

TRAFFIC AND BEAUTIFICATION MINUTES

September 3, 2019

PRESENT:

Phyllis Juetter, Chair

Vonnie Mott

Mary Ann Weber

Terry DeFillips

Gail Tafaro

Linda Lauerman

Julie Schlotterbeck

Meeting opened by Phyllis Juetter 10:00 A.M.

There will be a meeting regarding new signs for Watchung entrances this evening and a vote will be taken to finalize the order. Gail presented quotes and the group discussed lettering and either matte or shiny finish. The consensus was that they thought engraved signs rather than flat signs would be more attractive but it was mentioned that at past meetings there has been discussion that engraved signs will be more maintenance. The group did like the shiny vs. matte finish. It was suggested that perhaps the main road signs could be engraved and the secondary road signs flat. The old sign will remain at Best Lake and will be refurbished. The remaining old signs will be kept for historic value.

Fall Decorations:

We talked about decorating with mum plants and flowers in pots at the Boro Hall, police department etc. We need to consider watering when adding additional decorative pots.

If the flowers already planted still look good, keep them as long as possible and replace with fall plants. Phyllis suggested that the mum plants at Spratford Park be planted in the ground but keeping them in their original containers so we can lift them out after the season. 3 on each side of the Watchung sign.

We scheduled September 30th at 10 a.m. with a rain date of October 1st to decorate for fall. We will need to purchase some mums, pumpkins and corn stalks

as well as the fall decorations already stored at the Texier House. We will decorate Boro Hall and the front of the Texier House as we have in the past. We talked about decorating for fall at Blue Star Memorial, bottom of Hillcrest Road, Police Station and DPW garage with mums. Vonnie Mott said that she would take care of Blue Star Memorial.

Terry DeFillips mentioned that the rock at the bottom of Hillcrest Road is overrun with weeds. We will need to weed when we put in the mums there.

Holiday decorations

The two lighted trees for Boro Hall are no longer usable. Lane Solon got them working last year but they only lasted a short time and went out again. It has been suggested that we purchase LED lighted trees which may last longer. Mary Ann will call the wholesale place in Cranford to see when we would be allowed to shop there for replacements. Our door wreaths are also getting very old and the ornaments on the wreaths are tired. We should also look into some new ones. Terry suggested Michaels may be a good place to look for wreaths with a 50% coupon after one purchase available. AC Moore may also be an option.

Walkability

There was a discussion about walkability around Watchung. The Watchung Lake is walkable but has some sidewalk that is tilted and may cause tripping issues. There is also blacktop by Brookdale that needs repair. A walkway around Best Lake will be on a future agenda for discussion. The walkway on Valley Road needs repair as well. Currently there is work being done on the corners of each intersection but the entire walking path needs repair as well.

There was also discussion about grant funds for future projects. It was questioned whether or not Watchung has a grant writer. Vonnie mentioned that the Garden Club is applying for a grant through the National Garden Club Association for \$1,000 which we could put to use at the Blue Star Memorial or other project. The deadline is October 15th for submission.

Somerset Street

Phyllis has secured three quotes for landscaping and tree work for Somerset Street. On the large median closest the circle, we want to have the New Jersey

red oaks relocated – 3 to Texier House and two moved to the other medians to replace dead ones. We would replace the oaks with cherry trees to be consistent with the other median next to it. We want to have Black mulch placed on all the medians to be consistent and keep down the weeds. Water bags should remain on all new trees for three years till they take root. The ends of the islands are looking better but we need to add more color in the spring. If the tree work is to be done, Mike Galbraith is suggesting that it be done this fall for best results. Each of the quotes is slightly different and quotes different work areas. Bob Burns has the quotes and is meeting with a committee this Friday September 6th to go over the quotes. We should hear further either Friday or early next week.

Spratford Park was discussed and the fence that is owned by the gas station but is very visible and in need of repair. A discussion ensued about replacing the fence, or painting it white or a dark color. We did not come to a consensus. The zoning officer was going to take a look at it to see if he could require the gas station to make repairs or replace the fence. We were not sure of the result. Need to talk to Bob Burns.

Other items:

- The flags on the lampposts could be replaced with a fall flag decoration.
- The Rescue Squad has garland and lights on the gazebo. It was questioned if the light are working and should they be removed. Not sure who to ask about this.
- We need to set four dates for meetings in 2020 and get this information to Michele DeRocco to be posted.
- Traffic and Beautification should be on the Council Agenda for Council Meetings . We currently are not listed.
- The existing library is in dire need of painting. Terry D. looked into this but the person she found did not have the proper insurance credentials. This should still be an item for discussion.
- Some areas of town have had their street signs replaced with reflective new signs. Bob Burns has indicated that when signs are in need of replacement the new reflective ones will be used. Ongoing project.
- T&B - Priority for remaining 2019: Somerset Street and Spratford Park as well as fall and holiday decorations.
- Items for 2020:
 - Best Lake

- More color and plantings around town.
- As time goes on, plant more perennials than annuals so we have less to plant each year with less cost but with more color and size considerations. Again, watering is a huge consideration.

No definite meeting has been scheduled at this time with the exception of decorating on September 30th. Meeting will be called if needed.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Ann Weber