

From: Khughan <khughan@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2015 3:37 PM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy
Cc: dasama@optonline.net
Subject: Tree Conservancy of Darien, Darien Plan and of Conservation and Development
Attachments: TCD_Town_Conservation_Plan_1.13.15.docx

Dear Jeremy,

Thank you for giving the Tree Conservancy the opportunity to comment of the update for the 2006 Darien Plan of Conservation and Development. Our recommendations are attached.

We did not include any information about the Tree Conservancy of Darien. You may find the following helpful:

The Tree Conservancy of Darien is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing the tree and forest resources of Darien for the benefit of the community, its health and its quality of life.

Our goals are to:

- Educate our community about the value of trees and their care.
- Initiate a plan to identify and revitalize significant (heritage) trees.
- Maintain a stewardship program for the care of new and existing trees.
- Build partnerships to achieve tree conservancy goals.

Funding is by donations only, directly from benefactors or as contributions for special activities (such as 'plant a tree' day).

Please feel free to call myself or Sabina Harris (203-273-2178) with any questions. We look forward to seeing you this evening.

Karen Hughan
Good Gardens, LLC
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203.984.2025



Tree Conservancy

of Darien
EST. 2010

January 13, 2015

Mr. Jeremy Ginsberg
Planning and Zoning Director
Darien Town Hall
Darien, CT 06820

Dear Jeremy,

The Tree Conservancy of Darien is grateful for the opportunity to contribute our thoughts on the proposed update to the Darien Plan of Conservation and Development. We have considered the 2006 Plan and are addressing several of the recommendations made that we feel should be implemented and/or should continue to be developed. We would also like to offer a couple of additional items for consideration.

In addition, we have reviewed your recent booklet entitled "Planning Issues in Darien," dated January 6, 2015. Our commentary will be organized per the booklet:

"Much of the discussion in this booklet is organized around the three main thematic elements of a Plan of Conservation and Development:

- What Darien may want to protect (conservation strategies),
- How Darien may want to guide future growth and change (development strategies),
- What Darien may want or need to support its overall vision (infrastructure strategies)."

Conservation strategies – Tree Conservancy of Darien would like to ensure that the historic and heritage trees are preserved per Chapter Two (Conservation and Development) of the 2006 plan, as well as the cemeteries and scenic roads. It would be necessary for the town to provide funding for the care and beautification of cemeteries and to provide guidance to CT Light and Power to ensure that trees along scenic roads are not removed or pruned beyond repair. A Tree Warden would enhance our ability to protect these resources.



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Development strategies – Chapter One identifies that an increase in housing units to accommodate the growing population in Darien primarily is accomplished through “Built-outs, teardowns and new subdivisions.” Tree Conservancy of Darien strongly recommends that we adopt a Tree Ordinance in Darien to limit the ability to remove trees on private properties without approval from the town, and with the regulation that trees be planted to replace the sum of the caliper of those that are removed. A tree ordinance would address the problems of removing trees, as trees provide water saturation, the absorption of sound and habitats for wildlife. As Darien is the third most densely populated community in SWRPA, it is important that we protect our trees. We recommend following in Norwalk’s footsteps, in becoming a Tree City. A Tree Warden could assist in ensuring that the Tree Ordinance is followed.

Infrastructure strategies – One of the recommendations made in the 2006 plan state that it is important to “create a pedestrian friendly downtown where people can park and walk.” We would like to continue to enhance our downtown through tree plantings to accomplish this. Another suggestion was to “Consider the establishment of bike paths and greenbelts,” and we would encourage this in planning for the future of Darien. Finally, Noroton Heights Train station was identified in the 2006 Plan as needing “Certain improvements... including better security, lighting, landscaping and smoother and expanded sidewalks.” The Tree Conservancy of Darien has identified this project as critical in enhancing the quality of life for the estimated 27% of residents who commute to New York each day, as well as for Darien residents who frequent Noroton Heights shopping center.

Many thanks for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Karen Hughan and Sabina Harris

Tree Conservancy of Darien