways.	8/6/2018 10:03 AM
4	We already have enough traffic congestion we don't need bike lanes. No to plastic bag fees. Are we trying to run low income families out of RF?	8/3/2018 2:08 PM
5	1)“ Dark sky “ approved lighting for both public and residential use. With heightened awareness of crime in the village, and people being encouraged to increase security lighting on their properties, now is a great time to educate people about the importance of dark sky lighting in regards to birds and other wildlife. 2) An education drive to encourage residents to identify and empty standing water that breeds mosquitoes. 3) An option for people to share the cost and use of curbside compost bins. 4) More options to recycle – recycling extravaganza on a permanent basis. Thank you for asking!	7/20/2018 3:06 PM
6	The Village needs to figure out how to recycle electronics - we have old computers, printers, ect and no where to dispose of them. And what to do with the light bulbs that should be recycled and not thrown out with the garbage.	7/13/2018 1:40 PM
7	possibly some guidelines for new condo/apt buildings to use sustainable/conservation measures in their buildings and landscaping	7/12/2018 8:33 AM
8	open space is nice, stop adding community gardens and just have open space	7/12/2018 8:27 AM
9	More active recruitment for composting program	7/11/2018 11:09 PM
10	I'd like my kids to bike themselves more but there are so many intersections with no signage—in any direction—it's so dangerous. I've lived in rural Iowa and major cities and have never seen anything like it. Anyway, I end up driving them to the library.	7/11/2018 9:02 PM
11	Mandatory compost and recycling. Build compost fee into overall cost instead of charging the few who do it.	7/11/2018 8:37 PM
12	Bag the bag. Reduce plastic!	7/11/2018 7:28 PM
13	Where are the recyclers at Priory Park? After baseball I see tons of plastic bottles going into the garbage cans and the RF Park District does not pick them out. The recycler should be next to the garbage.	6/12/2018 10:12 AM
14	I would love more plastic bag recycling places. I know the push is against the bags but for those who have them they need a safe/eco friendly way of getting rid of them so they don't end up in the landfill	5/23/2018 4:33 PM
15	I think it would be really great to make areas more pedestrian/biker friendly. Specifically, the area on lake street near Whole Foods and Panera could use a lot of improvement, as it is auto dominated.	5/22/2018 11:38 AM
16	No To Plastic Bag fee!!!!!! Please don't tax me to make money for something else when I'm buying food to feed my family!!!!	5/22/2018 3:25 AM
17	Annual electronics recycling extravaganza	5/16/2018 7:03 AM
18	Elimination of styrofoam	5/15/2018 12:26 PM
19	Pushing for biodegradable plastic bags made of plant based materials.	5/15/2018 9:34 AM
20	Annual electronic recycling event	5/15/2018 9:02 AM
21	More sewer capacity to stop street flooding during heavy rains	5/15/2018 8:44 AM
22	Incentivized compost program. Maybe a reduction in monthly refuse removal (since much of it is diverted via compost)?	5/9/2018 8:21 PM
23	Homeowner sustainability options from small choices to large	5/9/2018 6:12 PM
24	Cars travel through river forest way too quickly to avoid north ave. Makes me nervous to run and send my child to school on his bike. This needs to be addressed.	5/9/2018 6:56 AM
25	actual use of front yard space for gardens...real plants in the lawn like dandelions... a labyrinth...fitness path for elders paving which allows water run off	5/9/2018 4:24 AM
26	Thank you for all your work! Keep it up!	5/8/2018 9:45 PM

