

**MINUTES
REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING
STATE OF THE TOWN MEETING
DECEMBER 9, 2019**

**RECEIVED
DEC 16 2019
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
DARIEN CT.**

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular State of the Town Meeting was called to order at 8:05 p.m. by Donna Rajczewski, Town Clerk, who announced that the new member in District II was Michael Casolo. He and Patrick Keane, District I, stood and Mrs. Rajczewski administered the Oath of Office. She also noted that District I needs one more member.

Mrs. Rajczewski said this was her last meeting as she is retiring at the end of the month. RTM members gave her a standing ovation. Mrs. Rajczewski thanked everyone and introduced Caryn Diller, who will be the newly elected Town Clerk as of January 6, 2020.

Upon Roll Call, the following members were present:

- From District I, there were 12 members present, 4 absent.
- From District II, there were 15 members present, 2 absent.
- From District III, there were 11 members present, 5 absent.
- From District IV, there were 13 members present, 4 absent.
- From District V, there were 14 members present, 3 absent.
- From District VI, there were 14 members present, 2 absent.

The absentees from District I were: Haverstick, Kelly, Lublin, McNicoll.

The absentees from District II were: Bacon, Howe.

The absentees from District III were: Kazim-Bailey, McGoey, Minnick, Washecka,
Woodbury.

The absentees from District IV were: Hardison, Hauser, Millar, Raymond.

The absentees from District V were: Boulton, Fiveson, Mosher.

The absentees from District VI were: Cantavero, Silsby.

The Moderator, Seth Morton, assumed the Chair.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

**** THE AGENDA WAS ACCEPTED BY UNIVERSAL CONSENT.**

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 12, 2019 ANNUAL MEETING

**** THE MINUTES WERE ACCEPTED BY UNIVERSAL CONSENT.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Moderator, as an addition to the agenda, read the following Resolution in honor of Donna Rajczewski, retiring Town Clerk:

Resolution of the Representative Town Meeting of the Town of Darien

***WHEREAS,** Donna Rajczewski is a fourth generation Darien native. She graduated from Darien High School, as did her daughters, Lee and Dana. Donna went on to graduate from Beaver College in Pennsylvania (now known as Arcadia University), where she had a stellar career on the field hockey and softball fields; and*

***WHEREAS,** Donna is extremely proud of, and dedicated to, her home town. She has been a very active member of the community and her church. She was a teacher earlier in her career at Noroton Presbyterian and The First Congregational Church Nursery Schools, where she helped mold many young children into fine adults; and*

***WHEREAS,** Donna has served her Town since 1996, first in the Planning & Zoning Department, and then the Town Clerk's Office. In November 1999 she was elected to her first of ten terms as Town Clerk, and earned the status of Certified Municipal Clerk. During her tenure as Town Clerk, she has served with four First Selectmen; and*

***WHEREAS,** Donna has served the Representative Town Meeting for 20 years, during which time she has kept abreast of State regulations governing the Town of Darien to ensure that deadlines are met and that resolutions conform to State law. She has worked with the First Selectman, Town departments, Town commissions and committees, the RTM Moderator, Town Counsel, District Chairs, and RTM committees. Donna has exhibited caring dexterity, coordinating the complex day to day activities of the Town Clerk's office and the RTM. By using her ability to multitask efficiently, she has made outstanding contributions to the smooth operations of the Town of Darien.*

***NOW, THEREFORE,** The Representative Town Meeting of the Town of Darien does hereby, upon her retirement, express deep gratitude for 20 years of dedicated service to:*

Donna Rajczewski, Town Clerk

and asks our residents to join us in recognizing her accomplishments, dedication and loyal service to them, and to the Town of Darien.

Dated this 9th day of December 2019

Seth W. Morton, Moderator, Representative Town Meeting

Town of Darien, Connecticut

**** JAMES CAMERON, DISTRICT IV, MOVED TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION.
** THE MOTION WAS SECONDED FROM THE FLOOR.
** THE MOTION WAS APPROVED BY ACCLAMATION.**

The Moderator presented Mrs. Rajczewski with the Resolution, and everyone present gave her a prolonged standing ovation.

Mrs. Rajczewski said she had enjoyed her service tremendously and met and worked with many fine people. The Town is in good hands.

The Moderator announced that there would be a reception for Mrs. Rajczewski on January 6th at 4:30 in the Mather Center.

