



## VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday Nov 14, 2017 – 7:00 PM

A regular meeting of the River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, November 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm. 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 7:00pm. Present at the meeting were: Commissioner Brennan, Commissioner Moller, Commissioner Simon, Commissioner Chen, Commissioner Masella, Commissioner Cheng, Commission Crothers.

### **Public Comment.**

Maureen Huston.

Ms. Huston made comment that she appreciated the thorough work of the SC with regard to the bee ordinance proposal and the presentation to the VBOT on Monday November 13<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Huston had two items of concern:

1. The possible 500ft notification proposal
2. Certified mail requirement.

Ms. Huston, shared a Google map with the SC Board that showed the number of houses a possible beekeeper would need to notify for both 500ft and 100ft along with details of the costs.

The SC informed Ms. Huston that Commissioner Crothers would share these with the VBOT so that her concerns could be taken into consideration by the VBOT.

Ms. Huston also stated that she had sent an email to Commissioner Crothers with regard to studies on bee allergies. Commissioner Crothers noted that she did not recall receiving this.

### **Adoption of Meeting Minutes from 10/10/17**

Commissioner Crothers noted error in minutes on page 3, paragraph 4. The word "forward" was omitted. Sustainability Commission meeting minutes were approved with this amendment.

### **General**

Commissioner Simon, welcomed Commissioner Cheng to the board and Commissioner Cheng offered an introduction of herself.

### **Commissioner Reports on Meetings/Presentations:**

#### **Commissioner Simon report - Energy Subcommittee**

Commissioner Simon stated that he was receiving a high volume of information emails from the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus Energy Subcommittee and that there is a lot of information. He suggested that we need to focus or “pick a horse” for our goals as there are 17 different agencies currently working on solar.

Two meetings of interest were: Oct 30<sup>th</sup> Energy subcommittee meeting with the SolSmart communities. Two interesting speakers at this meeting, which he attended by phone: Mayor of Park Forest, John Austinberg, who spoke about the Future Energy Jobs Act and energy initiatives. Elizabeth Doris was also a speaker and talked about the National Renewable Energy Lab (Solar in your Community Initiative).

Most meaningful meeting Commissioner Simon attended was November 9<sup>th</sup>. Sponsored by IREC (Interstate Renewable Energy Council), titled: *Opening Doors to Community Solar; Insights from Cook County and other local governments*. Commissioner Simon did not yet have the Deck from the meeting, however will email it to the Commission once he receives it. Speakers: Deborah Stone, Cook County Chief Sustainability Officer, gave an overview of regulatory landscape. Brian Milburk, Energy Manager City of Minneapolis, spoke about big city projects and solar farms. Samantha Bloomer, Conservation for Will County, spoke on implementation of community commercial and residential solar. How to get solar on Park District buildings was relevant and good reference for River Forest moving forward.

#### **Commissioner Chen Report**

Commissioner Chen had a personal meeting with Gary Cuneen, (SGA, PlanItGreen) for Leadership Lab class. Gary shared information on Solar in Your Community Challenge and Sunshot Prize. Commissioner Chen shared these with Commissioner Simon for review and offered copies to other commissioners if needed. Commissioner Chen also reported on her the meeting she attended for Physicians for Social Responsibility. Commissioner Chen has also been making email contact with a group called, Environment and Human Health Incorporated (EHHI).

#### **Commissioner Moller**

Commissioner Moller attended a Leadership Lab on Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> of which she was on a panel discussion. Also continuing to work on the Housing Forward Compost Program with the Interfaith Green Network. This is work being done with PlanItGreen, Interfaith Green Network and Commissioner Moller on a personal level. Commissioner Moller also attended a Chicago Council for Foreign Affairs Lecture on Inequality and Sustainability. Spoke with George Strom with regard to the Recycle Extravaganza.

### **Commissioner Brennan**

Commissioner Brennan and Commissioner Crothers were interviewed by Cheryl Scott of Green Community Connections for PlanItGreen E-News letter article about Zero Waste as the new normal. Commissioner Crothers interviewed for Green Block Party aspect and Commissioner Brennan LemonAid Stand.

