

RIVER FOREST

Proud Heritage • Bright Future

The Village of River Forest Newsletter | June, 2024



Commercial Zoning Proposal

On Monday, June 17, the Village Board will discuss the Commercial Zoning Proposal reviewed by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) at their **April meeting**. At the conclusion of the most recent public hearing on April 11, the ZBA voted not to recommend that the proposal be adopted by the Village Board and issued its Findings of Fact and Recommendation at its May 9 meeting.

How did we get to this point?

- In 2017, the Village Board set out to update the **Comprehensive Plan**. Passed by a unanimous vote in 2019, the plan includes generally recommended changes to the Zoning Code in order to place the Village in a more marketable position in the future.
- Starting in **2022**, the Economic Development Commission (EDC), in collaboration with the Village Planner, led a series of meetings and public conversations which resulted in the **current**

Commercial Zoning Proposal.

- In **May 2023**, the EDC referred the proposal to the ZBA.
- In **November 2023** the Village Board, seeking the opinion of the EDC and ZBA, directed to review, explore and provide feedback on the proposal. The **EDC** discussed the proposal again, provided additional feedback, and moved the topic forward to the ZBA.
- In **early 2024**, the ZBA held a series of public hearings to garner additional resident feedback.
- In **April 2024**, the ZBA voted not to recommend the proposal to the Village Board. The **Findings of Fact** was voted upon in May, which signals that the topic is ready for Board consideration.

We hope this information clarifies the process taken to ensure residents' questions, comments, and concerns were heard and addressed. For more information on the Commercial Zoning Proposal, click [here](#).

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From Village President Cathy Adduci

Dear River Forest residents,

On May 29, the Illinois General Assembly approved the State budget. I want to express my gratitude to Senator Kimberly Lightford, President of the Senate, Senator Don Harmon, Speaker of the House Chris Welch, and Representative Camille Lilly for their efforts in securing a budget that benefits the residents of Illinois and River Forest. Although I am disappointed by the way the State shifted the burden of the 1% grocery tax to the local municipalities, I am excited about the upcoming projects provided by the State budget:

- \$600,000 through Build Illinois Bond Fund for infrastructure improvements
- \$750,000 through Build Illinois Bond Fund for capital improvements
- \$21,000,000 grant in partnership with our neighboring communities for the North Avenue streetscape and business development project
- \$500,000 grant to the Cross Community Climate Collaboration (C4)

I invite everyone to come out and attend our third annual Juneteenth Flag Raising Ceremony on Monday, June 17 from 11am to noon at the **River Forest Public Library**. After the event, refreshments will be served on the lawn. You can learn more about this event [here](#).

I recently attended the launch of **Cook County Tourism Alive**, an initiative dedicated to helping the hospitality and tourism industry **Outside Chicago** thrive in the post-pandemic economy. I was pleased to catch up with Cook County President Toni Preckwinkle, other local elected officials, leadership from the Forest Preserves of Cook County, and representatives from the five suburban conventions and visitor bureaus. A picture from the event is available below.

Save the date for the 90th anniversary celebration of the River Forest Boy Scout Troop 66! Current members, alumni, and the community are welcome to commemorate the Troop's 90th Anniversary with a reception on Sunday, June 23 at 2 p.m. in Fellowship Hall at **Grace Lutheran Church and School** where stories of adventure, camaraderie, and service will be shared. For more information, please send an [email](#).

Lastly, for those who are job hunting, Emanuel "Chris" Welch is hosting his free annual Job Fair on June 29 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the **Proviso Math & Science Academy** in Forest Park. This is a great opportunity to put your resume in front of multiple agencies and local companies that are looking to hire. Learn more about the Job Fair [here](#).

Sincerely,

Cathy Adduci, Village President
Village of River Forest



Cook County Tourism Alive

Village Board Trustees



**Erika
Bachner**



**Kathleen
Brennan**



**Lisa
Gillis**



**Ken
Johnson**



**Robert
O'Connell**



**Respicio F.
Vazquez**

Village Clerk



**Jonathan
Keller**

To contact the
Village Board
to submit a
comment or
question, click the
button below

[Contact the
Village Board](#)

News Around Town

Meet with the Village President Recap

Village President Cathy Adduci hosted her very first "Meet with the Village President" event Saturday, May 18, at the River Forest Community Center. More than a dozen community members came out, asked questions and got more information about anything they were curious about. This event will be held quarterly in an effort to strengthen connections with residents or business owners in River Forest. **SAVE THE DATE** for Saturday, August 31, from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., for the next event, to be held at the Depot at Keystone Park. For questions, please call the Village at **708-366-8500**.



