

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

Draft Minutes

**Date:** August 18, 2015

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

**Present:** Terry Duffy, Joanna Garrett, Susanne Handler, Beth Harmon, Ted Hawkins, Pat Morrissey, Holly Schulz-Amatruda, and Bert von Stuelpnagel

**Absent:** Jennifer Morgan

**Guest Speakers:** Susan Cameron, Chair Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC), Jeremy Ginsberg, Director Planning & Zoning Dept (P&Z).

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

Chair Beth Harmon called the meeting order at 7:33 pm. The minutes from the meeting of August 11 were approved.

Public Comment: Catherine Beckmann wished to bring to the committee's attention a pedestrian safety issue arising from commuters using short cuts to the Noroton Heights train station walking down Edgerton from Middlesex, Noroton Ave, & Elm St. This route is winding and has no streetlights or sidewalks. The Chair thanked Catherine for bringing this to our attention.

Susan and Jeremy introduced themselves to the committee. The Chair asked what we as a committee can do with regard to promoting pedestrian infrastructure issues in the new town Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). Jeremy said that our report should be helpful to the POCD consultant, Glenn Chalder of Planimetrics. Susan brought up the idea that the town should have some protected cross walks (where traffic from all directions have to stop for a pedestrian crossing). Susan later brought up that the crossing from the Train Station to the Leroy West parking lot is very hazardous.

Question was asked: what happened with the SWRPA Route 1 Corridor study and did it change anything? Jeremy said that some of its recommendations have been implemented and pointed out several of those instances, no parking signs on the Post Road in front of St. John's Church for example. Holly inquired as to what is the process for getting lanes, crosswalks etc. approved or changed on state highways. It was explained that a request has to go from Capt. Don Anderson to the Local Traffic Authority and then on to the state's Department of Transportation (DOT) for ultimate approval.

It was then asked: what is P&Z's role in developing a Sidewalk Plan? Jeremy said it is important to separate short term goals from long term goals. P&Z and PZC in their deliberations require that commercial developers invest in sidewalks, preferably model blocks, as part of the approval process. As for providing new sidewalks where there are none, especially outside of the business districts, that is up to Public Works and the Selectmen to plan. Jeremy suggested that perhaps this may be embedded in the town's Six Year Capital Improvements Plan. The POCD cannot be a

sidewalk plan. Asked if P&Z could develop a plan, Jeremy said they have the staff to develop a separate sidewalk plan, but they do not have the time. Jeremy suggested that if we wished to develop a specific sidewalk plan we should look to outside consultants with the expertise to help. Though he also suggested we could just write down our short term, high-value improvement suggestions, add our long term goals and call it a plan.

Apart from setting priorities for the POCD, the Planning and Zoning Commission and Planning and Zoning Dept. are limited to reacting to homeowners and developers as they bring forward specific proposals for development. Susan pointed out that PZC required Penny Glassmeyer to provide better sidewalks in front of her new senior multifamily development bordering on Locust Hill Rd. Jeremy pointed out that it makes no sense for PZC or P&Z to require a homeowner building a new house along the northern end of Hollow Tree Road, for example, to put in a sidewalk to nowhere.

Susan pointed out that there are a number of regs & rules governing where crosswalks can be installed. She cited the circumstance where homeowners in a neighborhood off Tokeneke Rd wanted a crosswalk installed. DOT approved but Darien Police did not because the crosswalk did not go from one sidewalk to another. We learned that a crosswalk cannot route foot traffic from a sidewalk into a street, it must go into another sidewalk or landing pad. Jayme added that the town has stringent guidelines for crosswalk installation: there have to be ADA compliant areas of refuge on either side of a crosswalk. The Local Traffic Authority (Police Commission) has the responsibility for decisions & regulations governing local roads, marking, crosswalks and all items impacting traffic safety.

The Chair asked if there were any biking infrastructure issues for consideration by P&Z. Jeremy replied that they would be handled by the Traffic Authority and Public Works.

Committee discussion of standardization of hotspot findings, Bert's Powerpoint draft presentation was favorably commented on. Pat also distributed his filled-in Excel spreadsheet of rankings and committee members found it very useful for recording data from their sectors. Pat offered to email the spreadsheet for other committee members to use. Next meeting Holly will bring in some standard graphic markers used by planners for us to consider for use on our maps.

The Chair stated that she had received from Reese Hutchinson a copy of the 2013 South Western Region Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan. This will be forwarded by email for each member to review.

The meeting adjourned at 8:43

Audience: Jayme Stephenson, First Selectman and Catherine Beckmann

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Respectfully submitted by Ted Hawkins, Clerk