



**JASCULCA TERMAN**  
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

**River Forest Community Dialogues – 9.11.24 – 7700 Block of Madison**  
**Notes from Resident Comments**

**Who was in attendance?**

- 5 residents
- Matt Walsh (Village Administrator)
- James Chase & Nell DeCoursey Brennan (Jasculca Terman Strategic Communications)

**River Forest General**

- Appeal of River Forest:
  - Connected, close-knit community.
  - “Small town feel.” People know each other.
  - “Charming”
  - Quiet
  - Lots of greenery
- Guests express that small town feel is changing.
  - Some parts of River Forest not as quiet.
  - Some parts of River Forest feel more like the surrounding villages.
  - Traffic has increased.
- River Forest needs to bring in younger families. For a healthy future community, the Village needs to attract the next generation of longtime River Forest residents.
  - There is very little housing currently on the market in River Forest. Especially housing that is affordable to young families.
    - Note: Guests clarified that “family” housing is inclusive of housing geared toward young couples without children.
- Parking is a concern throughout the village. Not just near Madison St.
  - Even so, proximity to Madison St. makes parking issue more acute than in some other parts of Village.
  - Small businesses without their own parking rely on customers having access to nearby street parking. This has already become a struggle in some areas, including near Madison St.
- Strong desire for more restaurants and other amenities, so residents can go out in River Forest. Guests express that they usually must travel to nearby villages for shopping, dining and entertainment. They would like more options within River Forest.
  - Travel distance is one consideration, but guests also like to support local businesses in their own community whenever possible.
- Guests prompted discussion of River Forest’s comparatively higher property taxes:

- Guests fully understood property taxes would be high when they moved to River Forest. Understood it was a trade-off for good Village services and quality schools. So, while nobody likes to see taxes rise, they always knew this was “part of the deal.”
- Guests also see paying higher property taxes as an investment in maintaining the character of the community.
  - A guest expressed that higher taxes are part of the price one pays so the community “stays like it is.”
  - In discussing goals for development in the Village, guests assigned low priority to lessening property taxes. They have heard and understand arguments for development that expands the tax base. However, they say they are comfortable paying higher taxes to avoid development that “changes the character” of the area.
- Some discomfort from guests living in a TIF that property tax increases are going to TIF fund instead of schools.

### **Concerns re: Madison Street and Empty Lot**

- Living close to Madison St. is a “double-edged sword.” Nice to be close to retail, but also have to deal with noise, traffic, safety issues.
- Noise carries across Madison St. from Forest Park side.
  - Prior building on lot acted as a sound barrier. Noise is much higher now.
    - Nearby residents want the Village to take sound absorption into account when considering development proposals.
  - Much of the noise comes from late-night patrons of Madison St. businesses on the Forest Park side.
- Near-term asks for the Village to undertake with Madison St. lot, while empty:
  - Landscaping. Grass, bushes. Keep space better-groomed.
  - Upgrade to a nicer looking fence. Ensure fencing can keep people out of the lot—currently, people step over the fence to let their dogs run free/use it as a bathroom.
  - A recent positive: Village improvements on the lot have significantly reduced flooding.
  - Question from guest: Could River Forest Police help tamp down on late-night noise from patrons on Madison St.?

### **Future Lot Wants/Concerns**

- Guests overall express that they very much want to see the Madison St. lot developed.
- Housing:
  - Desire for resident-owned housing. Concern that renters aren’t here to stay in the community long term.
  - Good with townhomes. Good with condos. If condos, want them to be geared toward families. Opposed to studios and other condos geared toward single occupancy.

- Opposed to a “high rise” or a “big building.” 5 stories feels too tall.
  - Example given of a building that’s too big: Condos on Forest Park side of Madison St., across from the lot.
  - Example given of an acceptable building: Condos at Gale and Madison.
- Strong desire for onsite resident parking.
- Want a visually pleasant addition to the neighborhood. Attractive building. Greenery. Trees.
  - Important for housing to look/feel like River Forest. Key word to consider when reviewing development proposals: “Charming.”
- Though some neighbors are concerned about outdoor space and privacy in their own backyards/homes
- Retail:
  - High-end retail would be nice, but guests acknowledge it may not be feasible at that location due to lack of density and general problems facing brick-and-mortar retail.
  - A nicer convenience store. Already plenty 7/11-type options nearby. Would like a White Hen or something of that nature.
  - A nice restaurant. Broad appeal for families, couples, singles, etc.
    - Some recent restaurants in the area have not succeeded and may have closed even sooner if not for video gambling onsite. If restaurant is interested in space, make sure it’s geared toward the local market and has a chance to succeed.
  - Village should consider how retail customers will affect nearby parking supply.