Meet with the Village President

Bring your questions and feedback.

Outdoor Concerts at the Public Library

The River Forest Public Library is pleased to present a series of outdoor concerts in the Library's garden in the evening on the fourth Thursdays of June, July, and August. Limited chairs will be provided so attendees are encouraged to bring a lawn chair or blanket. In the event of rain, the concert will be held indoors on the second floor of the Library. These events are brought to the community through a partnership with River Forest Township.

Thursdays, 7-8:30 p.m.
6/27: Alloy Horn Quartet

7/25: Petra van Nuis Jazz Quartet
8/22: Bourbon Aristocracy



Alloy Horn Quartet

Cicada Photo Contest

"Visit Oak Park" is hosting a cicada photo contest! From now through Wednesday, June 19, amateur photographers are encouraged to visit any of the Forest Preserves of Cook County locations and take pictures of the cicada invasion. Gift cards for \$100 will be awarded for the most colorful picture, the most cicadas in one picture, and the best action shot. To learn more or enter the contest, click [here](#).



Historical Preservation Awards

The Historic Preservation Commission is currently accepting applications for the 2024 Historic Preservation Awards from homeowners, architects, or contractors who have helped to maintain the historic character of the Village. For more information or to apply, click [here](#).

Nominations must be received on or before July 26 to be considered for one of this year's awards.



Village Department News

Village Administration

Vehicle and Pet Registration

Vehicle stickers for 2024-2025 are now available for purchase. Updated stickers need to be affixed to windshields by July 14 to avoid late fees and citations. PLEASE NOTE: The Village is now offering an active military or veteran discount on vehicle stickers. All vehicles registered in Illinois with a River Forest address must also be registered with the Village through the purchase of a vehicle sticker. For more information or to purchase a sticker online, click [here](#).

Pets (dogs/cats) and vehicles are required to be registered with the Village. Pet tags can be purchased for \$10 at Village Hall and are valid from May 1 to April 30 each year. Click [here](#) to learn more.

Police Department

Free Bicycle Registration

As summer approaches, more bicyclists are taking to the streets. Biking is a great way to enjoy the outdoors, stay active, and explore new places. Whether you're a seasoned cyclist or just starting out, here are some tips to keep in mind:

It is free to register your bicycle with the Village of River Forest. This allows the River Forest Police Department to keep your bicycle information on hand should it be lost or stolen. Fill out the form online [here](#) or visit the second floor Police Department counter at [Village Hall](#).

The River Forest Police Department has teamed up with River Forest Chocolates to reward bicyclists for wearing their helmets in accordance with [Village Ordinance 9-4-8](#). River Forest Police Officers will be handing out coupons for a free chocolate truffle at [River Forest Chocolates](#) to bike riders who practice safe cycling!

The River Forest Police Department has also partnered with Forest Security to offer free bike helmets to members of the community who are in need. To qualify you must live, work, or go to school in River Forest and be 18 years of age or younger.



For more information contact River Forest Crime Prevention Officer [Megan Drake](#) at 708-366-7125.

**AS ALWAYS - FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR COMMUNITY
IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING.**

Public Works

Summer Construction

Each summer, the Village works on a variety of construction projects to maintain and improve infrastructure to make River Forest a great place to live and work. Residents can expect recurring projects annually, such as street patching/resurfacing, sidewalk replacement, and sewer maintenance/repair.

The Village's Street Patching and Maintenance programs help to prolong the service life of pavement by patching defective areas or by applying preservation materials and sealing cracks. Doing this minimizes costly repairs, too. Pavement condition rating identifies roadways that need

resurfacing as part of the Street Improvement Program. Not performing regular roadway maintenance eventually results in total pavement failure and requires reconstruction, which is significantly higher in cost than resurfacing. These projects are funded in part by Motor Fuel Fund tax dollars, which are distributed by the State to municipalities based on population.

