



**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, June 5, 2018 – 7:00 PM**

A regular meeting of the River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, June 5, 2018 at 7:00 P.M. 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 7:03 PM. Present at this meeting were Commissioners Brennan, Moller, Simon Chen, and Masella. Commissioner Crothers was absent.

Public Comment

No Public Comment

Commissioner Report on Meetings

Commissioner Cheng reported that she attended PlanItGreen meeting, discussion included Community Solar, and she shared with Comm. Brennan a letter of intent from PlanItGreen asking OPRF organizations about their energy use, contracts etc. In addition, the Zero Waste group-is trying to communicate changes in recycling and presenting consistent signage. Green Community Connections reported at the meeting they are also doing Green Block Parties and working with Wild Ones, Deep Roots and Sugar Beet Schoolhouse.

Commissioner Masella reported the gardeners had their first meeting they are also planning to plant circle of flowers in the middle of the plots. Want to do some type of ribbon cutting when do the flower planting. There is room for 24 plots but 12 were cut for now. She also reported that the Streets, who were helping with the gardens, have purchased a summer home and will not participating as much with the RF gardens. One of the gardens was reserved a Girl Scout troop and another reserved by a boy and his grandmother.

Commissioner Simon provided notes in our packet regarding the MMC Environment-Energy Subcommittee meeting he attended. The challenge for all communities is the way the utility agreements are structured, the type of agreement we have is a FCA which makes solar projects have no return on solar and no incentive. MMC is working on changing the contracts to give communities incentives. Commission going to look at the 3.98% tax on our bills and energy usage by Village. Village does pay for electricity at pumping station.

Commissioner Chen volunteered at the Wild Ones Plant Sale and is preparing for the Leadership Lab graduation is this Friday, presentation at 4:15pm

Commissioner Moller reported she planted Herb Garden with Roosevelt students, which is on agenda and will report later on meeting with Trustee Corsini.

Commissioner Brennan attended Flamingo Friday, added Sort IT Out stations to Flamingo Friday web info. she attended the solar presentation as part of the Roosevelt Tour and met with Park Foundation member, Susan Charrette, regarding artificial turf.

Presentation on Waste Diversion Project by Roosevelt Students

Mr. Kadlec of Roosevelt Middle School 7th Grade Science teacher introduced Charlotte Myer and McKenzie Lovell along with teacher, Amy Rains. The students then presented their waste diversion project as part of their Green4Good student project. They were inspired by the Sustainability Commission talk at the library and concern about the environment. They conducted a waste audit at school and made presentations to all 5th grade classes and tutored students during 5th grade on what can be composted and recycled. They even had the 5th grade students make posters. Lovell and Myers also made snack taxis from cloth that they sewed. The bags were sold during Earth Week at school to replace the use of single use zip-loc bags. The students then donated their earning to the Sustainability Commission.

Photo was taken with the students, teachers, and commission.

After the presentation the commissioners thank the students for their outstanding work and commitment to the environment. They are very inspiring. The discussion followed that the money should be specifically dedicated to one thing and that the posters should be shared with the community. Commissioner Chen shared the idea that maybe we should have a junior commissioner program. Commissioner Simon commented that many schools have student environmental clubs and is happy Roosevelt has one. The commission will think about how to use the posters, make sure to thank the students and think of ways to work more with the G4G student club at the schools.

Green Block Parties

Commissioner Chen reported for Comm. Crothers that the theme is Parkway for Pollinators. Working on getting the website update. Will get an update/clarification on the process.

John Anderson reported that we ordered one more set of SortItOut stations. This makes 3 complete stations to replace the set that had one section missing. We have not ordered the 2 other stations yet, it was decided to go ahead and order 2 more sets. The Village already ordered bags.

Roosevelt Sustainability Tour

Commission Cheng reported that Anna Daly, the teacher at Roosevelt in charge of the tour put the week together and created a context for the students. Students planted the community herb garden with Julie Moller. Ellen McMamus from Dominican University was also on site to share information about beekeeping at Dominican and Mary Susan Chen brought her worms and shared information on vermicomposting.

Village Manager, Eric Palm spoke to the students at Village Hall regarding permeable pavers, LED lights, prescription drop off and rain barrels.

Eric Simon spoke to the students at his home about solar energy-explained to the students how the solar is offsetting energy use in his home. President Adduci also attended as well as Katie Brennan. They explained how commission was started and explained how “things get done” at the Village.

George Strom from Roy Strom Company spoke at the school regarding waste, recycling and compost.

Commissioner Cheng will be putting together a report with notes so that it will be easier next year to organize the tours.

Update on Community Gardens

Currently 11 beds cut, 1 bed was not cut not sure why. Requested from PD for them to cut the 12th space. Waiting to hear back. There will be several meetings over the summer so that group can have events to create community. Members will share emails to hear about events etc. Comm. Masella thinks that next

year we could come close to getting 24 gardens reserved. Comm. Masella explained that the beds are not raised garden beds, they are cut into the sod, since kids sled on the hill in the wintertime. There is a water source but no trash containers everything is carry in, carry out. It was suggested that during fall clean up that a couple of compost carts could be provided. The question was asked where does the fee money go? Money goes to Park District. Commissioner Masella also reported that the planting of natives have started at Franklin and Hawthorne.

