

## **DARIEN BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES:**

**JUNE 6, 2015, 1 pm**

### **ROOM B-3**

**ATTENDEES:** Sig Buchmyer, Nina Miller, Bob Wolkowitz, Suzanne Schutte, Sandy Drimal, Sabina Harris, Sandy Filmer, Marcia Meinerth, Michael Chioda, Marianne Wadleigh, Christina Orsi Lirot.

Attending morning meeting: Sandy Drimal, Bob Wolkowitz, Cindy Ryan and Jeff Smith.

### **Budget Update:**

Marcia presented final budget numbers for the month of June, and fiscal year 2015. There is approximately \$600 remaining in the 2014/15 budget. It was agreed that this would be used to hire the college worker Greg to work on projects such as the berm clean up, clean up of exits/entrances into Darien, and cemetery maintenance. The first project will be berm maintenance. Suzanne will supervise this project and submit expenses to the Town Hall finance group before 6/30/15.

Cristina Orsi Lirot will take on the responsibility of Treasurer as of July. Marcia has been meeting with her to train her on how the budget process is handled.

The BC group agreed to the following line item amounts in the 2015/16 budget, which has been confirmed at \$26K:

-Hanging baskets purchase and maintenance: \$12750 (based on 85 X \$150 each)

-Urns: \$400

-Town Clean up: \$150

-Berm-ongoing maintenance: \$2000

-Contractor Services for general maintenance: \$3000

-AAG: \$3000 (contribution over sponsor payments)

-Cemeteries: \$3000

-Special Projects: \$2000

### **AAG Update:**

-Additional flowers/color is needed at Keith's Gardener Center AAG at exit 11. Cindy to follow up.

-The AAG sign at Kelly's garden is missing. Cindy to pick up new sign and replace it in garden.

-C. Orsi Designs will adopt the island near The Beach House (prior Pedal and Pump store). Cristina and Sandy F will work together to decide on what plants to be selected for the south end of this garden. Cindy will order a sign for this new AAG.

-Exit 10/Noroton Heights merchant garden: Cindy and Michael will decide during the summer months which plants stay and what needs to be removed. Once the garden has been reconfigured/reduced, Cindy will re-set the sign in an appropriate spot in the garden. The DPW will be asked to remove whatever bushes are deemed unnecessary. They potentially could be used in other gardens based on their condition. TBD.

-New AAG sponsors: Cristina volunteered to talk to Roger Penske from the Range Rover dealership, and the BMW/Callari Group to see if they would be interested in becoming sponsors. The garden to be suggested for adoption is the ex -Girl Scout garden in front of the Darien train station. Cindy to drop off AAG brochures at Cristine's home address: 23 Fairmead (a private road behind Trader Joe's.)

-The AAG brochure should be updated and reprinted in the fall. The group will discuss new pricing and any other changes to the program at the Sept mtg.

#### **UPCOMING/ONGOING SUMMER WORK PROJECTS:**

-Exit 12 rock formation vine removal/clean up with chain saw. Sig to supervise.

-Ongoing berm clean up. June and later in the summer as needed. Suzanne to supervise. Greg to be hired as needed for major work: transplanting/weeding and weed removal/chip spreading. Jeff and Nina will work on weed removal on the far right side.

-Stream at the berm: Sabina to follow up with DPW to ensure that reeds are removed. Issue is rancid odor/trash clogging stream/potential flooding problem.

-Ongoing clean up of trash at exits/entrances off of I95. Greg to be hired to work at exits 11 (all of them), 12, and 13, and Tokeneke Road on as needed basis. Also potentially exit 10. Suzanne and Sig to supervise depending on who is around/ away on vacation.

-Cemeteries. Bob to select several strategically important cemeteries for clean up. Note that Greg will assist, but is not insured to handle any work with chain saw. If required, Sig will help with his chain saw. Timing/selection TBD. Note that 3 cemeteries are currently being taken care of by adjacent home owners: Oxridge, Weeburn and Bates.

-Hanging Baskets: Sandy D will follow up with Elder Santiago all summer to ensure that the baskets are watered and maintained properly. Sandy mentioned that 2 baskets cannot be placed near Blue Mercury b/c there are no hangers on the lamp posts. 2 hangers have been ordered by the Chamber of Commerce for their xmas wreaths. Sandy D and Sabina will place 2 baskets in Noroton area instead of at Blue Mercury.

### **Eagle Scouts Project:**

Berm: A meeting was held on 6/6/15 to make a yes/no decision whether to allow the Eagle Scout to work on the berm project on the far left side near Leroy. If agreed to, the Scout will clean up the area near Leroy, will place an article in local papers asking for plant donations, will remove and transplant the plants to the new garden, will work with Sabina to plant 6 echinacea and other native flowers, and will get from Suzanne milkweed seed to plant. Sabina to follow up.

### **Adopt a Spot update:**

Sandy F updated the group on the Adopt a Spot program and mentioned that she had received a nice note from a Darien resident who had tended an Adopt a Spot garden on Maywood for 31 years, but was now relocating to Norwalk. Sandy will look for a new keeper of this garden.

### **Summer Meetings:**

The group decided that since there are so many ongoing projects to work on this summer, the **July meeting will be canceled**. As a reminder, there is also no August meeting. The BC group **will reconvene on Sept. 14**.

Meeting adjourned: 2:25 pm.