## Other

- Idea from guests: Speak with real estate agents in the Village. They may have valuable perspective to share.
- Guests expressed a recognition that many of their wants and concerns are related to Village-wide issues or even issues stretching beyond Village boundaries. The hyperlocal issues around Madison St fit into those broader issues.
  - Related theme: Village should take a “holistic view” to development in this area. How does development fit into the Village’s larger, long-term plan? “What’s the Village’s vision?” Guests want to hear that whenever Village communicates about development and/or zoning.



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

**River Forest Community Dialogues – 9.27.24 – 100 Block of Keystone**  
**Notes from Resident Comments**

**Who was in attendance?**

- 7 residents
- Jessica Spencer (Assistant Village Administrator)
- James Chase & Nell DeCoursey Brennan (Jasculca Terman Strategic Communications)

**River Forest General**

- Appeal of River Forest
  - Walkable community, close to things
  - Nearby nature with the Forest Preserves
  - Close to city – get the space, but still have access to urban living
  - Great schools
  - Community/neighborhood
  - Homes have character, nothing cookie cutter
- River Forest is a place for the schools and quality of life, but if you want to do anything else you leave to experience (entertainment, restaurants, etc.)

**Concerns re: Madison & Ashland Property**

- Businesses on Madison don't seem to do well
  - Little foot traffic
- Whatever gets built should align with the character of the village
- Question about whether Forest Park has a say in what building goes there
- Parking needs to be a priority, no matter what kind of development happens at the property
  - Without improved parking, it will be difficult for any businesses at the property to attract customers except for those nearby in the neighborhood
- Housing
  - Priority should be ensuring that development on the property is beneficial to the community. If development is only housing, opinions were less strong about the type of housing.
  - Mixed use with first-floor retail would be important if the development is primarily housing
  - Lower height is important

- Cap on the number of floors. Specific cap varied: mentions of 2-3 stories up to 7 stories.
- The condos in Forest Park stand out too much. Condos in RF should fit in more with the feel of the village.
  - Avoid making them look like random hotels/mass condos
- Cannot lose the residential town feel
- Some community members mentioned townhomes as a viable option
- Condos over apartments

### **Future Wants/Concerns**

- What is missing in River Forest?
  - Public art
  - Local restaurants
    - Possibility for outposts from the city (Publican Quality Bread, Small Cheval)
    - Daytime options with soups/salads/sandwich
    - There are downtown Chicago restaurants that are establishing new locations in further-out suburbs. Why aren't they coming to us?
  - Local boutique
  - Coffee shops. Especially one set up for people to work during the day and providing space for events, performances, general gathering place in the evening.
  - Need to bring businesses into the community. Much of the village is taken up by residential, education, government and nonprofit.
  - Community pool
  - Activities for teens/tweens
  - A “downtown” area. Residents cited a few examples of suburbs and Chicago neighborhoods that the village should try to emulate.
    - Lincoln Square
    - Southport Corridor
    - Elmhurst on York
    - Downtown Naperville
      - New shops/buildings, but they maintained the “old vibe”
    - La Grange
    - Glen Ellyn

### **Other**

- Lake & Lathrop
  - Would be great to see a restaurant with a patio, something family-oriented
- Forest Park collaboration
  - Residents encourage collaboration on complementary economic development efforts along and near Madison St
  - Forest Park seems to be more curated in terms of businesses they attract
- Keystone Park / Public Park
  - Though operated by the Park District, people shared their interest in plans to build out this park area for the community