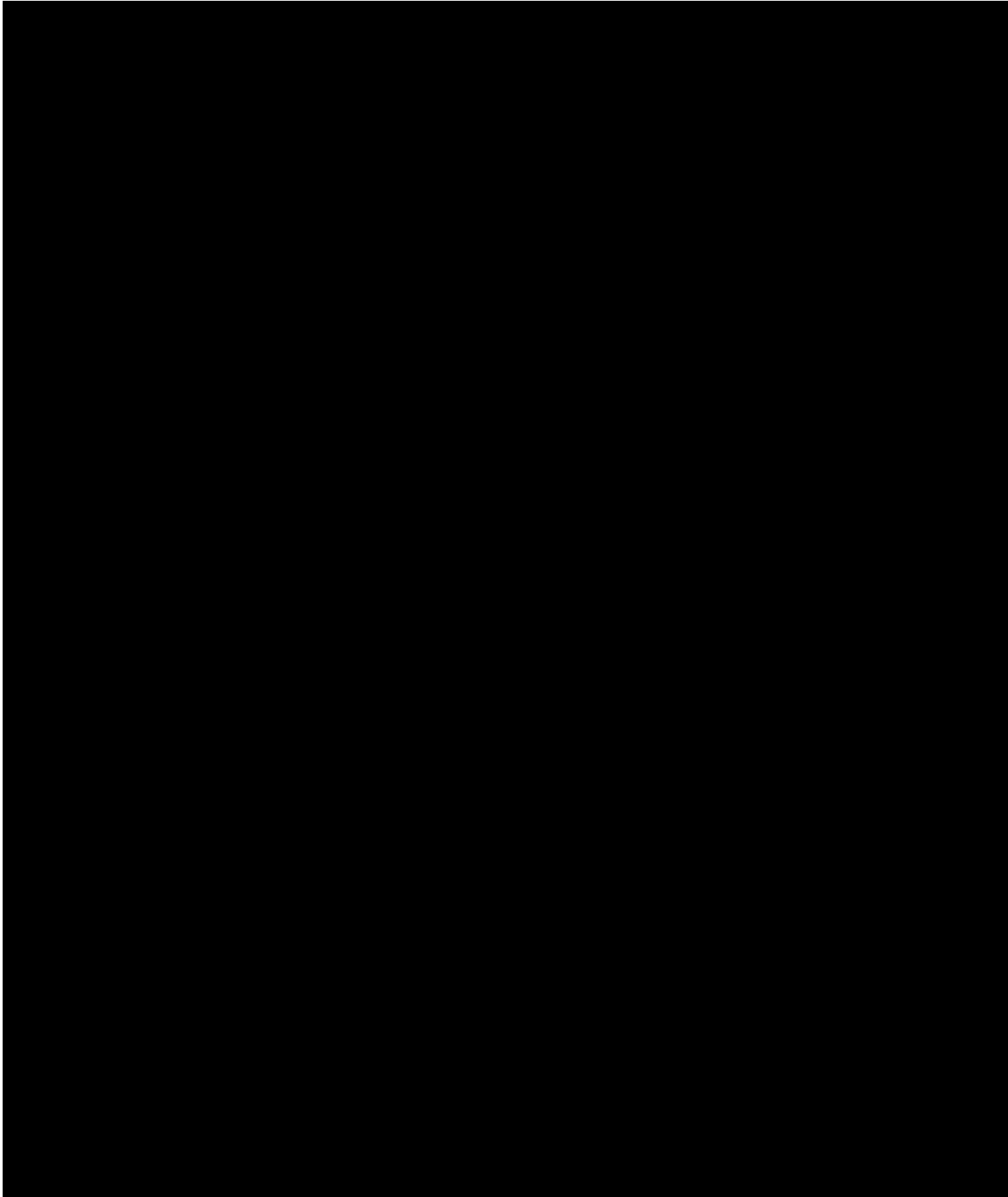
## River Forest Sustainability Commission - "Did You Know" Questionnaire

27	A new contract w/ Roy Strom to reward residents who reduce/recycle and charge more for residents with voluminous weekly landfill.	5/4/2018 10:20 PM
28	I would LOVE to see all native plants in our parks. Especially native bushes	4/27/2018 9:19 AM
29	JUST BAN PLASTIC BAG USE IN STORES... fee would be for paper...	4/24/2018 12:41 PM
30	More stop signs would be ideal. Those passing through the areas may not be familiar with the lack of stop signs. This is a safety issue and stressing.	4/24/2018 7:56 AM
31	I wanted to include considering aplastic bag fee. And conserving open space and gardens-- but the 'click' space on the survey wouldn't register. I would like to see the Village or Park District purchase land--even raze houses to increase community park areas.	4/17/2018 1:41 PM
32	More consideration for pedestrians especially during winter. Snow ploughs push snow to sidewalks and cross-walks often forcing people to walk on busy roads which discourages walking. Stronger enforcement for clearing snow and ice from sidewalks around commercial buildings, parking lots and homes. In general, I would like to see more people walking.	4/16/2018 8:25 PM
33	It would be nice to have community garden plots available to RF residents. I would appreciate being to able to drop off used batteries, smoke/CO detectors, and electronics at Village Hall any time during the year. Thank you. Perhaps more multi-family residential buildings (condos, apts, etc.) would install solar water heaters and solar electricity-generating panels if the Village organized a possible bulk purchase at a discounted price and if the heating/energy systems were as or more reliable than using conventional energy sources and no more expensive than conventional energy sources.	4/7/2018 6:18 PM
34	The recycler for bottles/papers is not senior friendly. It needs wheels. I can't lift it to bring out to the front. I still use and like the little ones.	4/7/2018 8:46 AM
35	Not sure this is the right forum but, while not currently a property owner, I've owned 3 homes with yards over the years. Raking leaves is foolish. We should mandate mulching of leaves into the soil, to improve the soil and cut costs.	4/6/2018 10:06 PM
36	All a waste of time --work on important issues rather than peripheral politically correct hog wash.	4/6/2018 9:11 PM

