

TOWN of DARIEN
MONUMENTS & CEREMONIES COMMISSION
Town Hall, 2 Renshaw Road, Darien, Connecticut 06820

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MINUTES

Monuments and Ceremonies Commission
January 12, 2010

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Philip Kraft at 3:33 PM.

Commissioners attending were: Marian Castell, Phil Kraft, Ken Reiss, Chick Scribner, George Walsh

The Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as written (Motion: Scribner; Second: Walsh)

A motion was requested and made (Reiss, second: Scribner) to suspend the regular order of business in order to hear a presentation by Gary Sara regarding the creation of a monument in honor of Stephen Tyng Mather, sometime Darien resident and founder of the modern National Park System.

Mr. Sara presented background on Stephen Mather (see attachment), along with rough conceptual drawings of two possible alternatives: A grouping of several stone monoliths taken from various national parks created by Mather; or, alternatively, historic marker signs to be erected by the state on I-95 near Exit 10.

During the discussion that followed the presentation, the Commission outlined its role and the limits to its jurisdiction (i.e. it has none over the verges of the State highway), and pointed out that its responsibility includes assuring that monuments erected in the town are appropriate in subject, size, design and location.

The Commission thanked Mr. Sara for his interest and promised him that a response would be forthcoming after the Commission had an opportunity to discuss his proposal.

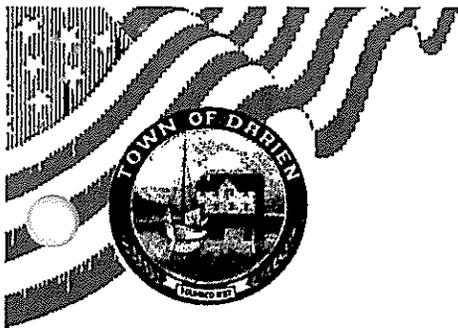
Resumption of Regular Order of Business:

Chairman's Report (Phil Kraft)

--The November 11 Veterans' Day ceremony was the first live cable feed to all Darien schools on Channel 79, thanks to heroic last-minute efforts on the part of Dave Devers.

--The Holiday Wreath-laying at the Fitch State Veterans Cemetery this year saw a total of 468 wreaths laid on Veterans' graves, an increase from 150 laid last year. Dignitaries taking part in the ceremony included Congressman Himes, Lt. Governor Fedele, State Senators Duff and McDonald, among others.

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM



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--John Geoghegan has resigned from the Commission for personal reasons...the commission needs a member to assume responsibility for the lobby showcase and for overseeing terms and appointments of Commission members.

--The Memorial Day Maritime Observance at the beach needs to be revitalized, and we are in discussions with Dave Devers, incoming Commodore of the Darien Boat Club, about the Club's taking on the ceremony as part of its annual season-opening Memorial Day weekend program.

--Asked Commission members to bring suggestions for the 2010 Memorial Day Parade Grand Marshal to the February meeting.

New Business:

The Commission discussed the Gary Sara proposal to erect a monument commemorating the work of Stephen Tyng Mather. It was the sense of the Commission that, while it would be appropriate for Darien to recognize Mather's contributions to the nation, our higher priorities would be to recognize natives and full-time residents and contributions to the Town of Darien.

Nevertheless, the Commission would entertain a more specific recommendation from Mr. Sara that included greater detail on design, finance, location, maintenance and acceptance by the Mather family of such an idea. The highway signage idea might be most satisfactory but is out of this Commission's jurisdiction. It was further suggested that Mr. Sara's most acceptable course of action might be to enhance the memorial to Mr. Mather that is currently in the Town Hall lobby. It was also suggested that the lobby showcase be made available to Mr. Sara.

Ken Reiss offered to draft a letter to this effect for approval by the Commission.

Upon a motion by George Walsh, the meeting was adjourned at 4:34.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, February 9, 2010, at 3:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Reiss for the Secretary.