

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

June 26, 2025

A meeting of the River Forest Zoning Board of Appeals was held at 7:30 pm on Thursday, June 26, 2025, in the Community Room of the River Forest Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue, River Forest, Illinois.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Martin called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. Meeting started by calling roll. Upon a roll call the following persons were:

Present: Chairman Frank Martin, Members Gary Dombrowski, Chris Plywacz, Mary Shoemaker, Ron Lucchesi, and Sheila Price

Absent: Member Corina Davis

Also present at the meeting: Jessica Spencer, Assistant Village Administrator, Cliff Radatz, Secretary, and Anne Skrodzki, Village Attorney.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS ON APRIL 10, 2025

Chairman Martin asked if there were any comments about the minutes from the last meeting, there were none.

A **MOTION** was made by Member Plywacz and seconded by Member Lucchesi to approve the minutes of the April 10, 2025, meeting.

Ayes: Chairman Martin, Members Dombrowski, Plywacz, Shoemaker, Price, and Lucchesi

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Chairman Martin introduced the application. Secretary Radatz swore in those who wished to testify.

III. PUBLIC HEARING – SPECIAL USE PERMIT – 7355 NORTH AVENUE

Chairman Martin invited the applicant, Diamond in the Ruff of River Forest, LLC, owner Anne Renee Vacherlon, who presented her application. She explained she had recently purchased the space on North Avenue and are interested in moving their dog grooming business from Madison Street.

Chairman Martin asked questions about the reason for moving the business. Ms. Vacherlon stated the building was sold in February/March and advised her the rent would be increasing.

Chairman Martin asked why she should be granted the special use permit. She responded that she has operated in the Village for 30 years and would like to continue her business here. The North Avenue property had been on the market for about 10 years, she stated, and felt this would be a good fit for her business.

Chairman Martin asked if she feels that the documents addressing the Standards as stated is true, Ms. Vacherlon responded yes.

In response to Member Plywacz, Ms. Vacherlon confirmed she does not use harsh chemicals. He asked how long she operated at the Madison Street location; Ms. Vacherlon responded 15 years. She reported that there were minimal things to be changed at the North Avenue property.

Chairman Martin asked about a disturbance at this business in the past year. He asked if her employee was aggressive towards another tenant in the business. Ms. Vacherlon explained the situation at the time.

Chairman Martin asked for public comment from those present, regarding this topic.

Secretary Radatz swore in those additional members who wished to testify.

Donna Fantetti Slepicka addressed the Board, speaking in support of the applicant.

Bart Smith addressed the Board, speaking in support of the applicant.

Robert Polomo addressed the Board, speaking of the disturbance previously mentioned.

Chairman Martin closed the public hearing.

Member Plywacz recused himself from voting because of his business relationship with the Applicant.

Chairman Martin noted that it is admirable of the business to be in the Village for so long and provided such a long list of supportive letters as part of the packet this evening. He noted the irony of having to complete this process in order to move back to where the business started so many years ago. He explained that the 12 standards referenced in the Village Code must be met for this application to be positively recommended to the Village Board. Due to an altercation between the applicant and another tenant of that property, Chairman Martin felt Standard B had not been met.

Chairman Martin further explained that if a Member felt that a specific Standard had not been met, then the Member should explain which Standard was not met.

A MOTION was made by Member Dombrowski and seconded by Member Lucchesi to approve the Special Use Permit for 7355 North Avenue.

Ayes: Members Dombrowski, Shoemaker, Price, and Lucchesi

Nays: Chairman Martin

Abstain: Plywacz

By a vote of 4-1, the motion passed.

IV. APPROVAL OF FINDINGS OF FACT FOR THE SPECIAL USE PERMIT FOR 7355 NORTH AVENUE

Chairman Martin asked the Board to move onto voting for the Findings of Fact. He noted that there were many letters of support provided by the applicant from their customers, each one uniquely written.

A **MOTION** was made by Member Dombrowski and seconded by Member Lucchesi to approve the Findings of Fact for the Special Use Permit for 7355 North Avenue pending conformance to the considerations set forth in this Hearing and review by the Village Attorney and the Chairman.

Ayes: Members Dombrowski, Shoemaker, Price, and Lucchesi

Nays: Chairman Martin

Abstain: Member Plywacz

By a vote of 4-1, the motion passed.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

A **MOTION** was made by Member Dombrowski to dismiss the meeting, seconded by Member Lucchesi to adjourn. A unanimous voice vote passed the motion.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Submitted:

Clifford E. Radatz, Secretary

Date: _____

Frank Martin, Chairman
Zoning Board of Appeals