**JASCULCA TERMAN**  
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

**River Forest Community Dialogues – 10.3.24 – Community Center  
Notes from Resident Comments**

**Who was in attendance?**

- 13 residents
- Matt Walsh (Village Administrator)
- Rick Jasculca & Nell DeCoursey Brennan (Jasculca Terman Strategic Communications)

**River Forest General**

- Appeal of River Forest
  - Walkability / accessibility
  - Transit options
  - Still close to the city
  - Great for families
  - Leafy suburb/greenery
  - Great schools
  - Safety
- Broader concerns
  - Lots of conversations around safety
    - People's recent experience with attempted burglaries
- Distrust between Village/Community
  - People upset about the Lake & Lathrop process – red flags were ignored
    - Lost faith in decision making
  - TIF / Economic Development / Fear of Eminent Domain has also created tension
    - Community doesn't want to fight for things like this, they want to be informed
  - The people of River Forest want to make informed decisions about economic development plans/opportunities
    - Village must do a better job sharing proof of concepts, vetting of developers and specific information about opportunities, etc
  - Share updates about economic development planning more regularly
    - Consistent, regular cadence of updates in village newsletter and through more consistent engagement

**Concerns re: Madison and Ashland Property**

- Safety
  - Safety should be top priority with whatever goes there

- Process
  - Community feels left out, with information given to them last minute
  - How can it be improved?
    - Sharing full, vetted proposals with the community highlighting pros, cons, etc
    - Opportunity for virtual meetings/presentations
      - Information shared beforehand, opportunity to pre-submit questions
      - Developers Forum for community residents
    - Transparency
      - Sharing data, research, information from developers, setbacks, etc
      - Sharing the Village's vision is important
    - Important for developers to build trust with community
  - These conversations should be the beginning of a more sustained engagement process
- Parking
  - People going to locations in Forest Park have been parking in our RF neighborhoods. No matter what goes there, parking needs to be a major consideration
  - One of the bigger concerns
- Community Benefit
  - No matter what gets put there, it should benefit the community., e.g., quality retail/restaurant

### **Future Wants/Concerns**

- Commercial
  - Some feel very strongly about doing what it takes to get commercial space of any kind
  - Commercial on street level under residential
    - Though there was concern about ensuring the viability of businesses that might fill commercial space, and whether the Village has any influence over which tenants a property owner chooses to fill space.
- Medical Offices
  - Don't bring in sales taxes, but could be interesting
- Restaurant/livelihood
  - Everything west of Des Plaines stops, becomes quiet – not a lot of foot traffic
  - Understand the turnover/difficulty of restaurants, but people feel like it is missing in RF
- Residential
  - Concern about burdening the school system
  - Parking concerns here as well
  - Question about creating opportunity for more affordable housing through this spot

- Include question of public/private partnership for a rent to own opportunity
    - Even if not a partnership, something that is more affordable that could help families enter the community
  - Would not want something like the building on Forest Park side of Madison
  - Don't want a tall space with a bunch of balconies looking into neighborhoods
  - Would need to be designed to fit with the vibe of the Village
  - One resident felt that only allowing low density residential options like the townhomes further west would be a missed opportunity
- Community Space
  - Rec center with space for teenagers/younger families
    - Oak Park rec center with membership requirements referenced as an example
- Office/Condo Space
  - Owned units, professional service spaces
    - Dentist office, lawyers office, etc

## Other

- TIF / Economic Development
  - Though agreement that a TIF is valuable, there is anger from the earlier TIF process which carries over here
  - Would love this process to be more robust from the Village/openly shared
    - Do research about the impact of economic development/share report with village residents
- Traffic
  - There has been a major increase in traffic on Madison that has caused problems
- Specific Developers
  - Is there an opportunity to approach local developers, those living in RF?