### **Commissioner Crothers**

Commissioner Crothers reported on attending the Midwest Pesticide Action Center (MPAC) Lawn and Land Forum as a panelist on Implementation and Improvement. This was a day long forum at Oakton Community College for municipalities, schools, universities, park districts and lawn care contractors. Commissioner Crothers spoke on Integrated Pest Management and chemical reduction in River Forest by way of education through the Green Block Parties and the Keep ON the Grass initiative. Panel received good ratings on relevancy and attendee satisfaction. Commissioner Crothers suggested that we pay attention to Skokie and how they handle their municipal lawn care. Lynn Liberia of the RF Park District was an attendee for the day. She was invited by the SC. Commissioner Brennan noted that offering this type of education opportunity to other board members or commissioners within our municipality is important. Commissioner Crothers noted that RF is invited to speak at such events because we are seen as a community leader in sustainability.

### **Commissioner Masella**

Commissioner Masella reported she has had two meetings with the Oak Park Art League, by way of the Oak Park Garden Club and Commissioner Brennan. This is for a project to revitalize the landscaping at the OP Art League. Commissioner Masella shared that she has some concerns about their organizational issues and mixed signals, but will continue to meet with them and monitor how and if to move forward. Commissioner Masella also attended a Wild Ones meeting. Speaker spoke about a butterfly garden at Cheney Mansion and was fantastic. There was a good turnout and she learned a lot. Commissioner Masella mentioned that she and Commissioner Crothers had met to discuss IPM for residential lawn care and that she would reach out in January to landscapers that she knows personally to discuss offering a program for local residential customers.

## **Report on Presentation of Beekeeping Ordinance to Village Board of Trustees**

Commissioner Brennan expressed that she was pleased with the presentation. Commissioner Masella commented that she believed that the presentation went well. Commissioner Crothers felt that the VBOT asked good questions, but believed that the SC should go back to the VBOT and share the concern of the 500ft notification rule. She also expressed that Trustee Gibbs suggestion to include the education page with the notification to residents was a good idea. It was agreed that once the bee ordinance is passed then Commissioners Crothers and Masella would pursue the education workshops with Dominican to formalize a program. It was also agreed that the SC would prepare bullet points/information to share with the trustees with regard to the village board ancillary suggestions from the Village Attorney's recommendation and include the information from Maureen Huston who gave public comment. John Anderson noted that he thought that the trustees seemed comfortable with adjacent property notification so the SC should share Ms. Huston additional information on this topic. It was also noted by John Anderson that many of the Attorney's issues were based on general policy decision of other ordinances in the village. John was unsure of what the trustees felt about the \$25.00 fee. It was assumed that the fee will be decided by the VBOT. The SC will also provide the village with contact information for beekeeping experts for hive inspection assistance when needed. Commissioners Crothers and Masella will prepare and send additional information to John Anderson.

## **Status of Chicken Ordinance**

On hold until further notice from John Anderson

## **Native Planting Update**

Because of weather, installation has been delayed until spring. This will actually save money as the planting can be done by Public Works. Reviewed the starting point from Lathrop and Hawthorne to Thatcher, then return on the north side. Commissioner Masella said the village will purchase plants directly from Midwest Ground Covers to save money. This topic is now removed from Agenda until the spring.

## **E-Waste and Recycle extravaganza**

Roy Strom now collecting curbside e-waste. Resident can call to collect, currently it is a soft roll out. Official roll out in Dec/Jan. Commissioner Moller participated to test it and all worked well. Cost based on what you have to collect. Example: TV is \$50. They will notify resident of the date that they will collect when the resident calls. Will review 6 months after implementation to monitor success. Commissioner Moller will email the flyer information to commission. May also include promo in water bill and will also post on the Roy Strom website and Village website. Plus hand out promo cards at the Recycle Extravaganza was suggested.

Park District contacted Commissioner Moller to host Recycle Extravaganza in conjunction with the Des Plaines River Clean up for Earth Day. It will be in the commuter lot next to PD Depot. Recycle dumpster is already at the event so this is helpful. Will be called the River Forest Earth Day Event. 8:00-10:00am DP River Clean up and 9:00am-1:00pm Recycle Extravaganza. Compost pick up all day. Date: April 21<sup>st</sup>. (Earth day is April 22<sup>nd</sup>)

Drive up/drop off rain or shine. Park District to facilitate volunteers along with Commissioner Moller, who has included her email for volunteers. Will be structured much like when RE was conducted by D90, but won't need as many volunteers. Commissioner Brennan recommended Tau Gamma from OPRF and placing the information in President Adduci's newsletter. Note: No hazardous waste or hard wired electric items.