**Q11 If you are interested in volunteering to help with Sustainability Commission projects, or if you have photos to share of green activities you’ve been involved in around town, please provide your name, email address and phone number below and a member of the Commission will contact you.**

Answered: 18 Skipped: 163

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Name	100.00%	18
Company	0.00%	0
Address	0.00%	0
Address 2	0.00%	0
City/Town	0.00%	0
State/Province	0.00%	0
ZIP/Postal Code	0.00%	0
Country	0.00%	0
Email Address	83.33%	15
Phone Number	72.22%	13





## Open Spaces and Eco Systems

**Commissioner Contact: Sue Crothers and Mary Masella**

**Goal:** Enhance existing open spaces and ecosystems, including Schools, Public buildings and Park District to improve habitat for native flora, fauna and public use.

**Strategies:**

- Continue to work with the Village to increase native plantings on all small green lawn decorative spaces: IE: Along railroad track on Central Ave and Hawthorne, in front of Village Hall, Pumping Station

### Current achievements of goal: Strategy point 1.

1. Native plants have been installed in two areas in River Forest. Along the railway tracks at Hawthorne and Franklin and under the Butterfly mural on Central opposite the paddle tennis courts. Work will continue each year to expand these gardens along the tracks with a goal of native gardens replacing all of the grass along the tracks. This will assist with reducing maintenance and save money.
2. The sustainability commission successfully implemented the Parkway for Pollinators Gardens program into the 2018 Green Block Party season. This program was in collaboration with the Deep Roots Project as part of the Big Idea award they received from the Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation. RF was instrumental in the DRP winning with award.

The Parkways for Pollinators Gardens program has been incredibly successful with 16 gardens being installed in parkways around RF. The object of the program is to:

- Increase resident education on the benefits of native plants
- Build upon the Monarch Butterfly corridor with increased Milk Weed. (as part of the Mayors Monarch Pledge signed by President Adduci)
- Reintroduce and increase native pollinators back into our community.
- Increase resident education on using natives to mitigate flooding
- Conserve water through natives (Natives required less watering and are drought tolerant)
- Reduce chemical application that negatively impacts our waterways through runoff.
- Encourage residents to take the HLHF Pledge for chemical reeducation.

Through our presentation to the village, education and work planting native gardens along the railroad track and the Parkways for Pollinators program, the Village is installing native rain gardens in the new bump outs along Chicago Ave. The Village understands the important role that native plants can play in flooding mitigation. These gardens will be planted in the spring of 2019 and will apply for full funding of the HLHF, GBP and Parkways for Pollinators. We will be requesting a multi year grant to ensure we can continue these connective programs through 2020 inclusive.

- Continue to work with the Park District to replace plantings with native plants and shrubs and plant more native plants throughout small parkways and triangle parks with seating areas

### Current achievements of goal: Strategy point 2.

More work needs to be done here. Mike Sletten the ED of the PD informed the SC that Keystone Hill was to be installed with Native plants last spring, however these plantings have not been installed. More collaboration is need with the PD for this strategy.

- By EOY 2018, increase the community gardens from one to two, by working with the Village and Park District to identify an underutilized space on the south side of River Forest to plant a community vegetable garden

### Current achievements of goal: Strategy point 3.

1. Former Commissioner Mary Masella worked with community residents, Public Works and the PD in a collaboration that culminated in River Forest's first community vegetable garden. 12 of the 24 plots were sold at \$25 per plot for the season. The gardens are located on unused green space located behind the water pumping station. A community harvest event was held in early October and nearby residents were invited in the celebration and harvest.

Collaboration included/will include:

- ❖ Public works providing the space initial signage and installing a spigot for water.
- ❖ PD posting the garden plots in the PD seasonal brochure and administering the payments.
- ❖ PD providing park bench seating in 2019.
- ❖ PD providing attractive permanent signage in 2019 with SC input.
- ❖ SC created the application, rules/regulations with the PD and PW and overseeing the protocol and any issues that arose, plus acting as liaison between departments and residents.

