

Watchung Environmental Commission
Monday, December 9, 2024 – Meeting Minutes

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM.
Present: Rachel Funcheon, Karen Pennett, Doug Speeney, Andy Stout, Denise Soppas, Coraleine Kitt
Absent: Jeniffer Principato
2. Minutes for the Oct. 28, 2024 Teleconference were approved.
3. Reports
 - a. November Tree Report
 - Tree Inspections: 5 permits approved. 76 trees to be removed, 26 trees to be replaced.
 - b. Planning Board
 - The Commission discussed PB 24-02, the Raising Cane's project, and the new ordinance regarding temporary accessory structures.
 - The Commission discussed the Bonnie Burn development and changes to the look of the Clubhouse.
 - c. Recycling: no report
 - d. Green Team: GT was recognized by Mayor and Council at last Council meeting and received the Mayor's Achievement Award for achieving Sustainable Jersey Silver certification.
4. Unfinished Business
 - a. The Commission discussed the HELPSY proposal for recycling textiles. Mayor and Council in favor of project. Need to move through the channels to get program implemented.
 - b. BOA applications. The Commission discussed:
 - BA 24-02, 55 Acorn. Applicant dropped proposal for sports court and revised application to only request retaining wall and dry well. Application was approved.
 - BA 23-12, Brandywine. Property is under new ownership and application was withdrawn.
 - BA 24-05, 1040 Johnston Dr. New construction on steep, wooded lot. Application was denied by vote of 4-3.
 - BA 24-07, 108 Johnston. Reconstructing existing retaining wall in driveway. Application was approved.
 - BJ's, Rt. 22: Application has site plan changes. EC will not submit comments.

5. New Business
 - a. The Commission discussed the new NJDEP Tree Removal Regulations. All NJ towns need to have tree ordinance with replacement plan built in. Watchung's is already in place. This is connected to Stormwater Ordinance MS4.
 - b. The Commission discussed the NJ Forest Service seedling list which will be published the first week of Jan. Doug will order off website.
 - c. EC Reorg Meeting in January – Meeting will be on Monday, Jan. 27th.
 - d. Other: The cage surrounding one of Salem oak trees on Mobus field is missing. Green purchasing policy – The Commission discussed the resolution which was passed for the Green purchasing policy. Someone dumped a hot water heater on the mountain behind Spratford Park.

6. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 PM.

January 2025 Tree Report

Tree Inspections: 1

Tree Removal permits approved: 1

Trees to be removed: 10

Trees to be replaced: 0

Tree Re-Inspections: 0

Permit Closed: 0

Trees replaced: 0

D. Soppas & K. Pennett

Tree Inspections:

1820 Plainfield Ave – 10 Dead Trees – Approved with no replacements

- Inspection: 1/2/25. (DS)
- A & W Landscaping & Tree Service
- 10 dead Ash