

# The Warren Observer

Fact and Opinion about Warren, Connecticut, Population: 1300+

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Highlights of: [www.warrenct.com](http://www.warrenct.com)

## Warren Community Notes

The overnight parking ban on town roads is in effect until April.

A new town ordinance prohibits operation of recreational motor vehicles on town property such as Warren Woods and town roads.

The Building Committee met during December to talk with an architectural and project management firm from Waterbury about renovations to the town hall. The Committee will resume deliberations about the town hall at its meeting on January 8. The final plan will go before a town meeting for approval.

## Planning and Zoning Commission

The Planning and Zoning Commission held its last meeting of 2003 on December 9.

Applications: Chris and Patty Butler of 15 Laurel Mountain Road applied for a temporary car and tool shelter. The application was brought before the board because it is non-conforming. The application was granted.

Elections: The meeting was turned over to the Zoning Enforcement Officer to conduct the election of officers. Wayne Wilson was reelected chair by a unanimous vote. Bob Bolte was reelected vice-chairman.

Inquiry will be made as to status of the Regional Planning Council. The commission deferred election of a representative pending determination of its status.

Zoning Enforcement Officer authority: Can the ZEO decline to sign off on a building that is in compliance, if an unrelated building on the property is not in compliance? This question had been deferred from the November meeting so that the ZEO could be present to discuss it. The commission answered "yes." If the ZEO is inspecting some new construction, but notices another building on the property that never had a permit, he can hold up the certificate of occupancy for the new construction until the other building is brought into compliance. ZEO, Mike Ajello, said he generally informs the parties verbally of the need for additional permits and the parties take care of it immediately. It is very rare for the parties to delay coming into compliance. From now on, the ZEO will inform the commission of such issues at monthly meetings and add them to his monthly report.

Size of structures: Wilson has reviewed regulations of other towns and has not been able to find rules about exempting certain structures from the permit process based on minimum sizes. One member indicated New Milford goes by value of the building as to whether a permit is needed. State Building code is expanding sizes of buildings that do not require code compliance according to the ZEO.

It was clear that no matter what rules are adopted, all setback requirements must be met.

Howard Lethbridge noted that until a recent issue involving a chicken coop, there had been very few issues of this type brought before the commission. The ZEO warned that there are a lot of so-called temporary buildings and they may stand for a long time. Garbage shelters, mail boxes and dog shelters are often outside the setbacks.

The commission agreed that there may be a need for policy about the size of structures that can be built without a permit, but within setback lines. This will be needed to ensure that enforcement is equitable and consistent.

Policy could address such issues as: how to treat chicken coops; whether one dog house in the setback is OK, but not 3. Policy could address how some size limitations would be applied. Wilson asked the ZEO to start writing down some of the issues that he sees regularly so that the commission could deliberate with specifics available.

New State Time Lines for Land Use Applications & Public Hearings: Most of the new changes do not have much implication for Warren.

Complaint: The Commission received a letter of complaint from a resident, who raised issues about unregistered vehicles and other irregularities on a neighbor's property. The commission discussed the issues and what the course of enforcement should be.

They decided that the first level of remedy will be to contact the owner, inform him he is in violation of the state law on unregistered vehicles and some zoning permit rules and seek cooperation. They agreed a letter will be sent, seeking cooperation with the rules.

ZEO report: The ZEO report noted that three new applications have been approved.

Carlos & Helen Santiago, 292 Brick School Road for a driveway and log home with garage.

### **Planning and Zoning Commission (continued)**

Paul & Lisa Tarantino, 95 Carter Road, for a bedroom addition and porch.

Bill Roode, Jr. 45 Sunset Lake Road for a deck addition and three accessory buildings. Submitted by Toni Richardson

### **Selectmen's Meeting December 12, 2003**

by Marylyn Hendricks

Jack Travers stated that the water conditioner was installed in the Town Hall, Town garage and Firehouse. It is working and pressure problems are being solved.

The 2004 Council of Small Towns will meet soon and Jack will attend. The selectmen will determine the garbage schedule for tonnage for next year. The town is required to guarantee a set amount of tonnage to ship to the plant. The town will consider recycling plastics and may have to go to recycling on a weekly basis. It costs \$32 a ton to recycle and \$64 a ton for garbage.

There will be an upcoming budget workshop with the region 6 selectmen and the superintendent of schools. They will discuss issues and changes for next year in regard to administrator's and teacher's contracts. Jack is concerned about the costs involved related personal and sick days. In the present contract, school staff can accumulate these days, and be compensated at retirement. Currently administrator's buy out for accumulated sick days is at their per diem salary of \$400. Jack feels this amount is excessive. It was stated that Supt. Tim James can sit in on negotiations, but selectmen are not notified of meetings.

### **Parks and Recreation Commission**

At the November 24, 2003 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission discussion centered on Warren Woods.

A September wedding at the Warren Woods left tables up and the kitchen a mess. Their deposit is being retained. Six additional weddings have been scheduled. Issues with the condition of the facilities after events resulted in a vote to raise the damage deposit from \$200 to \$500 for out of town reservations.

The policy requiring renters of the Warren Woods to have a \$1 million dollar insurance rider will be enforced. Local residents will have to indicate on the application that they have the rider if alcohol is being served and must have a local residential address to qualify for the \$100 permit fee.

The floor will be scheduled for refinishing in the spring.

Discussion continued on cutting a nature trail at Warren Woods. Bill Pollock has volunteered to cut the trail on a voluntary basis. The Commission will seek the authority to proceed from the First Selectman.

### **A Conversation With Beecher Perkins**

by Marylyn Hendricks

I had the pleasure to talk with Beecher Perkins this summer about the history of Warren buildings and schools. I learned that the Perkins family immigrated to this country from England in 1830. They moved to New Haven, then to East Cornwall and then to Warren. The family bought 3 small farms. The people who sold the farms did so because they said it was too rugged here. They moved to Ohio and named their new town Warren.

At one time there were several one-room schools in Warren. The Center School was located across from the store in or near the routes 45 and 341 intersection. It was moved north on route 45 and is now the home of Wendell Cote. There was the Brick School, College Farms School (Bob Tanner's home), Lake School (corner of North Shore Road and Hopkins road), East School located on Hardscrabble Road with foundation and chimney still there, the Milton School, now the site of the reservoir and possibly underwater, and the West School located on the corner of Brick School and route 341. Beecher attended the Center School. It was one room with one teacher and had one spring, one stove and one outhouse. Then he went to the Warren School on Sackett Hill, which is now the town library.

During the 1930's the population of Warren decreased to 300 residents and several of the schools closed. During that time Warren teenagers attended New Milford High School (located at Main Street). Because of the difficulties of winter travel these students would board in New Milford during the week. Marge Tanner Regner was one of these boarders.

When Beecher went to New Milford High School, then located at Main Street (approx. 1937), his parents would get him to the Warren Store and a bus would take him from there. In the winter the Perkins would drive a horse drawn sleigh to the store picking up students along the way. The school bus continued down route 45 picking up more students.

Beecher told me the first Warren Library was in a room at the parsonage, which is now the home of Lou and Connie Verbouwens.

There was a boy's school on the corner of route 45 and 341, now the home of June Seitz. It was called The Academy, but did not continue for very long.

The present Academy building used to be the Town Hall, then the Town Garage.

The site of the present Firehouse was a Methodist Church. When the population declined, the Grange bought the building. There was a curved ceiling upstairs and the building extended very close to the road. When the church sold the building, they put the money in a fund to maintain the Warren Cemetery, and to this day the town receives a check from this account.