



**Village Manager's Report
Week ending May 7, 2021**

Meetings scheduled for next week:

- Monday, May 10:
 - Village Board Meeting, 7 p.m., via Zoom
- Tuesday, May 11:
 - Transportation Commission, 7 p.m., via Zoom
- Wednesday, May 12:
 - Environment & Energy Commission, 6 p.m., via Zoom
 - Farmers' Market Commission, 7:30 p.m., via Zoom
- Thursday, May 13:
 - Historic Preservation Commission, 7:30 p.m. via Zoom
- Friday, April 14:
 - No meetings scheduled

Public Works Center rain garden – Work is scheduled to begin next week on the [rain garden](#) planned for along the southwest edge of the Public Works Center. Partially funded by a [Metropolitan Water Reclamation District](#) grant, this green infrastructure project is intended to slow storm water runoff and promote soil infiltration with native plants and vegetation. A typical rain garden holds water only during and following a rainfall event, but drains quickly enough to prevent mosquito breeding.

Oak Park Avenue improvements – Oak Park Avenue between Harrison and Van Buren streets is scheduled to reopen to traffic today (Fri., May 7) with new temporary asphalt pavement and restored sidewalks. Sewer lining is set to begin next week between Garfield Street and Roosevelt Road, which will require some night work to ensure proper curing of the materials during low-flow periods. Further north, water main installation has begun between Randolph and Madison streets, and will require limiting traffic to northbound travel only during work hours. The asphalt is being restored on the 500 and 600 north blocks of Oak Park and traffic control devices should be removed soon and traffic flow returned to normal. Resurfacing Oak Park Avenue from Roosevelt Road to North Avenue will begin once all underground work is completed. The project remains on schedule to be completed in November. Construction details and schedules are posted at www.opaveanew.com.

Zoning Board of Appeals actions – The Zoning Board of Appeals held public hearings on five separate requests at its meeting this week. Two of the hearings were for special use applications and three were for variances. The ZBA voted to recommend a special use permit for a physical therapy clinic at 221 Harrison St., and, at the

applicant's request, continued until June 2 the special use application for a hand car wash and detail center at 248 Madison St. The ZBA voted in favor of variances to allow a dental clinic on the ground floor within 50 feet of a street line at 1107-1109 Westgate St., and the re-installation of an ATM in a non-financial institution at 1010 Lake St. The ZBA also voted to recommend approving variances at 1021 Wesley Ave. that would allow expanding a nonconforming use, allowing the maximum height to exceed 30 feet and to permit construction of a third floor addition with dormers. In other related ZBA business, the McDonald's restaurant at 111 Madison St. withdrew its special use application for a second drive through lane after the ZBA voted against the application on April 6.

Plan Commission updates – The Plan Commission voted this week to recommend approval of three items – a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance in the Harrison Street District, a special use permit related to the text amendment and a minor modification to a planned development on Lake Street. The Zoning Ordinance text amendment would make *Outpatient Behavioral Health* a special use in the Harrison Street Zoning District. In the companion item, the Commission supported a special use permit for an outpatient behavioral health clinic at 213 – 215 Harrison St. These two items will go to the Board for consideration in June. The Commission also voted to allow reducing the number of dwelling units from 84 to 78 for the planned development at 835 Lake St. Since the reduction was less than 10 percent, the Plan Commission has the authority to make a final decision. The reduction in units pertains only to the sixth floor and will reduce the size of the floor as depicted in the [elevations and renderings](#).

Hotel/motel tax update – First-quarter receipts from the local hotel/motel tax suggest activity is improving, as March 2021 receipts increased substantially over February and January. While the \$21,476.86 collected from January – March 2021 were below pre-pandemic levels, the \$9,997.77 collected in March 2021 was more than twice the \$4,053.18 collected in March 2020. Despite the decline in revenues from this important revenue source, the Village has continued to support the local visitors' bureau [Visit Oak Park](#) with \$12,916.66 per month, in anticipation that the hotel-motel tax eventually will rebound.

Miscellaneous construction updates – The Illinois Department of Transportation will soon begin milling the top pavement layers on North Avenue for the repaving project between Harlem and Cicero avenues, but has not yet provided a construction schedule to make corner sidewalk crossing ramps ADA compliant on Harlem Avenue from Roosevelt Road to North Avenue. ComEd is working with businesses and residents to schedule late-night, temporary power outages in the downtown business district so that critical infrastructure repairs can be completed in two vaults. Other activity downtown includes crews addressing punch-list items from the recent reconstruction project between Harlem and Euclid avenues, including repairing some bricks in the Marion Street, Forest Avenue and Oak Park Avenue intersections.

Employee news – Grant Jones is the new Forestry Superintendent in the Public Works Department. Prior to assuming the post this week, Grant, who has more than 20 years' experience in the field, was the arborist for the City of Bowling Green, Ohio. He

has a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Science from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with and a master's degree in Horticultural Science from Michigan State University. In addition to multiple forestry-related certifications, he lived in Oak Park about a decade ago and served on the Farmers' Market Commission. In other employee-related news, the Village will welcome a new Fire Marshal next week. Mark Thompson, who is set to join the Oak Park Fire Department on Monday (May 10, retired from the Northbrook Fire Department. He also worked as civilian inspector for the Skokie Fire Department.

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