

Beautification Commission (BC)

Meeting Minutes

January 9th, 2012 ~ 9:00 am

Town Hall Room B-3

Present: Suzanne Schutte, Heather Pommernelle, Bob Baker, Sandy Drimal, Sandy Filmer, John Schlachtenhaufen, Phyllis Hawkins, Sabina Harris, David May

Absent: Cindy Ryan, Marcia Meinerth, Pam Elliot

Action items are noted in red.

Financial

- Current BC balances are \$13,625 regular account; \$1,400 special account.
- SS met with the BOS in December to request an additional \$7K budget to cover the berm project (total annual budget would then be \$33K). As we're doing most of the work ourselves, rather than paying a contractor to manage it all, we're saving the town money. SS submitted a proposal on the project, for BOS to discuss at the finance meeting. Karl Kildroff later wasn't aware of the proposal, so SS submitted it to him as well. Pending further response from town, possibly in February. DM stressed that we should place orders soon, so stock is available. **SS will f/u with the town.** DM asked, if we don't receive the additional funding, how much do we have already in BC accounts to spend? **SS to ask MM.**

Hanging Baskets Update

- SD expects to hang baskets around May 24. JS, BB, SH helped SD fix hooks; there are around 80 baskets in total. **SD to place plant order**, petunias primarily.
- SD requested watering costs for gardens and baskets. **SS to find exact costs from MM.**

Illegal Lawn Signs

- Both parties are interested in tackling the issue; **BB's meeting with the chairmen soon.** Believes they'll agree to no signs on public islands, timing of when signs must be up or down, when/how illegal signs should be removed. It is then hoped that P&Z will agree.
- SS discussed the issue with BOS, they requested our recommendations on what wording should be on the town website. BB prepared and distributed wording suggestions, **BB/SS to submit to BOS.**
- Darien Patch had a great article with picture of Woody Woodson's (P&Z) front lawn, which he covered with a few week's worth of illegal signs he collected.
- Discussed how CT state law does not allow a town to restrict wording on the sign, only the size of the sign.

Adopt-A-Gardens (AAGs)

- HP confirmed that flags and signs have been removed from Stop & Shop NH garden!
- **PR article will be drafted by HP/CR** to submit to papers and online, to drum up sponsors for AAGs.
- Spring Clean-Ups. **AAG group to have details of what needs to be done at each garden.**
- The status of paid/not paid 2011 invoices for AAGs is still not clear. **SS will f/u with MM.**
- Noroton Heights pots. **HP/CR to determine which pots should be thrown out, and which can be moved and used in the spring.**

The Berm Project

- DM has reduced the number of grasses that need to be grown on, to around 3-4 trays, so less space is required. We will still need a place to put the pots when delivered. BB approached Weeburn Country Club; they're happy to help, expects they'll water them as well. Weeburn will also contact Woodway Country Club to see if they'll help as well. **DM to provide expected area required for pots and growing on grasses. BB will then progress discussions with the clubs.** Not expected that Country Club of Darien will have space. Weed beach also will not work.
- SS approached Sue Swiatek to borrow their water pump. She says they don't have one...
- SF spoke to Land Trust re: water pump options. New pump would cost approximately \$150; we could put it in the stream and shoot the water to the berm space. **SF will gain further details.**
- **SS asking Rich for permission to use the stream near the berm for water.**

- Alternative sources of water (requiring quite a length of hose): **SS to look into the water source that's used by Dolcetti; alternative is a possible fire hydrant at Squab and Leroy intersection. If these aren't good options, JS to approach Dan re: tea house water source.**
- SS approached DPW to cut grasses annually – they've agreed, to happen annually in March. The grasses can also be cleaned up now; **DM will show them how to do it properly.**
- **SF is asking Penny Glassmeyer to attend a BC meeting,** so we can approach her to help/sponsors.
- JS mentioned 3 trees planted at the Berm site already. Wants to gain TC donation of further trees for DM's plan. **DM to confirm with JS what trees are wanted.**

Town-Wide Clean-Up

- Boy Scouts to help pick up trash? SH approached, they will ask for interest at next den meeting. Areas of particular focus to be Ledge Road from Post to the car dealerships, and Tokeneke from Post to Tokeneke School. **SH to follow up**
- Mechanics Road from Post Road mentioned as a huge ongoing mess. SS has spoken to Dave Campbell in the past, but it has not changed. Affects image of out of town residents who come for the Farmers Market.
- Spring clean-up date set for April 28th. (Schools are out April 16 - 20th)

Other

- Informal complaint from the state re: exit 11 rocks, We were going to write a letter. Decided not to write this, as DPW doesn't see it as an issue.
- Whole Foods 'Small Change Adds Up' program. Quarterly program, so for 3 months we'd get \$0.10 per bag if customers offer it to us. **PH to speak to them this week,** hopefully program will start mid-January.
- Gardener's Center donated possibly 2,000 bulbs! SS planted in front of town hall, DMC AAG, Exit 10 AAG, Corbin and OKH space. CR/HP planted at Exit 13 Town of Darien sign, Kelly's AAG, Keith's Exit 11S AAG, CVS garden, Darien Train Station northbound. DM planted at the berm and nearby. **SS to write letter to the editor thanking the Gardener Center for all the bulbs.**
- All agreed that annually we should approach garden centers for left over bulbs.
- Our November BC meeting date is Veterans Day, the 12th. Meeting rescheduled to 11/19.
- **HP updating BC text on the town website.** For names and addresses, to reorganize so SS's name is first, so people call her as chairman rather than BB.
- **HP to distribute Internal membership contact list.**

Next meeting: February 13th, 9am. Room B-3, Town Hall.