Solar Projects

Commissioner Simon reported that our SolSmart application would be in conjunction with MMC. SolSmart status can be bronze, silver or gold designation. Our goal will be to get bronze. The idea is Sol Smart provides information for residents to install solar. To earn a designation there are certain steps you take to earn a level. Sol Smart will help us to put together a streamlined plan to get information to residents so that they know how they can get solar. We will hear back in a couple of months and it doesn't cost anything. FYI we already have a permitting process for installing solar.

Commissioner Cheng reported OP is going for gold designation.

Solar in Your Community Challenge-Commissioner Cheng also reported at PlanItGreen has been sending letters to OPRF Community Fndn, Interfaith Green Network, and RF Institutions asking them to work together to meet the 2 MW energy minimum for a grant. Interfaith was thinking that 30 congregations could get together. RF applied for Solar in Your Community through PlanItGreen but our role is unclear. No one from PlanItGreen has contacted commission on what information they need or who they are contacting. The commission thought it was important to understand the initiatives that are being undertaken. We need our own strategy to be most effective and need to know who has they contacted. Moller reported that she shared D90 information with Seven Generations. Comm. Cheng will work on getting more information from Gary Cunneen.

Artificial Turf

Commissioner Brennan met with Susan Charrette, Park District Foundation member to ask if they Park Foundation wanted to co-sponsor our turf report. Susan said that she was interested and would take it to the board, since they have been looking at the question of turn since 2014. Katie will ask Cal Davis, RF Park District board member, if we can be on June 14 meeting agenda. The commission would like to share a copy of our report and be on the agenda. Commissioner Brennan and Chen will attend next PD meeting

SC Survey

Commissioner Cheng reported that the results were low last time she checked. John Anderson will check the current numbers and we will discuss at the next meeting.

Website

Commissioner Chen presented the updates on the website. Information is now grouped under Guide to Sustainability. The menu was redone and the Green News content is updated each month after the report for the e-newsletter. Green Block parties has its own tab now. Want to include more photos to make more dynamic. Other 4 categories, relate to commission goals, open space is now landscaping, community initiatives are things that are not our programs. Thank you to Comm. Chen and to John Anderson and Village staff for helping us update site. Comm. Cheng reported that a week after our meeting she will send a web update to John Anderson so that information is only sent one time per month. The next step is for individual commissioners to look at their subject area and submit updates to Comm. Cheng. The priority this month is to get the Green Block Party information up and current.

Bike Path

The project is important to participate in but it is inactive right now. Comm. Moller will be back up for meetings if Comm. Simon cannot attend and Comm. Cheng will also make herself available.

Other Business

Mosquito Abatement-Sue will report at next meeting

Plastic Bags-Do we want to expand to straws and stir sticks asked Comm. Simon. Comm. Moller reported that she did meet with Trustee Corsini and contacted Eric Palm about the Village status of non-home rule and what that would mean for a bag fee. Turns out that a referendum would need to take place if there was any tax collected like OP, Evanston and City of Chicago (these communities are all home rule). Julie reported about non-home rule and what that means-not sure up for a referendum, Comm. Moller said commission should come up with a plan around incentives. Comm. Moller will come up with an education plan and how to reduce usage.

Healthy Lawn-moves forward

RF Touch a Truck-Sue and Mary Susan blender bike smoothies, August 15, Wednesday morning-we are paying for this, it is \$200 educational outreach...we will promote compost...etc.

Deep Roots edible garden project-Deep Roots offering 6 free Edible Gardens must be in highly visible area, apply on-line through Deep Roots. Grace Lutheran is interested, contacted Dominican and Presbyterian Church.

Rain Ready Goal Review-Proposal by Center for Neighborhood Technology gave us a proposal for Rain Ready. Commission Moller and Brennan have been working on this. The plan costs nothing, the group provides a community snapshot and provides tips for flood resiliency. A robust conversation followed by the questions from Commission Simon asking what goal does this fall under...is this already included in Village planning? Mary Susan Chen will ask John Houseal if we should use this. Beth agreed caution with the timetable; it will still require time for a quality report. Would the Village Board also need to approve the work to be done, how will they get all the information? Does board need to approve. What problem are we trying to solve. John Anderson attended a Rain Ready presentation and commented it was mostly tips for residents and we (the Village) already provide that, we are aware of these things.

It was decided we would not pursue the Rain Ready Proposal at this time.

Commissioner Brennan announced-Commissioner Chen is now our volunteer liaison and will track volunteer names and interests.

Commissioner Brennan reported she talked with Commissioner Dersk of OP and they discussed getting the 2 commissions together. The group agreed that is a good idea. Comm. Brennan will work on a date

Meeting adjourned 9:07 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Signature Line

John Anderson, Secretary

Signature Line

Kathleen Brennan, Chairman
Sustainability Commission

Date: -----