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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

**River Forest Community Dialogues – 10.9.24 – 600 Block of Thatcher**  
**Notes from Resident Comments**

**Who was in attendance?**

- 15 residents
- Jessica Spencer (Assistant Village Administrator)
- James Chase & Nell DeCoursey Brennan (Jasculca Terman Strategic Communications)

**River Forest General**

- River Forest is a very walkable community
- Small town feel
- Schools were a draw for many
- Sense of safety
- Many noted high property taxes, but they still wouldn't want to live elsewhere

**Future Wants/Concerns**

- Timeline for Development
  - One resident stated that developments in Oak Park seem to be announced and completed according to a dependable timeline. They asked if Oak Park and River Forest have different approaches, policies, etc. related to development.
- Information from the Village should be communicated in a wide variety of forms to reflect differing preferences and habits of residents.
  - Opinions of the weekly newsletter were positive
  - Publicize events and other public input opportunities in Wednesday Journal
  - Public meetings should continue. Zoom could be used for development-related presentations to reach more residents who can't attend in-person events.
    - Presentations of development proposals should come early on. Don't wait too far down the line in the process.
- "Pre-developer communications"
  - Showcase the thought process Village leaders been going through about what kinds of development they want to attract and why
  - Communicate the pros and cons for residents to consider
  - Summarize conversations with developers, any input from consultants, marketing studies, etc.

- Village should put out a “straw man argument” for development based on what developers are willing to do within and outside of current standards/zoning. This could give residents something to react to, positively and negatively, and the Village can use that feedback.

**Concerns and Wants re: Madison and Ashland Property**

- How can we avoid what happened at Lake & Lathrop from happening on this property
  - Village should do more to ensure its approving trustworthy developers
- Commercial
  - High-end, quality restaurant(s)
  - Other residences were opposed to commercial-only development
- Housing on the Lot
  - While a few expressed being okay with condos/50 ft buildings, most of the group was against taller buildings.
  - All agreed there should be a height limit and nothing “monstrous”
    - Avoid the high-rise/city feeling
  - If condos, one resident mentioned the importance of design/architecture, adding that an appealing design may mitigate some residents’ concerns about building height or a general aversion to condo buildings. Other residents chimed in with thoughts on design:
    - Design of the roof should be in keeping with the look and feel of the houses nearby (try to avoid flat-tops that feel like the city)
    - Courtyards
    - Green space
    - Entryways designed with curb appeal in mind
    - “We just want something attractive”
  - Need for more affordable housing options in River Forest
    - Not necessarily the government definition of “affordable housing.” Rather, there’s a general need for more affordable, smaller spaces for people in their late 20s and early 30s
  - Some residents are against a condo building due to concerns it would negatively impact the residences directly next to it
  - Townhomes/rowhouses brought up as a good option
    - Homes at Franklin & Lake mentioned as an example
- Lots/houses close to the property are more impacted, including by small things that may not occur to residents who live further. Nearby residents’ concerns should be prioritized.
- Recreation center
  - Seniors, young adults, and others are missing space dedicated to recreation
- Is there an opportunity to sell the property to the Park District?
- Mixed-Use

- Opportunity to get commercial property tax revenue from business(es) on the first floor
- Others supported a recreation center on the first floor
- No matter what is developed, adequate parking should be considered
  - EV charging should also play a role
  - Busy streets with parked cars around that area currently
- Small number of residents mentioned that trying to get the best amount of tax money should be a priority

## Other

- Lake & Lathrop
  - Sense among residents that Village did not do enough due diligence to make sure trustworthy developers were selected
  - Some residents said the experience at Lake & Lathrop has caused the Village to lose credibility when it comes to development issues.
  - In discussing Lake & Lathrop, residents also brought up questions about the empty parcel across from Village Hall, which they say affects the community's perspective similarly—though to a lesser degree than Lake & Lathrop
- Some residents asked if the Village has considered polling/surveys as an option to gather opinions on development
- Town Hall with all River Forest taxing bodies present so residents can hear from everyone in one space. Development affects all taxing bodies, not just the municipality.
  - One resident asked if more collaboration between taxing bodies would be helpful to the Village's efforts



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

**River Forest Community Dialogues – 10.24.24 – 100 Block of Ashland**  
**Notes from Resident Comments**

**Who was in attendance?**

- 11 residents
- Matt Walsh (Village Administrator)
- James Chase & Nell DeCoursey Brennan (Jasculca Terman Strategic Communications)