**NOTE:** This garden is located on the north side or RF. This is because it was identified as the best current unused space for this inaugural community vegetable garden project. Former commissioner Masella worked closely with the village and the PD to find the right space. An appropriate location was unable to be identified on the south side of River Forest. We will continue to work to address this issue and hope to find a good south location in the future.

We also installed or are set to install 6 Inspirational Gardens in River Forest as part of our collaboration with the Deep Roots Project Big Idea award from the OPRF Community foundation. These gardens are raised vegetable gardens.

Locations:

Trailside Museum: **Installed**  
 River Forest Temple : **Installed**  
 Dominican University: Installation Spring 2019  
 Resident, 7613 Vine. **Installed**  
 Resident, 703 Bonnie Brae Pending  
 Episcopal Church, 515 Franklin: Pending



We will be registering all of the RF pollinator, community and vegetable gardens on the Green American national website for Climate Victory Gardens which will make RF one of the leading communities in the Country for Climate Victory Gardens.

<https://greenamerica.org/climate-victory-gardens>

Note: We will also recommend that the Village add a garden map to the village website to compliment the current tree map.

- Support development of the bike path plan for River Forest

#### **Current achievements of goal: Strategy point 4.**

Work on the bike path has begun and is ongoing. The SC is creating a resident Working Group comprised of avid cyclists in RF, to act as biking issue subject matter experts. Specifically, this WG will be consulted to help build practical, bike-friendly initiatives into RF's Comprehensive Plan, and provide input and insight into a potential bike path through RF, connecting existing neighboring bike paths.

**Goal:** Reduce synthetic chemical usage in River Forest

**Strategies:**

- By EOY 2021. All government and major educational institutions in River forest signed on to Integrated Pest Management Policy. (IPM)

#### **Current achievements of goal: Strategy point 1.**

Passive work has been done on this issue through our HLHF pledge and education. Addressing strategies points 1 through 3 need to come first in order to integrate the work and continual education into government and institutional entities. We are still on track to complete this strategy point by 2021.

- Continue the Keep ON the Grass program by way of the Green Block Party through summer of 2018. Review in 2019 to determine a new program that will build upon the Healthy Lawn Healthy Family initiative

#### **Current achievements of goal: Strategy point 2.**

Keep ON the Grass program and education was continued as part of the 2018 GBP season and administered by Deep Roots Project. Only 10 new pledges were achieved this season. Our post-season assessment has determined that the reason for so few pledges is not from lack of interest, but rather lack resources to engage the audience and have them complete the pledge during a limited time that is consumed with planting of our new Parkway for Pollinators gardens. We will address this in 2019 by employing an intern who will assist David Murphy (Deep Roots Project) so that as residents learn and understand the importance of chemical reduction and elimination in our eco system, its connection to our waterways, pollinators, wildlife and humans, the intern will be assigned to taking pledges and installing signs during the program activity of planting the garden.

- By spring 2018 have the administrative system in place so that the village is actively enforcing the Illinois State law requirement for chemical permits for lawn care providers working in River Forest

#### **Current achievements of goal: Strategy point 3.**

The SC assisted the village to increase its oversight of unlicensed operators in the Village by identifying contractors who did not appear on the list of permitted contractors. The village then sent out notices to these contractors. With a fee of \$100 per permit, the village not only increased revenue, it also offers the ability to tighten the protocol for chemical application and ensure those who are working in the village are licensed both with the village and by the State to administer chemical applications.

The SC requested that the village update its lawn care permit application to include proof of the State of Illinois Chemical license that is required by law for all companies that apply chemical lawn applications. Beginning in spring 2019 this question will be included on all permit applications and a copy of the license must be supplied by the contractor with the application.

**Goal:** Ensure that the Park District and educational institutions make informed decisions with regard to installing artificial turf.

#### **Current achievements of goal: Strategy point 4**

Upon request from the Park District Board, the SC offered a report and recommendation to the PF and to the PD on proposed artificial turf installation. This report concluded that artificial turf has many negative impacts on the environment from increased temperatures, issues with pollinators and runoff pollution. In addition the report also offered evidence of negative impact on athletes from staphylococcus infection to heat stroke and cancer. We made a request that the Park District investigate mitigating the complaint of flooding issues that they experience on the proposed site with improved drainage and natural turf before making their decision. The Park District confirmed at their October 2018 board meeting that they will conduct this research with an engineer and will continue to include the SC and the public in the discussion so that the SC may offer informed and researched recommendations and so that all RF residents can participate in the process.

