

WATCHUNG ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

MINUTES

JUNE 27, 2016

Present: Karen Pennett, Don Pote, Jim and Andy Stout, George Sopko, Sondra Epstein
Absent: Rachel Fruncheon

Call to Order, Minutes:

The meeting was called to order at 7:33. The May minutes were discussed and approved as written.

Tree Report:

Sondy spoke to Barbara Dean, Watchung Historic Commission, and informed her that the environmental commission believes that a "cookie" from a rare Columnar maple tree recently cut down from a Valley Road property, should be inscribed and displayed for posterity.

It was agreed that the wording would read: **Columnar maple, a rare variety, grew in Watchung, cut 2014.** Don offered his van for moving the cookie to/from the great swamp for inscription.

See attachment for June's Tree Inspections.

Open Space: No report.

Planning Board:

The Planning Board reviewed one proposal to add 8 additional parking spaces at Valley View School. The additional spaces would be placed on the southern side of the current parking lot: some replacing grassy area to southern side of basketball court and some along current sign. The Engineering firm presenting the change informed the board that spaces were increased to 9. No one from the Board of Education was present. Because the Planning Board needs to review the new plan of 9 parking spaces and no one from the Board of Education was present to answer questions, the proposal was put off till the July Meeting.

Miscellaneous:

Bottle caps:

With Rachel on vacation, her report was given by Karen. In her absence, the library will monitor the bottle cap bin and empty it if necessary. Rachel also spoke with Laura Mandel, Chairwoman of the Warren Environmental Commission and Green Team, about the bottle cap program. Laura is very interested in starting it up in Warren, but first needs to find someone to manage it. She invited Rachel to come and speak to the Green Team about the bottle cap program, and also about the Pilgrim Pipeline. She will do so on Sept. 7th.

Pipe Line

Rachel attended a "Stop the Pipeline Town Hall" in Montville on July 14th. It was sponsored by the Sierra Club and CAPP (Coalition Against Pilgrim Pipeline). The public was invited to come and learn more about the pipeline. Jeff Tittel, the Director of Sierra in NJ, spoke, as did an engineer from the company that is doing the independent environmental review of the project for our coalition. We will present the detailed

information they provide to NJ DEP, who will be deciding whether or not to approve the project. Jeff Tittel said that in normal times, such a project wouldn't have a chance because NJ's regulations are too many and too onerous, but that because of our current governor, it is being considered.

New Business

Karen attended the town picnic in May. While setting up Karen insisted the recycling containers previous received from the county be distributed throughout Mobus field to be used to collect recyclables. By the end of the event, the Recycle bins were full of trash and recyclables, mostly trash. All material in the containers thrown in the trash. Karen is going to look into finding lids for the Recycle bins, lids that have holes for cans and bottles. Recycle containers will be used at future town events.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:45PM. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Monday, August 22, 2016 at Borough Hall at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Don Pote, Secretary
Watchung Environmental Commission