

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE JOINT REVIEW BOARD
NORTH AVENUE TIF DISTRICT
MEETING MINUTES
May 31, 2018**

A meeting of the Village of River Forest Joint Review Board –North Avenue TIF District was held on Thursday, May 31, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room of Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue, River Forest, IL.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Eric Palm at 6:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL OF JOINT REVIEW BOARD MEMBERS

Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Eric Palm, Village of River Forest, Carla Sloan, River Forest Township, Jim Reynolds, Triton Community College District 504, Ed Condon, River Forest Public School District 90, Tod Altenburg, OPRF Consolidated High School District 200, Mike Sletten, River Forest Park District, Public Member Karen Santelli

Absent: County of Cook

Also Present: Village Attorney Lance Malina, Robert (Bob) Rychlicki from Kane McKenna Associates

3. APPOINTMENT OF PUBLIC MEMBER

MOTION by River Forest Public School District 90 (Dr. Ed Condon), to appoint Karen Santelli of 1531 Forest as the public member of the Joint Review Board. Seconded by OPRF Consolidated High School District 200 (Tod Altenburg). MOTION PASSES on Voice Vote.

4. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON

MOTION by School District 90 (Dr. Condon) to appoint Mr. Palm as Chairperson of the Joint Review Board. Seconded by River Forest Park District (Mike Sletten). MOTION PASSES on Voice Vote.

5. OVERVIEW OF JOINT REVIEW BOARD DUTIES

Village Attorney Lance Malina provided an overview of the statutory duties of the Joint Review Board. Copies of the three draft ordinances were disseminated to the members of the Joint Review Board.

6. OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREA FOR THE NORTH AVENUE TAX INCREMENT FINANCING DISTRICT, ALONG WITH THE ELIGIBILITY REPORT, HOUSING IMPACT STUDY AND THE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN AND PROJECT

Mr. Palm invited Robert (Bob) Rychlicki from Kane McKenna to provide a brief overview of the North Avenue TIF Eligibility Report, Housing Impact Study, and the Redevelopment Plan and Project. Mr. Palm stated that he is going to forego any discussion on how TIF works, however once Mr. Rychlicki finishes, if anyone has any questions, they will be answered. Mr. Palm continued, explaining that as there was a very similar discussion regarding the Madison Street TIF a couple of years ago, he felt it would be best to focus on the qualifications of North Avenue.

Mr. Rychlicki explained the criteria that were identified to qualify the plan area as a TIF District including: conservation area, contiguous area, potential for redevelopment and improvement to tax base, obsolescence, deterioration, excessive land coverage, deleterious layout, lagging/declining EAV. Mr. Rychlicki explained the additional elements of the TIF plan as well as the next steps in the process.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Palm invited those who wished to speak to approach the podium.

Gayle Faulkner - 7911 North Avenue - Ms. Faulkner stated that she would be affected by the proposed North Avenue TIF, and that she and some of her neighbors have met to discuss their concerns regarding the TIF. Ms. Faulkner shared that she is especially sensitive to how senior citizens and families with school aged children will be affected. She related hearing at a previous TIF meeting that during the Lake Street TIF years ago, residents of an existing condo had been relocated to a newly built condo building just down the street, and that the message communicated was that these residents were more than fairly compensated for signing over deeds, in that the new building included underground parking and in-unit washers and dryers. However, Ms. Faulkner expressed concern wondering if the new building and additional amenities might result in an increase in property taxes, and be unaffordable for those on a fixed income or those with lower incomes and young children. She is concerned that families who currently reside in River Forest will be able to afford to stay in River Forest. Ms. Faulkner communicated that families appreciate the safety of River Forest, along with the excellent schools, and the general environment. She is concerned that there won't be enough affordable housing especially if real estate and impact taxes are increased.

Erika Bachner - 7208 LeMoyne - Ms. Bachner expressed that although she is not in the proposed TIF area, she is speaking as a concerned community member, regarding the potential impact on diversity in River Forest. She reported her feelings on the importance of racial and economic diversity, including that it prepares children for OPRF High School and the diverse population as a whole. She is requesting that some TIF funding be dedicated to redeveloping modest income communities and ensuring that any residents displaced have options to remain in River Forest in affordable housing. She emphasized the strong sense of community that many who occupy townhomes share, and to look at open space and lawns that provide safe places for kids to play.

Daniel Lauber - 7215 Oak - Mr. Lauber introduced himself as a 30-year resident of River Forest, a city planner, and an attorney. Mr. Lauber reported that he has been dealing with the issue of affordable housing since the 1970s. Mr. Lauber stated that River Forest housing caters largely to the financially well off, while affordable housing for those with modest incomes is in very short supply.