### **Sustainability Commission Education Goals**

Commissioner Brennan shared a review of the SCG so that Commissioner Cheng could get up to speed. She then gave an overview:

- Continue Sustainability River Forest tour program with Roosevelt 8<sup>th</sup> grade class and to expand to other schools and offer a spring tour to RF public servants. Research if village residents and groups may be interested as well.
- Outreach to residents, institutions and businesses by continuing to accept speaking invitations
- Seek out partnership opportunities. The Greenest Resident Competition opportunity or highlighting green businesses.
- Sort-it-Out waste separation becomes the new normal.
- Plastic bag issue is a long-term project.

Commissioner Cheng shared interest in participating in education, but suggested a more narrow focus and baseline survey so that the commission could educate on specific topic. Commissioner Brennan agreed that this was a good idea as it would enable the ability to include metrics. Commissioner Moller suggested that Commissioner Cheng take on Education. Commissioners Brennan and Cheng will meet to discuss this further.

Commissioner Moller suggested that Commissioner Brennan be removed from specific goals committee because, as chair of the board, she oversees all committees.

- Commissioner Brennan also discussed how Sort-it-Out falls under waste and education outreach.

Commissioner Moller added the One Earth Film Festival as part of the Education goals as an educational resource and also suggested adding such information to a resource guide on the new website.

### **LED lighting conversation and Metrics, map of Village owned Properties**

John Anderson shared a map of all the properties the village owns and maintains, and identified buildings for energy efficiency improvement: Pumping Station, where the old boiler was replaced with HVAC on roof. Village applied for grant for this work. Similar improvements have been done at PW garage and village can look to doing so at Village Hall.

ComEd LED Alley Fixtures Program: ComEd is replacing old fixtures to reduce costs and wattage per month. This is a significant saving of energy and money for the village.

2015 the Village only had a few streets with LED. By 2017 there was a massive switch to LED and this resulted in substantial costs and KWH savings. Over time the costs of switching out streetlights to LED lighting will pay for itself. Example: From 2015 to 2017 there is a cost saving to the Village of over \$24K. This project was paid for by grant fund from ComEd. In addition, more power taken out of the grid assists with the old underground cable lines in RF, which also saves money. Commissioner Cheng suggested that this is an educational opportunity for residents as to what they can do in their own homes.

### **Turf Issue**

Commissioner Chen reported that she has been email corresponding with Mike Sletten, the Director of the PD. Mr Sletten has asked all PD board members to research the artificial turf. Commissioner Chen has also been reviewing the PD meetings to keep on top of this issue. She has emailed PD Trustee Cargie who has committed to keeping Commissioner Chen up to date on this issue. Latest connection Commissioner Chen has made is to Nancy Alderman who is part of the Environment and Human Health Incorporated. (scientists from Yale). She will share some of these email communications. There are also studies from Planet Science from Penn State. Science is not definitive because there are conflicts from also industry studies. There are still concerns of with Nike Turf. Commissioner Simon voiced concern that this may be out of the SC scope with regard to the health issues and a debate that has no answer. Discussion ensued and it was agreed that the SC would continue to monitor this from an environmental and health aspect and offer a White Paper to the PD, then allow them to make the decision. Discussion concluded with Commissioners Simon and Brennan assisting Commissioner Chen in reviewing her research and writing a White Paper.

### **Other Business**

Commissioner Chen discussed a question from Deborah Kadin, freelance journalist from Oak Park, "should the SC ask RF to sign onto the Paris Climate Agreement" .

PlanItGreen goals and our work already live up to the expectations.

Discussion ensued and it was agreed that we should consider this as a symbolic gesture that the SC should undertake. It was decided that the SC would reach out to Cathy Adduci to ensure that she was invited to the Chicago Climate Forum on Dec 3-5, which is being supported by the Mayor's Office and the Mayor of Paris will be in attendance. Commissioner Brennan to follow up with President Adduci.

Commissioner Crothers followed up with John Anderson with regard to the discussion at last month's SC meeting of State Chemical License protocol for lawn care providers in RF. John confirmed that RF does not request proof of this license, which is required by the State. Commissioner Crothers requested that this be addressed and rectified for permits in the village.

### **Schedule next meeting**

Tuesday Dec 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017 – 7:00pm

Commissioner Masella will not be in attendance.

Commissioner Crothers confirmed that she will be in Australia for the next meeting. It was decided that she would submit her Sustainability Goals in writing so that the commission board can continue to move forward with a goal of May 1<sup>st</sup> having a document of the SC goals submitted to the VBOT.

### **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 8.56pm.