Mrs. Rajczewski was presented with a beautiful, massive bouquet of flowers by Lois Schneider and Monica McNally.

STATE OF THE TOWN REPORTS

CHAIR, PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

Stephen Olvany read his report (attached) and made a power-point presentation.

CHAIR, BOARD OF EDUCATION

Tara Ochman read her written report (attached).

CHAIR, BOARD OF FINANCE

Jon Zagrodzky presented his report using a power-point presentation (attached).

FIRST SELECTMAN

First Selectman Jayme Stevenson read her written report (attached).

**** UPON MOTION MADE AND SECONDED FROM THE FLOOR, IT WAS
UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO ADJOURN AT 9:40 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Telesco Blois
Telesco Secretarial Services

State of the Town of Darien Address
Stephen Olvany -- Planning and Zoning, Chairman
December 9, 2019

Slide 1: Thank you, Mister Moderator & fellow elected officials. Good evening everyone, I am Stephen Olvany, Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission. I was recently elected as the Chair and I am very excited for the position and for its challenges.

Before I commence with my update, I would like to extend my thanks to my fellow commissioners for all their hard work and dedication. Since last year, three members have left—John Sini, who is now on the Board of Education; Kevin Cunningham, who now serves on the Police Commission; and Liz Riva. I want to thank them for their hard work and service to the community, and to formally welcome our new members---Cara Gately, George Reilly, and Larry Warble.

I want to thank John, Kevin and Liz for the recent work that they, as well as 3 current members have done regarding updating our zoning regulations. This was a natural outgrowth of the 2016 Town Plan of Conservation and Development, and we were able to better clarify and streamline some of the zoning regulations as they relate to food uses and commercial zones in Town. We were responsive to comments we had received relative to making the regulations simpler, and having fewer commercial districts. We believe that the hard work we put into these new regulations will have a beneficial impact to development and redevelopment in Town going forward.

The first topic I'd like to speak on tonight is the role that the Planning & Zoning Commission plays. Our Commission is just one of four local land use boards that have a role in development or redevelopment of the community. These also

include the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Environmental Protection Commission and the Architectural Review Board. Over the next few weeks, I will be reaching out to the Chairmen of each of those boards to discuss our common roles, and to thank them for their work in this team effort. In my six-and-a-half plus years on the Planning & Zoning Commission, and in my former tenure on the Zoning Board of Appeals, I realize that all of the boards play an essential part in the redevelopment of the community, and making Darien what it is today.

Our job as I see it, is to keep a good balance of development and re-development, and the currently existing small New England town character of Darien. The Planning & Zoning Commission would also like to see Darien have a strong downtown, and walkable business districts.

Second, I want to touch upon some of the redevelopment that has occurred within the past year or so. In reading Mr. Sini's speech from last year, I see that he noted the theme of "change". Change in Darien occurs almost daily, but is gradual. I have a quick Powerpoint showing some of the projects completed within the past year, and now underway, and soon to come. Some of you may be familiar with many of these, but I wanted to give you a sense for the positive economic situation we are in relative to other local communities. Keep in mind that according to the assessor, with every million dollars in grand list growth comes about \$12,000 in tax revenue to the Town. Jon Zagrotsky, Chairman of the Board of Finance, will be discussing these types of financial mathematics in further detail in his remarks.

Slide 2: Overall, zoning permits are down compared to the past few years. The graph on the screen shows that we project a decrease for the number of permits for this current fiscal year.

Slide 3: This graph shows the value of the Building Permits issued since 2015. As you can see, while there has been some variation in total value over the past few years, all of these years have resulted in well over \$100 million in total value constructed annually.

With that said, I'd like to thank you all and the community at large for investing in your properties and validating that we in Darien are doing it right.

Slide 4: New Single-family Residential construction continues. We are seeing about 30 new houses constructed annually for the past few years, and this year is no different. The slide you see is a new house going in at 6 Outlook Lane. Most new single-family residential construction is "replacement" housing, which is the teardown or demolition of an existing residence and the construction of a new, replacement residence on the same lot. As you know, since Darien is mostly "built-out", there are very few vacant lots in Town. Again with that said, the small 3 and 4 bedroom houses are being replaced with larger 4 to 5 bedroom houses. That is something that I know the Board of Education is monitoring, and that Board is in the process of working with a consultant on school enrollment projections.