#### **Strategy:**

- Share research and issue white paper so that the Park District and institutions can fully understand the impact of artificial turf on the environment and human health

#### **Current achievements of goal: Strategy point 5.**

See above details of achievements of strategy point 4. White paper report was issued and presented. Copy attached:

## Water

**Commissioner Contact: Sue Crothers and Julie Moller**

**Goal:** Assist Village staff in educating residents in reducing the consumption of potable water.

**Strategies:**

- Share and promote the use of water-efficient technologies

**Current achievements of goal: Strategy point 1.**

In 2018 we concentrated on education and water mitigation with native plants. This strategy point is part of the next step and will be addressed in our 2019 goals.

- Promote the use of harvesting rain water and grey water systems

**Current achievements of goal: Strategy point 2.**

No movement has been made on this strategy to date. This needs to be addressed in 2019 goals.

- Reduce the waste of natural resources by using natives plants, permeable pavers etc.

**Current achievements of goal: Strategy point 3.**

The sustainability commission successfully implemented the Parkway for Pollinators Gardens program into the 2018 Green Block Party season. This program was in collaboration the Deep Roots Project as part of the Big Idea award they received from the Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation. RF was instrumental in the DRP winning with award. The Pathways the Pollinators Gardens program has been incredibly successful with 16 gardens being installed in parkways around RF. The object of the program is to:

- Increase resident education on using natives to mitigate flooding
- Conserve water through natives (Natives required less watering and are drought tolerant)
- Reduce chemical application that negatively impacts our waterways through runoff
- Reintroduce and increase native pollinators back into our community.

We will apply for a grant through PlanItGreen and the OPRF Community Foundation to continue the program in 2019.

Educational work on the benefits of permeable pavers, particularly as the housing footprint for each lot has increased over time making less permeable land available, is a topic that still needs to be addressed in our goals/strategies.

**Goal:** Improving and Maintaining Water Quality

**Strategies:**

- Facilitate the reduction of synthetic herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers practices of institutions, residents and businesses

**Current achievements of goal: Strategy point 1.**

We Continue our commitment to the HLHF initiative. Currently 141 residents have taken the pledge and display the Keep On the Grass sign. In addition, the Village, Dominican University and the Trailside Museum have signed on along with the Park District.

This program will continue in 2019 as it is an important part of education and commitment to reducing pesticide usage. Residents learn through our presentation at GBP the connection between chemical lawn care and runoff to the Des Plaines River through the storm water system and then into our drinking water.

We continue to meet each year with the Park District for their yearly IPM review. The 2018 end of season meeting is upcoming.

- Provide information on water reduction strategies and/or grant opportunities for storm water management

**Current achievements of goal: Strategy point 2.**

Through our presentation to the village, education and work planting native gardens along the railroad track and the Parkways for Pollinators program, the Village is installing native rain gardens in the new bump outs along Chicago Ave. The Village understands the important role that native plants can play in flooding mitigation. These gardens will be planted in the spring of 2019. We are currently working on a grant application to PlanItGreen (the RFOP sustainability initiative created by the OPRF Community Foundation) All our work by the RFSC thus far has been completed on a very small budget from the SC funds and local leadership programs along with original support for HLHF and GBP from the OPRF Community Foundation, however we have never received support from PlanItGreen. We therefore feel it is time for PIG to commit to RF and will apply for full funding of the HLHF, GBP and Parkways for Pollinators. We will be requesting a multi year grant to ensure we can continue these connective programs through 2020 inclusive.

- Provide information on reducing the demand on local and regional storm water collection

**Current achievements of goal: Strategy point 3.**

The SC has worked to educate residents regarding the importance of reducing water consumption via the GBP Parkways for Pollinators Gardens and the HLHF initiative. For example: Residents learn the connection between planting natives and water reduction as natives use less water. We also educate neighbors on how and when to water their lawns to save water. In addition to the conversation, this information is located in our HLHF trifold and on our website. When residents take the Pledge the commitment to correct watering is requested. (see next page)

**I pledge to adopt the following natural lawn care methods:**

*(To receive a free sign choose #1 and any two of the other choices).*

- ☐ **1. Eliminate Use of Harmful Chemicals:** I will (or have already) eliminate the use of herbicides such as glyphosate (Round Up), 2,4 D, and/or "weed and feed" products on my lawn and in my garden.  
*(required to receive free sign)*

**Additional natural lawn care practices:**

*(choose two to receive free sign)*

- ☐ **2. Mow high:** I will mow my grass to a height no less than 3 inches.
- ☐ **3. Water properly:** I will water my lawn with no more than 1 inch of water per week.
- ☐ **4. Fertilize organically:** I will use only naturally derived organic fertilizers on my lawn and garden such as compost, compost tea, alfalfa meal, etc.