**River Forest General**

- What do people like?
  - RF is close to the city and transit
  - Feels suburban, but still urban
  - Quiet and peaceful, walkable communities
  - Safe community
  - Beauty of RF, great outdoor space
  - School system
  - Progressive community, culturally diverse
- What is missing in RF?
  - Vibrant downtown, like Forest Park and Oak Park
    - How can we stimulate what already exists?
  - Public Park facilities – have to travel to other villages for that, for example a swimming pool
    - Sports spots for kids
    -

**Concerns and Wants Re: Madison & Ashland**

- Community Benefit – put something in that helps community, rather than only an economic boost
  - Recreation Center—current Community Center is outdated and lacks many modern amenities
  - Pool
  - Community garden / green space
- Mixed-Used Condos with commercial on the bottom was supported by some voices
  - Some feel that expensive condos on that corner would not be purchased – there is nothing to look at or spend money on around there
- Townhouses
  - Some feel that they don't generate enough taxes, but there was support for this over condos/apartments
  - Helps control the traffic a little bit

- Could bring families in who will commit to the Village, potentially buy a home down the line
- Housing, General
  - Fear about space in schools and growing population, though many participants understand limited housing available for those interested in moving here
  - Opportunity for more affordable options (not Govt. definition affordable but compared to the area)
  - Concern about the impact it would have on the plots right next to it
- Restaurants / Commercial
  - There have been lots of turnover in the area – concern about putting something in and demand not being present
    - Questions about data that would push towards an understanding of why certain businesses succeed and prosper, while others fail
- Already existing stores around Madison feel random – area should be developed more strategically and stimulate what already exists
- Parking/Traffic
  - Parking and controlling the traffic is one of the biggest concerns when thinking about what gets developed there
  - Must do something to limit congestion/worsening of this problem
  - People are not following the rules it seems when driving around here
  - One voice mentioned opportunity for parking structure to be developed
- Aesthetics
  - Whatever gets built needs to align with the aesthetics of the community – i.e. big, tall high-rises don't fit in with the feeling of River Forest

#### Other

- Lake & Lathrop
  - This space makes more sense for a condo development, the problem with it was the current developer
  - Higher-end condos
- Communication moving forward
  - Important for more meetings like these moving forward
  - Transparency from interest/what is going on the developer's end
    - Feeling they can talk all they want, but what a developer wants is what matters – community wants to see developer plans and input
- Traffic/Speeding Around the Village
  - Major area of concern from all community members
  - Lots of accidents and speeding recently
  - South RF have to cross two big, busy streets for school, and it has only become worse over time
- Empty homes around RF
  - Fallen into disarray, not being repaired

- There should be an opportunity to turn these over/make them something affordable



**JASCULCA TERMAN**  
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

**River Forest Community Dialogues – 11.19.24 – 1400 Block of Clinton**  
**Notes from Resident Comments**

**Who was in attendance?**

- 9 residents
- Matt Walsh (Village Administrator)
- James Chase & Nell DeCoursey Brennan (Jasculca Terman Strategic Communications)

**Overall River Forest Comments**

- Appeal of River Forest
  - A small, walkable community.
  - River Forest isn't a "cookie-cutter suburb"
  - The Chicago area's "best kept secret"
  - Proximity to the city and access to public transportation systems
  - School system is strong. Also has "some ethnic diversity."
  - Families stay in the community for a long time
- Concerns
  - Traffic and speeding are major concerns. Residents believe there is a lack of enforcement of speed limits
  - Multiple attendees expressed that there has been an increase in crime that is not being reported to the public fully or in a timely manner
  - Taxes are higher than in other communities
    - Limited tax base. Lots of the Village taken up by universities, churches, schools. Need for more businesses.
  - Limited parking in some areas.
- Village and Community Communication
  - Multiple residents said they have had negative experiences speaking at public meetings and they said that, in some cases, summaries/notes from these meetings do not accurately reflect their comments (one resident said comments have been "whitewashed")
  - Multiple residents also expressed that many of the comments they made during this 11/19 community dialogue had been given to the Village previously in other settings. These residents are seeking some form of affirmative response, action, acknowledgement, etc. so they can be confident they are being heard
  - Many residents said the Village should slow down when it comes to making major decisions

- The Village has not been transparent recently – and to rebuild trust with the community, transparency is an important step
- Ample notices must be given about meetings through a variety of means. Ideally more than one round of notices.
- Overall, communication between residents and the Village was a major theme of this community dialogue. The conversation turned from development issues to communication issues several times.