The Sewer Lining and Point Repair programs improve the sewer system and help to prevent costly repairs due to failing sewer mains. Portions of the sewer system are cleaned and televised annually. These videos help staff examine the conditions of the sewer network and determine which sections are in need of lining or partial replacement. Sewer lining is an effective way to repair damaged pipe and avoid open excavation, sidewalk destruction, or digging up trees.

The Curb and Sidewalk program consists of the removal and replacement of defective curb and sidewalk throughout the Village. The Village is divided into three regions which are surveyed by region on a three-year cycle. Repairing damaged sidewalks is vital to keeping walking in the Village safer, more convenient, and more enjoyable for people of all ages and abilities. Click [here](#) for more information about the Curb and Sidewalk Replacement Program.

Visit the Village's construction page [here](#) for more details on these capital projects and project updates.

Fire Department

The "101 CRITICAL DAYS of SUMMER SAFETY"

From the Memorial Day weekend through the Labor Day holiday, we enjoy all types of warm-weather events, but summer is also a critical time for injuries. More mishaps occur during these 101 days than during the rest of the year. The Village and the Fire Department would like to wish everyone a happy and safe summer season.

Summertime Safety Tips

- Before going on vacation, or when the summer temperatures really start to heat up, it's a good idea to have your vehicle checked by an automotive service professional.
- Check hoses, belts, radiator fluid and the oil. Also check wiper blades, air pressure in the tires, tire tread wear, brake lights and turn signals.
- Make sure you know where to find your jack and spare tire and know how to use them in case you find yourself with a flat tire.
- Barbequing is another summer activity that requires precautionary measures. Barbecue and grill mishaps result in more than 4,500 fires and 500 injuries each year; don't let a fun activity like outdoor cooking be spoiled by a needless injury.
- Gas and charcoal grills should only be used outdoors. If used indoors or inside a tent, they pose both a fire hazard and the risk of exposure to toxic gas.
- Place the grill in an open area and out of pedestrian traffic. Establish a three-foot safe zone around the grill and make sure children understand they are not to enter this zone.



Juneteenth Events

Upcoming Juneteenth Events

Join the Village and the River Forest Public Library for The **Juneteenth Flag Raising Ceremony** Monday, June 17, from 11 a.m. until noon at the River Forest Public Library. This event commemorates the date in 1865 when General Order #3 proclaimed the freedom of enslaved people in Texas. After the ceremony, refreshments will be served until 12:30 p.m.

For those looking to commemorate the holiday early, **Dominican University** is hosting a free family BBQ Thursday, June 13, from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., along with a lecture from Dr. Danielle Walker, who has been awarded the NAACP Chairman's Image Award for her activism. An RSVP is required for the BBQ and/or the lecture separately. Please RSVP by clicking [here](#).

JUNETEENTH

RIVER FOREST FLAG RAISING CEREMONY

MONDAY, JUNE 17

PROGRAM: 11 AM-12 PM

AT RIVER FOREST PUBLIC LIBRARY
735 LATHROP AVE., RIVER FOREST

JUNETEENTH
TRAVELING
MUSEUM

AFRIWARE
BOOKS

REFRESHMENTS
SERVED AFTER
THE PROGRAM

ALL ARE
WELCOME

TELL A
NEIGHBOR!



RIVER FOREST PUBLIC
LIBRARY

A federal and state holiday commemorating the date in 1865 when General Order #3 proclaimed the freedom of the enslaved people in Texas.

Sustainability



Savings Through Community Solar

This past month, the Village Board approved a contract for the Village's water pumping station and street lighting electricity accounts to be included as part of a new community solar project. This will result in annual savings of more than \$8,000 in electricity costs for these Village electricity accounts.

Community Solar is a program that supplies its customers with solar-generated electricity without requiring installation of equipment. In Community Solar programs, solar providers build the solar farms and provide the electricity to your electricity delivery service, Commonwealth Edison. Organizations and individuals then subscribe to the solar farm and, each month, subscribers receive credits through their ComEd bill equal to the amount of electricity their portion of the solar farm generated that month. Savings may vary month to month, with the amount of sunlight being the biggest factor. But the community solar provider only bills you for 90% of the cost of generation on the solar farm, meaning you keep 10% of the savings for yourself.

Residents can sign up for a community solar program and see these same savings on their own electricity bill. More information on the program can be found [here](#). This program allows all residents to access solar power without any onsite installation or fees. Please note, there is usually a waiting period to be activated; so please be on the lookout for a subscription offer, even if it's months after you sign up. That allocation is calculated based on your electricity usage at the time you sign up for the program. Variations in your monthly solar savings occur because the sun isn't always shining and making power.