Mr. Lauber emphasized the importance of housing that would be affordable for employees of the Village, school teachers, social workers, recent college graduates, and people who work for River Forest businesses, stating that they cannot afford the majority of housing available in River Forest. Mr. Lauber specifically called attention to senior citizens who have lived in River Forest for years, requesting that the Board enable them to continue living in River Forest in their retirement, by making a commitment to policies and guidelines which preserve the number of existing affordable dwellings. He also requests that if any existing affordable housing units are torn down, that the same number of affordable housing units be built before any residents are displaced, so that no one is forced to move more than once. Mr. Lauber is also requesting that the Village commit to an inclusionary housing policy within the TIF district, which states that no less than 20% of any new units built, be affordable to those with a modest income, and be kept affordable for a minimum of 99 years. Mr. Lauber stated that everyone wins when inclusionary housing is created, as the developer can receive a density bonus and thus build more units than normally permitted until zoning allowances, and of those additional units, a certain number would be affordable units, but would also include a couple of market rate units resulting in a greater profit. He further stated that all the taxing bodies benefit in an increase in tax revenue because there are more units in the development, and the properties become more valuable and generate more taxes, which hopefully reduces any pressure to increase property taxes for existing households. Mr. Lauber ended his comments by asking the Board to make a recommendation of the proposals outlined to the Village Board of Trustees.

Dwayne and Erica Jones – 1546 Forest – Mr. and Mrs. Jones were not present when called.

Jan Brent – 1533 William – Ms. Brent stated that she lives in a 16-unit condominium building that is deteriorating. She continued, explaining that repairs on the building are expensive which results in extra assessments for the owners which are happening more and more frequently. She stated that the building is populated by owners, renters, and some people who utilize Section 8. Ms. Brent believes that because of the poor condition of the building, some people who might qualify for government housing assistance, are not able to utilize it to purchase a condo in the building, because the building is in such disrepair. Ms. Brent feels the best outcome for the building is for it to be sold with the individual owners of each unit being paid and then being able to decide if they wish to relocate in another part of River Forest.

Eric Palm thanked everyone for their comments and stated that he appreciated the feedback. He then reminded everyone that procedurally, the Joint Review Board reviews the qualifications of the proposed TIF and then makes a recommendation to the Village Board. He continued, that the Village Board is the final decision maker for policy regarding where any TIF money is spent, and that the public hearing for that, including comment to the Village Board of Trustees is Monday, July 9th at 7:00 pm.

Mr. Palm stated that the comment about a partnership between the residents and the TIF is a good one, and is a theme that has grown out of discussions regarding affordable housing, and that the Village is taking it very seriously.

Mr. Palm concluded this remarks by stating that the TIF is the financing component to this, and that once it is approved, there will be additional conversations in terms of strategy and how to accomplish the goals. Mr. Palm stated that implementing TIFs can take many years, and asked for patience.

8. JOINT REVIEW BOARD QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

Triton College (Jim Reynolds) stated that he didn't have any questions, and thanked everyone for attending to voice their concerns. He clarified that the purpose of the JRB is not to make a recommendation based on people's concerns, but rather to make a recommendation based if the Village has done its duty to prove that the criteria have been met, and to provide oversight for the length of the TIF. Mr. Reynolds further commented that the TIF affects all the taxing bodies present including Triton College as the Tax Increment will be going for the North Avenue project, and not to Triton College. Attorney Lance Malina confirmed Mr. Reynolds understanding of the responsibilities of the Joint Review Board is correct.

River Forest Township (Carla Sloan) thanked everyone for their comments and stated that the Township is always mindful of the senior population and their ability to continue to live in River Forest, and the importance of affordable housing.

Public Member Karen Santelli, stated that her son grew up in River Forest, and that her family has been here twenty-five years and have enjoyed the many parks and community atmosphere, and that all the comments made tonight are considered and respected. Ms. Santelli stated that there will be some give and take, but she believes this is a win/win situation for all involved and that everyone's voices will be heard.

Park District (Mike Sletten) requested clarification that the setup of this TIF is the same as the Madison Street TIF regarding eminent domain, and Mr. Palm confirmed that it is.

School District 90 (Ed Condon) stated that he didn't have any questions and concurs with the other JRF members in appreciation for the community input. Mr. Condon commented that the strength of the River Forest community is impressive and a real asset. Mr. Palm agreed.

District 200 (Tod Altenburg) requested a continuation to a later date as he and Superintendent Pruitt-Adams need some extra time to consult the Board of Education and get their direction. He stated that their next Board meeting is June 19th and that they could provide an update that night and get direction on how District 200 should vote. Mr. Altenburg stated that if the vote is taken tonight, District 200 will have to abstain from the vote.

Mr. Palm concluded that no additional information is being sought from the Village. Mr. Palm responded to a question and stated that the Public Hearing is on July 9th, and because there is a waiting period after that, there would be no negative impact on the process if the special meeting is continued to a later date. Mr. Palm also stated that the Village did meet the compliance requirements for the distribution of the information. Mr. Palm responded to a question that the audio and draft minutes from this meeting will be available on the Village's website at least 48 hours before the next scheduled meeting.

9. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING

Motion was made by District 200 (Mr. Altenburg), and seconded by River Forest Township (Ms. Sloan) to continue the Special Meeting of the Joint Review Board to June 21, 2018 at 5:00 pm. MOTION PASSES on Voice Vote.

The next meeting of the Joint Review Board is scheduled for Thursday, June 21, 2018 at 5:00 PM.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION made by the Park District (Mr. Sletten) to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by School District 90 (Dr. Condon). MOTION PASSES on Voice Vote. The meeting adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

Eric Palm, Chairperson

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