

Watchung Environmental Commission

Minutes

February 23, 2015

Present: Sondra Epstein, Jean Forlano, Rob Gibbs, Pam Lewis, Karen Pennett, Don Pote, Andy & Jim Stout,

The meeting was called to order by Jean Forlano at 7:30 pm

Minutes

- November 24, 2014 approved with corrections
- January meeting was cancelled due to inclement weather

Reorganization

- Jean Forlano was nominated and voted in to return as Chairperson
- Karen Pennett was nominated and voted in to return as Secretary

Tree Report covering November 2014-January 2015

- 95 Anderson Rd, 12/16/2014, knock down, Elite builders, Remove 38 trees: 1 dead tree, 19 trees in the house box, 18 outside house box. 18 trees to be replaced: replace 16 trees at 2 ½", 2 trees at 4", only 4 replacement trees may be conifers
- Glen Eagles Drive, 12/16/2014 new house built by Elite builders then sold. The new home owner dug up the required replacement trees planted by Elite builders. The trees were to have been inspected two years after Elite builders planted them to make sure they survived. The town is holding a \$15,200 Maintenance Bond for the trees from Elite. The Borough engineer negotiated for 5 new trees in front of the house, 3 @ 2 1/2" Kucazen cherries, 2, 4" Fiestisic oak. The town is now asking for a complete tree planting plan with dates. The home owner will be required to post a new bond of \$200 for each tree relocated.
- 180 Washington Drive 12/16/2014, New home owner, issued permit to remove 5 trees and replace 2 @ 2 ½. New home owner removed more than 5 trees and dumped new top soil without permit. Homeowner said the tree service said the trees were diseased, pictures showed hollow trunks. Permit issued to remove 8 trees retroactively and replace 3 trees @ 2 ½
- 167 Stanie Brae Drive, 01/09/2015, knockdown, view lot, new house to be built by Rocker, When the house was knocked down 11 trees were removed. After inspection it was determined that replacement would be 12 trees; 8 @ 2 ½, 4 @ 4".
- 72 Will Lane 1/16/2015, knockdown, new house to be built by Fraige Construction, 10 trees to be removed, replace 2 @ 2 ½ ".
- Concern over the number of trees being removed due to old house knock downs. Rob to speak to Borough Attorney to determine if more restrictions can be made to size of house in relation to property size and increase size of replacement trees.
- As of 12/01/2014: \$8,294.05 in the tree bank. \$5,026.80 was used to plant 4 Holly's, 4 Norway Spruces, 4 Eastern White Pines, and 12 American Boxwoods, to screen the maintenance

buildings on Somerset Street. The balance is now \$3,267.25. The borough engineer notified Sondra that this was going to be done.

Planning Board

- BJ requested an extension they are still working on the request from Watchung fire officials
- Cingular wireless requested extension of temporary monopole.
- Weldon's request to extend the quarry zone. Weldon purchased the properties on the quarry side of Bonnie Burn Road and requesting rezoning for the Quarry Zone

Correspondence

- Reviewed correspondence

Miscellaneous

- **Pollinator Garden:** Karen to look into using area around the Library as a pollinator garden.
- **Farmers Market:** scheduled for September 13, 19, 20 and 27; and October 4, 11, 18 and 25. Pam will run a table on Pollinators.
- **Shred Day:** Watchung Shred day scheduled for June 13, expected location Parking lot of the Watchung Police station
- **Warren Watchung Green Fair:** Watchung Green team will partner with Warren Green Team and host Warren Watchung Green Fair on April 25, 2015
- **Thomas Fiorilla,** BSA is actively working on his Eagle Project, building bat houses to be erected near the lakes in Watchung. Rob would like Thomas to come to a Council meeting and discuss location of the bat houses. Karen to contact Thomas
- **Pam requested** the article she wrote be placed on the Web Site. It was not able to go into the town newsletter due to limited space in the newsletter.

The next regular meeting: Monday, March 23 at Borough Hall. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Karen Pennett, Secretary

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