Organizations Serving River Forest



Township

To learn more about Township programs and services, click [here](#), visit the River Forest [Community Calendar](#), or email [Supervisor John Becvar](#).

Announcing New Township Supervisor and Clerk

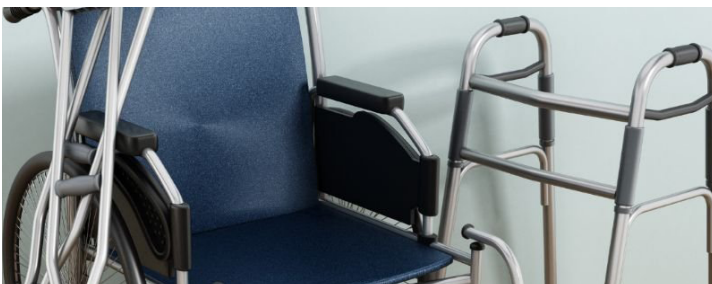
The River Forest Township Board of Trustees unanimously voted to appoint **John Becvar** as the new Township Supervisor and **Margaret Mary Detmer** as the new Township Clerk, effective as of May 21. Both will fill out the remainder of their respective terms until May 2025 and plan to run in the April 1, 2025, consolidated general election. Learn more about the Township Organization [here](#).



New Supervisor John Becvar (Left) and Former Supervisor Carla Sloan

Medical Equipment Lending

Did you know that River Forest Township loans out medical equipment such as wheelchairs, canes, walkers, bedside commodes and shower chairs free of charge, for as long as the equipment is needed? They also encourage donations of gently used medical equipment at [Oak Park Township](#) during business hours. Learn more [here](#).



Township Budget Hearing

The River Forest Township Board of Trustees will vote on the FY25 Budget (April 2024-March 2025) during the Township Board meeting on June 18 at 6 p.m. at their office. See the proposed budget [here](#).

Second Installment Tax Bills

Second installment tax bills are expected to be out this summer with a due date 30 days after mailing. They will also be available to view and pay online. Second installment property tax bills reflect the 2023 reassessment, as well as exemptions. For more specific information check the Cook County Treasurer's [website](#).

riverforesttownship.org - 708-366-2029 x11

Park District

Party in the Park

On Thursday, June 20th bring your picnic blanket and lawn chair and listen to a concert from The Charles & Company show consists of dance music from Motown, Classic Rock, Swing, Blues, Reggae, and the 50's. The Charles & Company Band is much more than a band of musicians, they are first and foremost entertainers. Entertainers that get the audience to let go, dance, laugh, and have fun!



rfparks.com | 708-366-6660

Library

Visit the [calendar](#) to see everything happening at the Library. There are events and activities for all ages. Below are some highlights:

[Read about the summer Community Art Project!](#)

Saturday, 6/15, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.: Pet Adoption Event with Magnificent Mutts, All ages.

The Library is once again partnering with [Magnificent Mutts Rescue](#) in Hillside to bring an array of furry, adoptable friends to the Library lawn! Help a rescued animal find its forever home. In case of rain, the pups will be moved into the [Barbara Hall Meeting Room](#).

Thursday, 6/20, Noon-5:30 p.m.: Community Blood Drive, Adult

The Library is partnering with Vitalant Blood Donation to host a community blood drive. If you are able, please consider donating blood. Stop by the [Meeting Room](#) anytime between noon and 5:30 p.m. to donate. [Registration is encouraged](#) but walk-ins are welcome.

Friday, 6/21, 10-10:45 a.m.: Tall Tales and Silly Songs with Todd Downing,

Dance, sing, and enjoy some bubbles with performer Todd Downing! For families. [Registration required](#).



