

Occupy Winchester Meeting Minutes – June 18, 2013
7:00 p.m. at Winchester Unitarian Society

Present: Patty, Steve B., Barbara, Susan, Maggie, Trudy, Steve D.,
Julie, Rosina and Vern

Facilitator: Patty
Stack Keeper: Steve
Note Taker: Vern

Reports:

“No Mega CVS in Winchester”

Trudy introduced guest Steve Debler who talked about the efforts of some Winchester residents to prevent CVS from building a “box store” at the intersection of Washington and Swanton Streets. Steve said he thinks that, if this store is approved, Winchester is going to see more box stores. Steve mentioned several issues raised by opponents, including: traffic surveys (and the absence of one covering 2 to 3 p.m., when schools get out); the store’s appearance, the question of whether there will be adequate parking; the assumption that any snow will be removed from the premises; and whether the proposed CVS is consistent with the Town’s “master plan.”

Steve believes that some changes that the Zoning Board has required of CVS are merely for the sake of appearance and he thinks they’re not changes that will keep the outcome from being a box store. He noted that there are three Zoning Board Commissioners (appointed by the Selectmen and therefore not directly accountable to voters) who have the ability to vote and make decisions and Steve expects the decision to be made next week. There will be a Zoning Board of Appeals meeting on Monday June 24th at Town Hall, at 7:45 p.m. Individuals opposed to the CVS may attend the meeting to demonstrate their opposition by simply being there. Saying that he expects the decision to favor CVS, Steve cited Nantucket, where CVS was exploring opening a big store (in a former supermarket site) and 4,000 residents then signed a petition and “CVS packed up and left.” Trudy added that, if this passes on June 24th, there would be a public campaign to raise opposition to CVS. Information about Winchester action is available at www.nomegacvs.com.

Red lawn signs are available and can be requested through the website (<http://www.nomegacvs.com/volunteer>). Other actions you can take are: (1) sign the online petition at <https://www.change.org/petitions/to-cvs-caremark-corporation-stop-plans-for-a-mega-cvs-store-in-winchester-ma>, (2) attend Monday’s Zoning Board of Appeals meeting, (3) write a letter to the editor of the *Winchester Star*, and (4) educate your neighbors and friends about this.

“Mothers Out Front: Mobilizing for a Livable Climate”

Susan reported on “Mothers Out Front: Mobilizing for a Livable Climate” (MOF). It is headquartered in Cambridge, MA, and is fully funded, with two staff people. Susan is the Outreach Liaison person in this area. MOF is building capacity (i.e., increasing the numbers of involved people). MOF has interconnections with other climate-change-

related organizations, such as 350.org. Susan noted that people know what needs to be done, but there is not the political will to make changes. MOF is working to stimulate political will by pressuring political, business and economic institutions to align their priorities and actions with the reality of climate change and its impacts. She explained that what's exciting is organizing at community level via house parties of 10 to 15 people. At house parties, mothers, grandmothers and other child care providers find out how to plug in to the bigger movement, and a few people from each house party will go back and start another neighborhood group via more house parties. (MOF has a house party kit.) There was a big kick-off event on June 1st at Old South Church, Boston. This new initiative started about three months ago, organizing mothers and grandmothers. In Arlington, Susan's a member of a group of grandmothers and mothers of older children.

Barbara read excerpts from MOF's declaration, which can be found on their website: www.Mothersoutfront.org

Susan said that many of the MOF folks would be part of a 6-day march (8/28 to 9/2) from Somerset, MA (site of the Brayton Point coal plant) to Cape Wind – symbolizing the need to migrate from fossil fuels to renewable sources energy.

Occupy Winchester Treasury:

Patty reported that the OW treasury has a balance of \$54.80 + one Berkshare, before tonight's free-will contributions. Steve B. noted that he believes that OW will be eligible for an early grant later this year from the Winchester Unitarian Society's Social Outreach Grant funds.

Proposals:

PassMassAmendment

Patty brought up the PassMassAmendment petition effort and ballot initiative to amend the Commonwealth's Constitution to declare that "corporations are not people and money is not speech." This will be a ballot initiative, and the goal is to collect 90,000 signatures of registered voters. There will be a window to collect signatures, from September 18th to November 20th. For more information, go to: <http://passmassamendment.wikispaces.com/About+the+Ballot+Initiative>.

Terra Friedrichs (terraf@compuserve.com) is heading up petitioning team coordination, press/media, etc.

Barbara proposed that Occupy Winchester endorse the petition drive.