*Please fill out information on back to receive your free sign*

## 180813 PD Turf Presentation Draft

Issue: The RFPD is considering the removal of natural grass fields and replacing them with artificial turf in at least one location in RF. The PD Board has invited comments and input from the RF Sustainability Commission on this issue, as ecosystems and open spaces are one of our main areas of focus.

Known information about the PD Plans: The PD has publicly relayed few details about its plans, so our response is limited at this time. The RFPD has not shared the location(s) or the types of artificial turf infill with which they are considering replacing existing RF natural grass, the timing of their plans, or their research to date on their reason for replacing natural turf with artificial.

This is what we know:

- The PD has set aside \$1.5M for one or more artificial turf fields in RF, as an “unfunded” 2018-2019 budget item;
- There are 3 components to an artificial sports field: the synthetic carpet base, the artificial grass-shaped fibers, and the infill (usually pellet-shaped) material.
- The PD has discussed replacing one or more existing natural grass fields at Keystone and/or Centennial Park (next to the Library) with artificial turf;
- The PD has met with OPPD and FPPD personnel and conducted site visits of their artificial turf fields. The FP field was replaced 2 years ago, had a lifespan of @ 10 years. One of the OP fields started out as a tire grind infill, and was replaced with a rubber grind called “Nike Grind” in 2015; and
- The PD reports that it has received notice from the Water Reclamation District that it is possible for them to install artificial turf if it chooses.

RF Sustainability Commission Input: The RFSC believes that the most environmentally sustainable option is to maintain its current natural grass fields, and not replace these fields with artificial turf. Natural grass fields offer important environmental and health benefits, which would be lost if removed. In contrast, artificial turf poses numerous known environmental

risks and dangers, including chemical and micro plastic runoff into waterways, heat stress on humans and the environment, the loss of biodiversity, and more than 120 tons of chemical/petroleum-based plastic and rubber dumped into the landfill after the estimated 10- year life of an artificial turf field.

The RFSC suggests that instead, the PD explore measures for improving the Village's existing natural grass investment. If the PD's motivation for exploring artificial turf is more playability during the spring, fall, and on rainy days, it should avail itself of techniques to maintain natural grass fields at a higher level, for a fraction of the \$1.5M cost set aside for artificial turf. These techniques include advanced soil aeration, nutrient management, and use of grass breeds that are disease and cold weather-resistant. These techniques are successfully used worldwide, in climates harsher than Chicago, at a fraction of the cost of artificial turf.

If field playability is driving the PD's decision, we note that dangerously high artificial turf temperatures have caused field closures that are not necessary on natural grass. According to the Penn State Center for Sports Surface Research, artificial turf is generally 35° – 55° hotter than natural grass, which stays cooler than air temperatures. Studies have found artificial turf surface temperatures to reach 120° with a 79° air temperature, and 146° with an 85° air temperature. Artificial turf manufacturers recommend watering of fields for temporary turf cooling, and closing of fields to prevent heat stroke, skin blistering, turf burn, and melting of artificial turf materials. Further information below.

#### 10 Environmental Advantages of Natural Grass Fields:

1. Purified air and improved air quality: Natural grass fields remove dust and dirt from the air, along with common impurities such as carbon dioxide. *Natural* grass blades capture air-borne impurities; dew and precipitation help move them into the root zone, where dust and dirt return to the soil and soil microbes help break pollutants down.
2. Carbon Sequestration and Reduction in Global Warming: Natural grass in the U.S. captures about 5% of the carbon dioxide from the atmosphere each year. Natural grass traps and converts carbon dioxide to a stable form of carbon that's locked into the soil layer

through a process known as carbon sequestration. Rather than being released into the atmosphere and adding to greenhouse gasses, carbon is held in the soil where it eventually becomes organic matter. An average-size natural grass soccer field (@64,000 sq. feet) collects and stores up to 18,000 lbs. of carbon per year.