Saturday, 6/22, 2-3:30 p.m.: Lucy! An Original Solo Musical Based on the Life of Lucille Ball, Adult

Performer Jillann Gabrielle traces the life of Lucille Ball, America's most beloved comedienne, from her shaky family beginnings in upstate New York, through Broadway, and then to Hollywood. She will also feature the time when Lucille met and married Desi Arnaz, their volatile but passionate marriage, her reign as Queen of the B movies, and finally her zenith as the Lucy character on television. This musical is brought to you in partnership with the River Forest Township.



riverforestlibrary.org | 708-366-5205

Organizations Serving River Forest



Oak Park and River Forest
High School



Roosevelt
Middle School



Willard
Elementary School



Lincoln
Elementary School

District 90

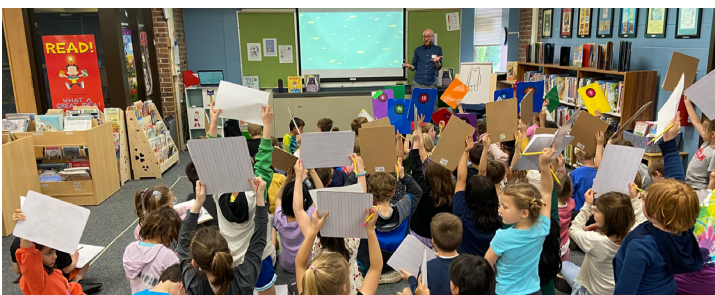
District 90 Students Making a Difference



Roosevelt Middle School students in the Sustainability Club helped plant two trees on Oak Street in partnership with the Village of River Forest this spring. They learned about the importance of caring for trees, and contributed to supporting the health of the Village's tree canopy.



Willard Elementary School held the 36th annual "Big Hearts, Little Hands" event honoring senior citizens in River Forest this spring. Every student played a role honoring guests with music, tea, treats, artwork, and flowers.



Lincoln Elementary School students learned about writing stories with visiting children's author, Jacob Grant, during a special library class this spring. After the author showed them how to draw storybook characters, the first-graders were excited to show him their sketches.

district90.org | 708-771-8282

District 200

Geothermal Initiative Helps Meet Sustainability Goals

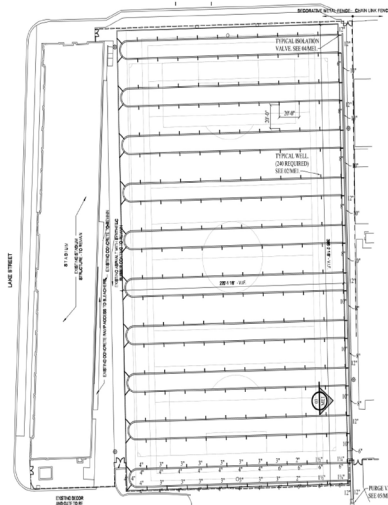
When it comes to reducing the carbon footprint of Oak Park River Forest (OPRF) High School's vintage, million-square-foot building, the District's Sustainability Policy has set ambitious goals. One of the most notable is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 45% of 2012 levels by 2030 and 100% by 2050.

This fall, the school will make significant strides toward achieving that goal when it installs a geothermal system under the football field, harnessing heat from the Earth's core to provide a renewable source of energy. The new geothermal system will provide 100% of the heating and cooling for the new Physical Education (PE) facilities being built at the southeast corner of the building, known as Project 2, which will be completed in summer 2026.

The 270 geothermal wells to be installed under the turf will contain 500-foot lengths of piping filled with fluid. Electric pumps will send the fluid in and out of the PE wing, moving heat energy from the building into the ground during the summer and pulling heat from the ground into the building during the winter.

An analysis comparing the geothermal system to a more traditional boiler-and-chiller system found that geothermal will save the district roughly \$385,000 per year while reducing CO2 emissions by an amount equivalent to driving an average passenger car 504,984 miles.

The total cost of the geothermal project is \$26.3 million, but with federal tax incentives estimated at \$8.9 million, the net cost will be \$17 million, paid for with a combination of cash reserves, grants, and potential state funding.



01 GEOTHERMAL WELL SITE PLAN



oprfs.org | 708-383-0700

Memorial Day In Photos

Memorial Day 2024



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River Forest Events



Village Contact Information

Village Administration
708-714-3563

Village Administrator
Matt Walsh

Finance Department
708-714-3524

Director Rosemary McAdams

Fire Department
708-714-3560
Chief Tom Gaertner

Public Works and
Development Services
708-714-3551
Director Jack Bielak

Police Department
708-714-3540
Chief James O'Shea

Emergency
Services
Dial 911

400 Park Avenue River Forest, IL 60305
708-366-8500
708-366-3702 (fax)
Monday 8 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Tuesday- Friday 8a.m. – 4:30 p.m.