

# WATCHUNG ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION - ZOOM MEETING MINUTES (FINAL)

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2021

**1. Call to Order:** The Zoom meeting was called to order at 7:32 PM.

a. Roll Call--

Present: Rachel Funcheon, Karen Pennett, Jim and Andy Stout, Doug Speeney, Andy Baldassarre, Council President Wendy Robinson

Absent: Joan Tak

Also in attendance: Council Member Pete Martino

b. New Zoom format—Going forward, all meetings will be held on Zoom and will be recorded. Recordings will be posted on the Borough website.

c. Public Comment Announcement—Public will stay muted until public portion at end, at which time comments and questions can be stated and addressed.

**2. Approval of Minutes: 1/25/2021 Teleconference**—The minutes were approved.

**3. Reports:**

a. Tree Report:

--General Report—no report this month

--Site inspections, Violations—none reported

b. Planning Board:

--Bonnie Burn Development—The Planning Board will start reviewing the proposed project under the new applicant, Kafka.

--Learning Experience—Weldon provided an environmental engineer and a traffic engineer. Discussion included traffic capacity on New Providence Road, flooding of Union Avenue, discrepancies in number of parking spaces needed, and the tree replacement plan. The EC can comment on the plan.

--Climate Change -- State has mandated that all future Master Plans must include Climate Change impact. Since MP was just approved, it will not be amended to include Climate Change at this time.

c. Recycling—Styrofoam

--Rachel spoke to Mayor and Council at the special Council Budget Meeting about getting a shed for Styrofoam recycling at the new DPW facility, as was also suggested last year. Discussion involved how to get a shed, where to put it, and how the program would be run. More discussion and planning is needed.

d. Green Team—Green Fair: Fall is a possibility for the Green Fair—nothing definite.

**4. Unfinished Business:**

a. Bamboo Ordinance: Laws and Ordinances is reviewing. At the Borough Council meeting on Feb. 4, Rachel spoke about the impacts of planting bamboo and the reasons for the proposed ordinance which would regulate the growing of bamboo in the Borough. A resident who had contacted the EC about his neighbor's bamboo plantings also spoke. The Echoes-Sentinel reported on this issue.

b. Trex Bench: Walkway at Mobus Field suggested instead of Best Lake as location with support of EC for users of park and playground and walkers around lake. The exact location along the walkway still to be determined.

c. Saplings Order: Community Tree Recovery Program, affiliated with the Arbor Day Foundation

--EC could join T and B and Recreation in Operation Pride Day for a tree giveaway. 5 seedlings would be given to each resident to insure growth of at least one. Free seedlings will come from the NJ Forest Service Nursery. Number of trees to be ordered was discussed. Program is planned for Sat., May 1<sup>st</sup>.

d. Spotted Lantern Fly (SLF) Mitigation: Rachel reached out to Rutgers Cooperative Extension. They do not offer manpower or a specific program. They provided resources, including Penn State. EC can raise public awareness and encourage residents to handle their own properties regarding the insects.

e. Adopt-A-Drain: The EC was not in favor of this program for a number of reasons. The Borough website and newsletter can serve to disseminate information on voluntary storm drain maintenance, raise awareness to

residents regarding debris and snow clogged drains, and suggest using a rake to remove materials away from the drain.

f. LED Giveaway: Rachel called, and the bulbs had been given away.

**5. New Business:**

a. Spring Newsletter Articles: Bamboo and SLF

--Articles are due March 31. Rachel asked that they be written by March 22 for EC to review.

--Doug will write the bamboo article and include suggestions for alternative screening plants.

Suggestions were provided, and he will do further research.

--Rachel will write the SLF article.

b. Budget Report: Expenses for 2021 include membership fees at \$500, 2 possible tree giveaways at \$100.00 each (spring and fall), protective fencing for trees, and a shed for Styrofoam recycling at \$2500.00. \$5000.00 could be allotted to the EC when budgets are finalized.

c. Climate Change in Master Plan: See Planning Board Report

d. Other: None

**6. Public Comment:**

--Council Member Martino commented on the Master Plan, Trex bench location, Operation Pride tree giveaway, and Camp Endeavor projects.

**7. Special Announcements, Correspondence:** none

**8. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:54 PM with the next meeting scheduled for March 22, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

Andy Stout (Recording Secretary) and Jim Stout (Assistant to the Secretary)