3. Oxygen Generation: Natural grass generates significant amounts of life-supporting oxygen; One natural grass soccer field produces enough oxygen to meet the daily oxygen needs of 5,120 people – nearly 50% of RF's entire population.
4. Ambient Cooling and Offsetting of Solar Heat: Natural grasses cool themselves and their surroundings, offsetting 50% of solar heat through cooling evaporation. On sunny days surface air temperatures above natural grass stay 10°-14° cooler than asphalt. In contrast, surface temps of artificial turf can measure 37°F *higher* than asphalt, and more than 86°F higher than natural grass under the same conditions. Eight average-size natural grass front lawns have an estimated cooling impact equal to 70 tons of air conditioning.
5. Rainwater Purification and Improvement of Groundwater Quality: Natural grasses and the soil microbes that exist within them reduce environmental contamination by purifying water and breaking down pollutants as they move through the root zone. Pollutants in the atmosphere can make rainfall so acidic that it damages the environment. However, filtering rainwater through a healthy lawn can reduce its acidity to one-tenth its original, unfiltered state. This improves the quality of groundwater and reduces contamination of bodies of water, such as rivers and lakes.
6. Pollinator, Pet, Bird, and Biodiversity Support: Healthy, natural grass encourages earthworms, microorganisms, butterflies, ladybugs, and other insects and birds that support biodiversity. Natural grass fields are also safe for pets to play and roll around on. Natural grass absorbs pet urine and waste residue into the soil and does not leave a bad smell. Natural grass is also cool and comfortable for pets to walk on.
7. Reduction and Filtration of Runoff and Diversion of Water from Storm Sewers: Natural grass slows the flow of storm water, allowing it to be absorbed into the ground, filtered and returned to aquifers instead of flowing into storm sewers.



8. Erosion Reduction: Extensive natural grass root systems lock soil in place and protect it from loss by wind and water. Natural grass rootlets condition and aerate soil, build hummus, and help with dust stabilization and soil erosion control. By comparison, artificial turf infills are carried into the community by wind, water, shoes, etc. Many of us have experience with “turf bugs” in our kids’ sports bags, shoes, socks, clinging to water bottles, in our cars, laundry room floors, and in our washing machines, then flowing into our municipal water system.
9. Sound Absorption and Glare reduction: Natural grass absorbs sound and reduces noise pollution. It also reduces glare that can cause vision discomfort.
10. Low impact on Environment: Natural grass renews itself and can last indefinitely. It does not need to be removed, replaced, or landfilled. And in RF, our parks are largely chemical free – under the Integrated Pest Management program they are not treated with chemicals or pesticides except as a last resort.

### 13 Environmental/Health Impacts of Artificial Turf:

1. Leaching of Micro plastics, Chemicals, and Toxins: All components of artificial turf – the plastic carpet, synthetic “grass blades,” and infill materials – contain chemicals that leach into the water system and groundwater through runoff. Artificial Turf is comprised of a plastic, petroleum, and silica-based **carpet**; chemically treated **plastic** “grass blades”; and **pellet infill** made of a choice of recycled tire rubber, recycled manufacturing waste, recycled footwear, silica sand, thermoplastic elastomers (TPEs), Ethylene Propylene Diene Monomer (EPDM) Rubber, acrylic/polymer coated natural sand, treated organic materials such as coconut fiber, husks, peat, cork rice husks, and walnut shells. Some studies show significant zinc and lead leaching in groundwater from crumb rubber fields. The chemicals used to color artificial turf “blades” can include lead, titanium, and other metals. Some of the chemicals in tire crumb, such as dibenzopyrenes, are known carcinogens. A December 2016 EPA Report identified nearly 30 articles and reports relevant to chemical leaching from crumb rubber and/or ecological toxicity and risk. However, examination of these risks was deemed to be beyond

the scope of the EPA's research. Manufacturers of artificial turf materials are reticent to share the chemical make-up of their products (for example, Nike Grind), making it difficult to scientific study.

2. Heat Stress: Artificial turf fields absorb and retain heat, resulting in surface temperatures that are much higher than the surrounding air. For example, a BYU study reported average artificial turf field temp of 117°, as compared to 78° for natural grass, and 110° for asphalt. A maximum surface temp of 200° F is reported on BYU fields. The University of Missouri reports artificial turf field temp of 178° F (138° F at “head-level height” on a 98° day; and Penn State reports artificial field turf temps of 120°, 130°, and 146° F for air temps of 78°, 79°, and 85° F.
3. Silica Inhalation: The crystalline silica sand that is generally used in artificial turf infill contains silica dust, which can cause silicosis and cancer when inhaled. Crystalline silica is known by the state of California to cause cancer, and the IARC has classified silica as a carcinogen. One artificial turf manufacturer advises that its sand infill should not be breathed and can cause moderate to severe eye and respiratory irritation. However, there are currently no standards for non-occupational exposure on artificial turf fields.
4. Injury: Professional athletes consistently indicate preference to play on real grass, based on increased injuries, soreness and fatigue from artificial turf. For example, the NFL Players Association reports that artificial turf causes more strains, abrasions and concussions than natural grass, shortening their careers and adversely affecting their post-career quality of life. FIFA and the U.S. Soccer Federation report that artificial turf is not a preferred playing surface, and the U.S. Women's Soccer Team has filed discrimination lawsuits over matches required to be played on artificial turf. The U.S. Men's National Soccer team has contracted to play all games on natural grass since 2014. When natural grass stadiums are not available, natural grass is required to be installed over artificial turf to address the players' concerns.
5. Infection Risk: The abrasiveness of synthetic turf fibers contributes to abrasions or “turf burns,” and a higher risk of exposure to staph infections.

