

**Pedestrian Infrastructure Advisory Committee  
To the Darien, Connecticut, Board of Selectmen**

Draft Minutes

**Date:** August 4, 2015

**Place:** Darien Town Hall, Room 119-B

**Present:** Terry Duffy, Ted Hawkins, Pat Morrissey, and Bert von Stuelpnagel

**Absent:** Joanna Garrett, Susanne Handler, Beth Harmon, and Jennifer Morgan and Holly Schulz-Amatruda

**Guest:** David Genovese, Baywater Properties

This was a regular meeting of the Pedestrian Infrastructure Advisory Committee (PIAC).

Acting Chair, Pat Morrissey, called the meeting order at 7:37 pm. A quorum was not present so minutes from the meeting of July 28 could not be approved.

David Genovese of Baywater Properties was introduced and invited to present his thoughts on pedestrian and bicycle issues as they relate to downtown development. David gave some history on Darien retail development and mentioned that previous zoning requirements for parking virtually dictated a curb cut or two for each building for access to parking. The net effect of multiple curb cuts was to create an unfriendly and unsafe pedestrian experience walking between stores. So shoppers would expect to part at Dunkin Doughnuts for coffee as example, and then get back in their car to pick up a prescription at Griebs.

David's new project with Penny Glassmeyer (detailed information is on their website: [www.yourdowntowndarien.com](http://www.yourdowntowndarien.com) ) on the pedestrian infrastructure front seeks to consolidate parking and then provide an interesting and pleasant walking experience between stores. Baywater has hired top architects and designers to achieve that goal. Previous studies reviewed by the developer came from the Darien Revitalization Project and SWERPA (Route 1 Corridor Study) among others. Many of these studies can be found on the website. In particular David recommended that the PIAC members review Jeff Speck's work including a video, his book, [The Walkable City](#), or TED talk presentation:

[http://www.ted.com/talks/jeff\\_speck\\_the\\_walkable\\_city?language=en](http://www.ted.com/talks/jeff_speck_the_walkable_city?language=en).

The Chair asked David: what should the PIAC be working on? David thinks the town needs better bike lanes and cited one close to home, Nearwater Lane from Hindley School to Weed Beach or Noroton Bay. David acknowledged the difficulty of making changes to improve bike or pedestrian lanes and recounted his recent experience with the Model Block sidewalk improvement downtown from the Sugar Bowl to Griebs. An additional observation was that the town needs more bike racks. As for crosswalks downtown, his group will continue working on it to improve pedestrian friendliness. David also pointed out that Tokeneke Road moving east beyond Old King's Highway South is not easy for commuters from the train to get to Zotos or Colangelo. This is a well traveled byway but with no provision for the many walkers from train to office & back.

David was congratulated by all for the thoughtfulness and care with which his development team are approaching pedestrian and bicycle issues in downtown Darien. We look forward to hearing more and being supportive as this project moves along.

We discussed the need for the Chair to know in advance of meetings who cannot attend so that guest speakers can be rescheduled if attendance is too low. August is a tough month for many committee members given prior commitments, but we need to know from each member if attending or not. Chair or Vice Chair will query each member when the agenda is sent to reply if they will be in attendance or not.

The meeting adjourned at 8:48

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Respectfully submitted by Ted Hawkins, Clerk