

Dear Editor,

As one of the “nice” ladies who collected signatures last spring to put a public question concerning the enactment of a tree ordinance on the ballot, I was offended by Rick Bandazian’s characterization of us as liars in his letter published in the *Suburban News* January 10. First, as it is a matter of public record, it should be noted that Mr. Bandazian’s name is not on the list of registered voters who signed the petition asking that a public question about a tree ordinance be put on the ballot (Mr. Bandazian’s name is on the list of signatories on the open space petition). Second, it was the Wyckoff Township Committee that decided not to put a public question concerning a tree ordinance on the ballot, not the individuals collecting the signatures. The Township Committee acted against the strong objections of the residents who collected the signatures, who wanted to see the question on the ballot. The Township Committee was forced by state law to put the open space public question on the ballot; a public question on a tree ordinance is subject to no such law.

Concerning the second part of Mr. Bandazian’s letter, it should be said that all of the trees he described could be taken down—without a permit. The only trees protected in the defeated ordinance were those eight inches in diameter or larger *within five feet of a property line*, or greater than 24 inches in diameter elsewhere on a property. Exceptions were made for any tree that was dead or dying, as well as any trees, regardless of size, which were within 20 feet of a home or pool, 10 feet of a septic field, or five feet of a driveway. No permit would have been required for any of these trees. One has to wonder whether any of the objectors to the tree ordinance actually bothered to read it.

Sincerely,

Janet Gaglione
Wyckoff