### **Concerns & Wants re: Madison & Ashland**

- Residents had questions about why the Village purchased these plots
- What could go there that would benefit the entire community?
  - Recreation center (public or private) – something other communities have that we don't
- New Businesses
  - Missing things like restaurants, diners, casual hot dog or ice cream joints, shopping, cafés, gyms/yoga studio. People go elsewhere for that
  - One resident expressed dismay at the number of empty storefronts in River Forest.
  - Can River Forest learn why some businesses do not want to come to River Forest or why businesses have left? Suggestion from residents for the Village to have conversations with business-owners that choose other communities or business-owners that leave—an “exit interview.” Sometimes businesses leave for reasons related to a community or to municipal governance, but sometimes it's completely unrelated (e.g., landlord issues).
    - Example: CorePower leaving
  - How can River Forest support small business owners in the community?
    - A local business-owner in attendance expressed frustration with Village's permit requirements, fees, and similar issues. They found it particularly difficult to open their business.
    - One resident pointed to invest incentives and investments made available by other municipalities, and stated that River Forest appears to lack those
    - Can the Village get data about what residents would be interested in to share with potential businessowners?
  - When the Village evaluates commercial development opportunities, it needs to consider any new business's impact on traffic and parking, as well as the business's clientele.
- Residents at this dialogue were more opposed in general to new housing at Madison & Ashland and Village-wide.
  - There were questions about whether the Village has looked into a population limit that can be supported, given River Forest's small geographic size
  - No big buildings “like in Oak Park.” They don't fit with the community and cannot be maintained/supported.



- Fears expressed that the Village cannot support an increase in population from “big apartment complexes”
  - While more housing means more property tax revenue, it comes with the trade-off of more residents using schools and municipal infrastructure. Some residents preferred commercial development because it expands the tax base without this trade-off.

### **Development in River Forest**

- The Village should more actively communicate when there are new development proposals, proposed zoning changes, public meetings, etc.
  - Information should be – at the very least – in the Wednesday Journal, on the Village website, and in weekly newsletters. Overcommunicate.
  - More frequent communication. Communication given with more notice
  - Use postal mail for important news and announcements
  - Don’t make people “work hard” to inform themselves and provide input
  - Some residents feel there is a sense of “secrecy.”
    - Note: We listed all of ways we are aware of that the Village communicates on these issues. Most residents expressed that this is not enough.
- One resident said it can be difficult to navigate the Village website when searching for these kinds of announcements.
- One resident referenced a series of meetings the Village held with prominent River Forest institutions at some point pre-COVID. These meetings were intended to discuss current issues of significance, including development. The resident suggested the Village bring this idea back in some form and also make the meeting open to the public.
- Questions about the Village’s “overall plan”
  - Many residents felt that a Comprehensive Plan developed before the COVID pandemic is likely out of date at this point.
    - Are there opportunities to review the Comprehensive Plan more frequently or develop additional plans apart from this specific document?
    - Can the Village conduct market analysis/research that can support development plans either on Madison & Ashland or elsewhere
- Many residents wanted to hear what developers are telling the Village about their needs, and what the Village is telling developers to attract them
- Multiple residents expressed that it’s problematic for “a minority to determine the outcome for the majority” in the village. They cautioned against deferring too much to “NIMBYs.”
- Most residents expressed interest in development providing things the whole community can use, as opposed to development that is strictly residential. “Something people can get excited about.”
- One resident in attendance tried to explain the strong feelings felt by many in River Forest about development: There is a sense that River Forest community is a “fragile oasis” that is very different from the villages surrounding it. People live in River Forest because of its unique character. When they look at much of the newer development in

surrounding communities, it reinforces the notion that River Forest's character would be very easy to lose without careful decision-making.

