

**Borough of Watchung
Open Space Advisory Committee Meeting
September 16, 2013**

Mr. Desnoyer called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Present the meeting were:

Beck-Clemens (X), Desnoyer (X), Jacques (X), Loboazzo (X), Schaefer (X), Stout (X),
Tucker (X)

Mrs. Schaefer read the minutes from May 20, 2013 meeting into the record. A motion of approval of these minutes was made by Mrs. Beck-Clemens and seconded by Mrs. Tucker.

Committee reports were introduced as follows:

Planning Board: Mr Desnoyer spoke about Crystal Ridge explaining that they want to remove the current "Gate keeper" and replace them with security cameras and Fobs. The Planning Board was scheduled to hear more testimony at their next meeting.

Historical: Mrs. Tucker said that Watchung History Day was progressing very well. The date will be October 5, 2013 starting at 10:00 am. There will be a Civil War enactment which will be played out on the Village Green from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm. At 10:30 there will be a ribbon cutting at the Texier House which will open to the public showing much of the history of Watchung. The Fire Department is trying to get the old 49 truck to be displayed for the day. The Girl Scouts will be doing crafts and the Boy Scouts will be selling refreshments. Banners will be placed and flyers will be sent out to residents telling them about the event.

The Watchung Arts Center will be hosting a concert of Irish and Civil War Music at 7:30 pm. There will be approximately 100 tickets available for sale.

The Boy Scout who has been working at the Texier House helping organize and set up will be receiving his Eagle Award at the Texier on September 25, 2013.

Recreation: Mr. Jacques said that the Mobus Fishing Derby is set for September 21, 2013. The fish consisting of Bass, Blue Gills and Catfish will be delivered to the lake on Friday.

Harvest Festival is coming together. The Yankee Stadium trip was a success.

The tennis Courts are ready and Dave Mobus is looking into possibly putting together a tennis clinic.

An email was received from resident Gail Bennett Tafaro in response to the Watchung Newsletter article written by Mrs. Beck-Clemens asking for input on what the residents would like to see at Camp Endeavor and the Ness Property. She voiced a concern about the safety and upkeep of the playgrounds. She also commented that many people who walk their dogs around the Watchung Lake do not remove the dog refuse. She said that there should be more signs reminding pet owners to remove their dogs "duty". She stated that her son had served in Iraq and had inquired about how he could become part of the Memorial. Mrs. Tucker has already forwarded this request to Barbara Diem.

Mrs. Tucker stated that there was a lot of poison ivy along the sidewalk bordering the Mountain Blvd side of the Watchung Lake. Mr. Jacques commented that the sidewalk was in less than fair condition on the Brookdale Road side.

Mrs. Schaefer asked if there were grants available to help with the updating of the playground and Mr. Jacques as well as Mrs. Beck-Clemens stated that there were.

The Recreation Committee was also asked to compile a "priority list" of items that require attention in the Borough.

Environmental: Mr. Stout stated that there is a possibility of movies being shown at the Library.

He also stated that his committee is working on a plan to have developers replace removed trees with native species.

Mr. Desnoyer and Mrs. Beck-Clemens read a letter/petition received from a group of residents located on Sequoia Dr, Bayberry Lane and Oakwood Road. They have addressed how Camp Endeavor has become a dumping ground for the Borough. The Tennis Courts are in deplorable condition and the entire site is unsafe. There was mention that the property was purchased with Green Acres Funds and that the Borough was in violation of not maintaining the property in good and park-like condition. Mrs. Beck-Clemens stated that the Camp property was not purchased with Green Acre funds but that the property was placed on the Borough's "Green Acre" inventory list for the sole purpose of preparing the Recreational and Open Space Plan.

The Open Space Committee as a whole expressed their concerns over the items mentioned in the letter/petition and a sub-committee will be preparing a memo to the Mayor and Council addressing the issues.

Mrs. Beck-Clemens updated the committee on the Ness Property. The DEP had come back and because the Borough had received FEMA monies to help with Hurricane Sandy cleanup, wants all the trees and wood chips removed as soon as possible.

Once the cleanup is complete, the Mayor and council will have further discussions on the removal of the Ness Barn.

She also stated that the Borough is looking into the purchase of Valley Furniture. One possible use could be for the Library.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm. The next meeting will be January 13, 2014 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracee Schaefer