The language of the PassMassAmendment is:

Section 1 Corporations are not people and may be regulated. The rights afforded to the human inhabitants of the Commonwealth, under this Constitution, are not applicable to corporations, limited liability companies or any other corporate entity. Any references to persons, citizens, inhabitants, subjects, men, people, individuals or like terms in this Constitution, are not to be construed in any way to be referring to a corporation, limited liability company or other corporate entities. Corporations, limited liability companies

and any other corporate entity shall do business in this state under the regulation of laws passed by the legislature which shall set the rights of such entities to do business to promote the common good and strengthen the social compact of this Commonwealth.

Section 2 Money is not free speech and may be regulated. To protect our political process and the functioning of government to serve in the best interests of the citizens of the Commonwealth, money shall not be considered free speech. The legislature shall have the power to regulate the raising and spending of money and in-kind equivalents for any primary or election of a public official and for ballot measures. This shall include regulation of any advertising for or against any candidate in a primary or election for public office and any ballot measure.

Section 3 Nothing contained in this Amendment shall be construed to abridge the freedom of the press.

People can endorse it without committing to gather signatures. The proposal was approved unanimously.

Vigils for Peace

Barbara spoke about United for Justice with Peace and the Veterans for Peace service held in Boston on Memorial Day. She noted that many towns have vigils for peace on a regular basis and she proposed that Occupy Winchester plan and hold one or more vigils for peace this summer, on Saturdays, for one hour during Farmers Market time. Julie asked about having an educational component and Steve B. asked about setting up a table or tent to handle the educational material. Susan suggested getting information in the local newspaper and having that as a handout. She also advised that we should have an action ready to share with people that they could do to get involved. Susan noted that after vigils in Arlington folks often drift off to a coffee shop for conversation, particularly with new participants.

The proposal was adopted. Barbara will check with Winchester Multicultural Network to ask if such events on the Common require any sort of official notice to anyone. She also will inquire about whether there is a cost to have a table there. Barbara and Patty volunteered to work on this; others are welcome. To volunteer, contact: Barbara.magnuson@comcast.net.

Links to other Websites

It was suggested and we agreed to link the OW website to www.nomegacvs.com. There was some side talk about CVS and other chains, e.g., Burger King, and whether they do some good things when they come to a community, like create jobs or offer price competition that could help consumers. Susan noted that the new CVS in Arlington actually has fewer employees because it uses self-service checkout stations.

Announcements:

Steve B. asked that everyone please vote next Tuesday, June 25th, in the U.S. Senate election.

Julie has recently finished work on a book that should be out this summer, *Toward a Socially Responsible Psychology for a Global Era*. For more information see: <http://www.springer.com/psychology/community+psychology/book/978-1-4614-7390-9>

Rosina was at Beacon Hill hearings last week on GMOs and was encouraged. She said legislators were friendly and she thinks it's just a matter of time until the Massachusetts legislature takes action. CT recently passed a labeling law, with a trigger requiring that four other states must pass it before it becomes law. ME also passed such a law with a similar trigger.

Barbara mentioned that she and Vern plan to participate in the demonstration coming up on July 27th and 28th at the Brayton Point coal plant in Somerset, MA. There will be protests and direct actions (the latter may result in arrests). Attorneys from the National Lawyers' Guild will provide training on July 27th, especially for those planning to engage in direct actions.

Steve B. raised the possibility of Somerset's coal plant being cordoned off as a specific source of electricity so that people could choose to boycott it and drive it out of business.

Patty announced that, on July 7th, there will be a Decolonize to Liberate event from 5 to 7 p.m. on the Boston Common, with a facilitator, about healing and how we move on from here. More details to follow.

Rosina noted that South America has overthrown a lot of oppression in the past 10 years.

Barbara recommended looking at Occupy Natick website (www.occupynatick.org) as a good model, representing a number of towns in the MetroWest region. Their GA meetings are first and third Sundays of each month, from 2 to 4 p.m. Barbara intends to go to one of their GA meetings sometime this summer and will offer to carpool.

Patty said OW's web hosting service subscription is up for renewal on July 28th. May First asks for \$200 for a year's service and provided our first year at no cost. There was a brief discussion of alternatives. Susan noted that May First provides encryption and other security features that may matter to Occupy groups. One member offered to advance funds to cover cost if treasury did not have enough.

Patty announced that she could use help keeping OW calendar updated (uses Google Calendar). If anyone can help, contact Patty.

The next Occupy Winchester meeting date is: **Tuesday, August 27th, at 7:00 p.m., in the Parlor at The Winchester Unitarian Society, 478 Main Street, Winchester, MA 01890.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vern