6. Latex Allergy: Latex allergens are found in natural rubber and cause an allergic response in 6% of the general population. Reports of allergic responses to crumb rubber (from tires, shoes, manufacturing waste, or otherwise) are anecdotal, because scientific studies have not been conducted.
7. Increased Storm Water Runoff and Polluted Water: Artificial turf does not absorb rainwater – it drains through the surface or along the ground into storm sewers. Prior to installation of artificial turf, the soil below is compacted. Then a layer of sand, concrete, or decomposed granite is put on top of the soil and compacted so the turf lays flat. Next, a layer of plastic may be applied, followed by the artificial turf being stapled down. While rain may permeate the plastic grass shaped fibers and synthetic infill pellets, it is not absorbed into the ground below the plastic carpet backing. Some studies show that zinc and other metals, are found in synthetic turf runoff, affecting water quality and aquatic organisms.
8. Undercutting of Municipal Efforts to Manage Increased Storm Water: Statistics show that Chicago has been receiving heavier rainfall and snow, and scientists predict higher and stronger frequency, putting stress on all infrastructures. The village of RF, city of Chicago, and other metropolitan areas have launched efforts to manage storm water, implement green urban design, and preserve plants and trees to manage the effects of heat and heavy storms. For example, the Village's 2016 install of permeable pavers in its commuter parking lot was designed to divert 46,000 gallons annually from RF's sewer system. Artificial turf subverts these efforts by decreasing the square footage of water-absorbing soil in RF. If the PD replaces the Centennial Park natural grass field with artificial turf, the entire *annual benefit* of the Village's permeable paver lot would be eliminated with just a 1.16" rainfall. RF receives an annual rainfall of at least 37", so the Village would need to install 32 more permeable paver lots to compensate for the added stormwater runoff caused by one artificial turf field.
9. Increased Water Usage: Artificial Turf needs to be watered to help cool (at least temporarily) the high temperatures of artificial turf. Watering also improves playability by settling infill particles, decreases static cling, and washes away bacteria and fluids on fields.

Water irrigation not only uses water resources, but also requires energy for transport.

10. Increased Carbon Footprint: The production, transport, maintenance and disposal of artificial turf contributes to a large carbon footprint. Artificial turf is a petro-chemical product that requires the use of virgin materials and high levels of processing and production. A 2007 Canadian study found that a 9,000 sq. meter artificial turf field emitted 55.6 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> over a 10-year period, plus additional greenhouse gasses. The study found that 1,861 trees would need to be planted to offset these emissions from one field. **Taking this to a RF level,** the carbon effect of installing one artificial turf field would negate nearly half (45%) of the green house gasses saved by our D90 schoolchildren through their food scrap compost program. The impact of installing a 10-year artificial turf field is equivalent to gutting 1 ½ years of the 3-year food compost program at our Willard, Lincoln, and Roosevelt schools.
11. Synthetic Turf Does Not Support Biodiversity: Though most artificial turf fields have drainage systems, they do not contain microorganisms that can break down pollutants. Artificial turf does not offer habitats for insects, butterflies, or provide food for birds.
12. Urban Heat Island Effect: Urban heat islands are created when natural grass and trees are replaced by impervious surfaces that absorb heat. Urban heat islands increase demand for energy (particularly air conditioning), intensify air pollution, and increase heat-related health problems.
13. Noise and Glare: Synthetic turf tends to produce glare from natural sunlight and overhead lights and does not have the ability of natural grass to absorb sound.

Conclusion: The RFSC believes that the Village's natural grass fields offer important environmental and health benefits, which would be lost if removed. We are concerned about artificial turf's numerous known environmental and health risks, and those not yet studies. We encourage the PD to provide information to the Commission and Village residents about their research and ongoing artificial turf plans, so that relevant research can be conducted, and the most helpful input may be provided.

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