

**DARIEN BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES:
October 20, 2014**

Membership:

The BC discussed the need to find a new secretary and treasurer to replace Heather and Marcia.

Marcia confirmed that she had spoken to Randy Klein from the Dem. Party to extend her term which ends in Nov. 2014.

BC members suggested that we talk to potential new candidates. Sandy F will talk to Jan Treubner and Cindy to speak to Gwen Morgensen to see if they are interested or know other potential candidates.

Suzanne met with Meredith Schoff who due to numerous personal issues going on now, would like to delay her appointment to the BC. She has been in touch with the Republ. Party who will interview her as soon as she is ready.

Financial Review:

Marcia provided a financial update:

-\$26k was added to our budget (the 2014/15 budget) in July. To date, we have a Balance of \$12k.

-Marcia mentioned that she had not yet received the final bill from Elder, would call him to tell him to send her the final bill ASAP, and that his work for the season was ended. Marcia will send to Suzanne and Cindy a summary of his expenses (AAG watering/weeding) to see how/where his time has been spent this year. To date, \$9.4k has been billed from Elder.

-Marcia suggested to the group that we not take on any more baskets nor AAG gardens because she believed that this could cause us to go over budget in the future. Following a group discussion, this was agreed to.

Donated Plants:

BC members reviewed the donor list to determine what plants still needed to be transplanted.

The following 5 houses remain to be done: Taylor house, Schoff house, Morgensen house, Cameron house, and McGrath house. Sig, Cindy, Sabina and Suzanne will go to the Taylor house. Suzanne, Sig and Sabina will go to the Scholl house. Sabina, Michael and Nina will go to the Morgensen house. Nina and Suzanne will go to the Cameron house. Cindy will go to the McGrath house. Members were asked to get the transplanting done ASAP due to cold weather coming.

Berm Update:

The group discussed the idea of spraying the weed control product given to us by the DPW on the weeded base area of the berm. Bob W volunteered to look into environmentally correct ways to control weeds and to recommend a product to spray. Suzanne will ask her husband to use his sprayer and spray with whatever weed control product is determined appropriate. The group decided to not throw grass seed this fall until the weed and spraying issues were determined. If too late to spread seeds now, then wait until next spring. The group discussed the need to potentially move the boulders to the base of the hill to form a boundary between the grass and the hill, and hopefully to help control the bindweed. If we decide to move the boulders, we will need to ask the DPW for their assistance. This should be done in the winter months when the ground is frozen.

The group decided that we would no longer use donated mulch or topsoil from the Dump/Dpw since we believe that this may be the cause of the weed growth at the berm. Sabina will talk to

Ed Gentile to see if “good chips” are available, or if we could purchase chips for BC use by bundling our order with theirs to receive possible cost reductions in price.

Sabina will talk to Matt at the DPW to see if he can cut back the cat tails which are clogging/overtaking the stream at the berm.

Adopt A Garden (AAG) Update:

Cindy and Michael provided an update on which gardens require weeding or additional plants. Cindy mentioned that the butterfly bush at the CVS parking lot garden needed to be cut back because it had grown too tall and was obstructing the view of the sign there.

Cindy and Suzanne will review Elder expenses provided by Marcia to determine how time/monies were spent on AAGs this year.

Hanging Baskets:

Sandy D. mentioned that she had instructed Elder to take down all baskets at the end of September.

The group discussed the idea that baskets hanging throughout Tilley Pond on the lampposts would look great. Sandy D will talk to the new head of P and R to see if they would agree to fund the costs of baskets, hangers and ongoing watering next season.

Tokeneke Merchants Update: Suzanne mentioned that she had talked to many of the merchants on Tokeneke Road, had left them a flier with photos of the baskets, and had agreed to provide them with pricing on baskets and watering whenever available. Currently 5-6 merchants are interested in purchasing baskets from the BC. Sandy D will get new 2015 pricing from the nursery, and the BC will discuss in Jan. the price to charge the merchants for baskets depending on whether they purchase just baskets, or the ongoing watering and maintenance.

Annual Report:

Suzanne mentioned that she had finalized the Annual Report, asked certain members for facts to be included in the report, and said that she would circulate the final version to all BC members for any changes/additions. The due date is 10/30/14. She reminded members that photos were needed for the report.

Cemetery Update:

See Town Plan on Conservation & Dvlp below.

Other: Business:

-Town Plan on Conservation & Dvlp.

The BC discussed and decided that the following items could potentially be included in the discussion with P & Z at the January 13 mtg:

1. The idea that Darien cemeteries should be regarded as “outdoor museums reflecting the historical heritage of the state of CT”, with the suggestion that the town adequately fund their ongoing maintenance.
2. Asking for funding to transform the berm into a public park, involving the renovation of the far left sides and the purchase of park benches.
3. Asking for funding to complete the gardens at the entrance to the Noroton Heights train station
4. Funding for the renovation of the pond and walking trails at the Tokeneke School.

Other Business contd;

-Suzanne updated the group on the article that she had submitted to the Green Team for placement in Green Minutes, asking for new members on the BC; for volunteers to help plant the donated shrubs and plants; and asking for student groups to volunteer to help plant native seeds.

NEXT MEETING: DECEMBER???? NEED FOR MEETING?

Need to submit to Town Hall dates for 2015 meetings. Need to decide start times of mtgs.