Slide 5: The multi-family permits are quite interesting, and vary from year to year. The largest multi-family project is Kensett. Kensett Phase II is in the process of being completed. That Phase II area is a redevelopment of vacant land off of Hoyt Street and some older homes at the end of Wakemore Street, into 14 townhouse-style large condominiums. This entire project, which includes more than 70 new units in phases I and II, should be completed in 2020. At an estimated average tax bill of \$15,000 per unit, that adds over \$1.0 MM to the tax roll.

Slide 6: Old Town Hall Homes will be a new 55 unit deed-restricted apartment building. It will then be rebranded as “The Royle at Darien”, since it was originally the site of Royle School (prior to it becoming Town Hall). Expected completion date of this project is sometime in the summer of 2020.

Slide 7: Two private Clubs also have recently completed new construction—the Noroton Yacht Club finished a new building a few months ago. This new building complies with all flood regulations.

Slide 8: The Ox Ridge Riding & Racquet Club has also completed new construction, which will allow it to focus on other activities in addition to horseback riding.

Slide 9: As for commercial redevelopment, there has been quite a bit recently.

- 320-330 Boston Post Road—there are two office buildings now being renovated for office uses. Many of you may have noticed the new facades, new landscaping, new sidewalks, and rebranding of the property. We are pleased to see these buildings containing vibrant office uses, rather than lying dormant.

Slide 10: Orange Theory at 364 Boston Post Road recently opened and has been a big success. The landlord has leased most of the refurbished building, and a gourmet grocery, Pasta Vita, will open in December or January, taking up nearly all of the remainder of the vacant space.

Slide 11: The Residences at Selleck's Woods, an assisted living/memory care facility, was completed a few months ago on Parklands Drive.

Slide 12: There have been a number of new businesses established since this time last year—too numerous to name them all. Some of them include:

Flour Water Salt Bakery

BonBon hair salon

Hollow Tree Self Storage

Caffe Nero

J. McLaughlin, and

Shoes N More

As you have all heard by now, and saw the presentations at a previous RTM meeting in October, three major redevelopments are about to get underway.

Slide 13: The first step in the Federal Realty project in Noroton Heights is the construction of a new Walgreens between the existing Walgreens and Equinox. That work, which I will call Phase I, will occur between now and fall 2020. Significant drainage improvements will also be implemented as part of this project. According to Federal Realty's 3Q2019 REIT filings, the projected cost of their project is \$110 to \$120 million. This is in addition to their initial purchase in April 2013. Federal's anticipated stabilization date is 2023 (10-years). They are underway and the Stop & Shop on Heights Road is to close on Thursday Dec. 19th

Slide 14: I am pleased to note that the New Noroton Heights Shopping Center redevelopment project is about to get underway. It is a 40+ million dollar project,

and all the financing is finalized, a general contractor hired, logistics plans prepared, and they are ready to get started. Demolition Permits have been applied for with the Building Department for most of the existing buildings, and some demolition will occur starting in January.

A groundbreaking ceremony will be held on Wednesday.

Expected completion sometime in 2022.