- Lake & Lathrop
  - Residents had many questions about the future of this property and how to move forward – who plays a role, what power does the Village have, etc.
  - Village needs to show the lessons learned at Lake & Lathrop and show how another experience like that will be avoided in the future
  - This experience has led to “mistrust” of the Village on development issues.
  - One resident said that the appearance of “wasted money” makes people less willing to accept Village arguments about expanding the tax base
  - During the Lake & Lathrop conversation, one resident also mentioned the difficulty of developing a property at Park & Lake



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

**River Forest Community Dialogues – 11.21.24 – on Franklin, half block north of Madison  
Notes from Resident Comments**

**Who was in attendance?**

- 5 residents
- Matt Walsh (Village Administrator)
- Rick Jasculca & Nell DeCoursey Brennan (Jasculca Terman Strategic Communications)

**General River Forest**

- Residents love the walkability and community in RF area
  - People care for their spaces, neighbors, etc
  - Love that the neighborhood they are in feels diverse, urban, fun
- Traffic
  - Major concern, lots of speed around Franklin
  - Traffic planning needs to be a major focus, especially with increase in accidents

**Development**

- Residents' feelings about development and process are that the Village is better about knocking down things than they are at building things – there seems to be no plan afterwards
  - Some residents feel like RF's long-term development plan might be too outdated
- There needs to be more input from the voices of those around the development who might be more impacted
  - One resident mentioned weighing these voices differently
- It would be great for residents to hear from the actual developers
  - Residents also have questions about what developers are interested in, etc – hearing from them directly is a solution to that
- Beyond hearing from developers, one resident mentioned bringing in an unbiased expert who could help evaluate pros and cons
- Many feel that yes it would be great to have new restaurants or shopping, but it isn't their highest priority and fearful of turnover
  - Most overarching opinion is that whatever goes there should be beneficial for the community and can last
- Madison & Ashland
  - Most of the residents do not feel as strongly about what exactly goes there.

- Lots of comments about doing things with no plan after it being torn down –needs to be a clear plan for development BEFORE tearing down
    - Whatever goes in should fit into the character of the community
  - Filling the space
    - Some mention a dog park to fill the space on an interim basis, something that residents can use until a development is approved and ready to proceed. “Why leave it vacant?”
    - Soccer park was another mentioned filler for the interim
  - Condos / Apt
    - When brought up, residents weren’t entirely against condos, but feel it is important that they align with RF community character if needed
      - Concerns about parking issues in that area
      - Potential for a restaurant on the first floor
    - A couple residents were more against smaller apartments, as that option doesn’t feel like it’ll attract residents for the long-term
  - Parking
    - Can’t be too congested – response to the parking issues in the neighborhood
- Lake & Lathrop
  - The residents are still upset by this process
    - Things like Annie’s, that generated revenue, were taken down and now we are stuck with a concrete mess for the immediate future
  - Most people don’t feel strongly about what exactly goes in that place
    - Some feelings the original plans do not seem realistic
- General Development
  - Is there an opportunity for a happy medium between luxury condos and tiny apartments (people who want to stay in the village, but downsize)
  - Idea to create housing that helps with a transition between phases (not senior living or assisted living)

## Other

- Communication
  - Resident ideas for communicating proposal ideas included sharing proposals in an email and asking for community feedback
  - These community conversations feel like a great first step – needs to continue
  - Notifications of events, conversations, announcements need to be a combination of everything – advanced notice, newsletter, website, etc.
    - Attendees did mention that there is more information going outbound than there used to be, but a multifaceted approach is the best way to reach everyone who might not be as tuned in

- Residents feel that the Village has very different constituencies. In different parts of the community– and there can be lack of understanding from each area about what happens elsewhere
  - One resident feels like this divide can lead to RF spending more on specific, unnecessary things that feel “fancier”
- Residents in this conversation felt that those who might be making decisions don’t represent the typical resident
  - Residents feel more community should be involved
  - Asked about opportunities to create councils or groups of residents who could provide input on the future of RF – a planning committee of sorts
    - Offer creativity to the residents
- Some residents mentioned that collaborating with Village neighbors to plan and execute things in the future might be more helpful
- Community Center
  - Building is rundown
  - Lots of parking issues around this building
  - Lots of activities are serving the greater community, but not necessarily RF – how can we create something that gives RF residents what they want?