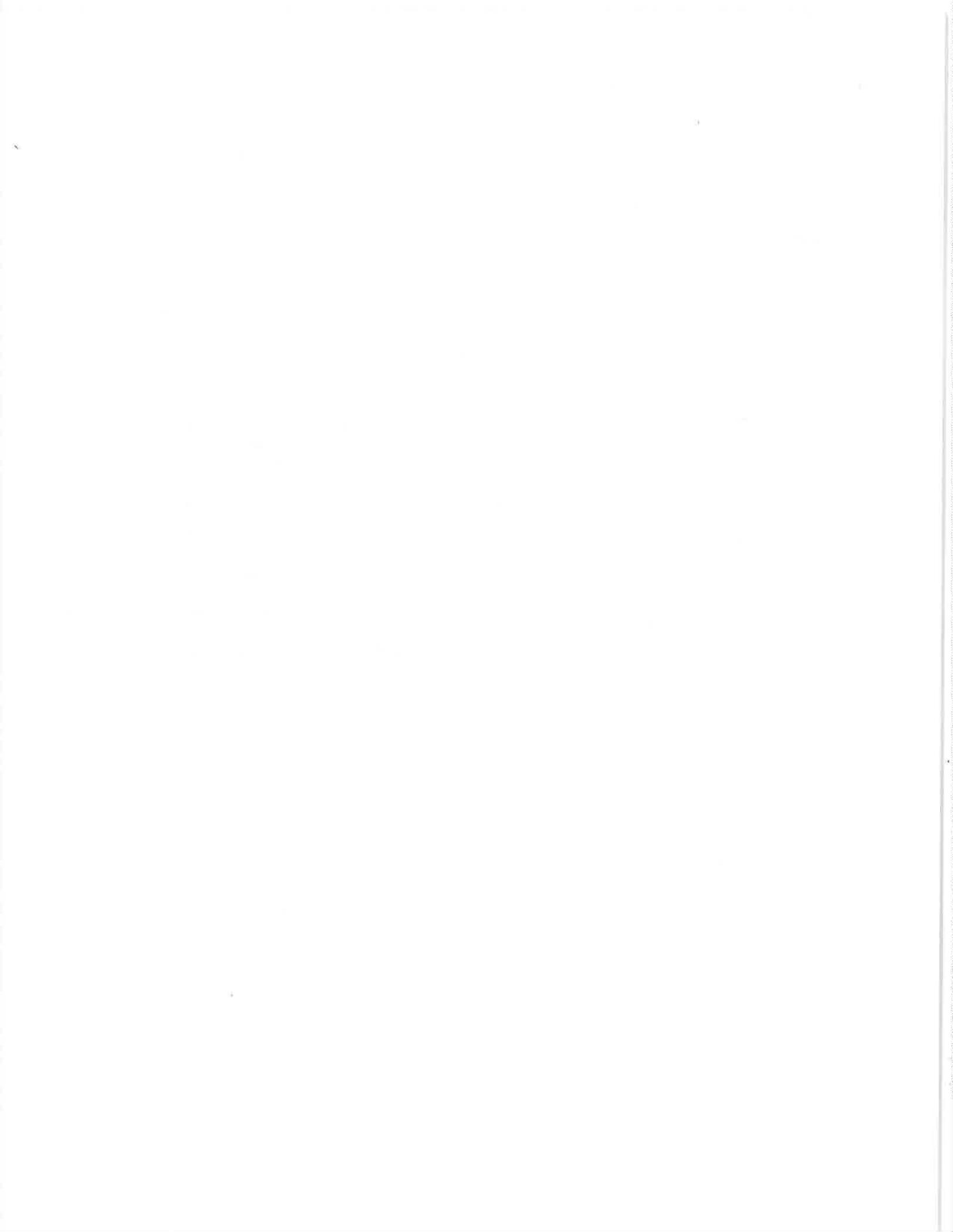
A rendering of the final product is shown on the screen behind me.

Slide 15: Finally, the redevelopment of the downtown, in what will be called, “The Corbin District”, will get underway in spring 2020. The first step will be the demolition of the Gulf gas station at the corner of Boston Post Road and Corbin Drive, and the related redevelopment on the east side of Corbin Drive. Changes to the buildings on the west side of Corbin Drive will get underway in 2021 or 2022.

I would also like to thank all these key investors, some of whom are local residents for investing in Darien and again validating that we are doing the right stuff.

Slide 16: The final topic I wish to discuss is the Planning & Zoning Commission’s role in being what I will call “Stewards of the Grand List”. Because communities get a majority of their tax revenue from local property taxes, it is essential that a stable Grand List exist. I believe that our Grand List continues to get stronger. Board of Finance Chairman Jon Zagrodzky will get you more details about the changing Grand List in his State of the Town Address.

Slide 17: In conclusion, I foresee a very interesting 2020 ahead. We will see the start of the new construction projects both in downtown and Noroton Heights. We



will see the completion of Old Town Hall Homes—The Royle at Darien, and all 55 new units being occupied. Our land use boards will be involved in the review and permitting of number of exciting new projects, including, but not limited to a replacement Ox Ridge Elementary School, and a review of the details of the Weed Beach Meadow and Trails project--a follow-up to our October finding that the improvements are generally consistent with the Town Plan of Conservation & Development.

The various land use boards spent hours of time and effort working with applicants in reviewing and analyzing their proposals, and we are anxious to see the fruits of our labor. So as John Sini mentioned to you last year, we will soon be going through a little discomfort in terms of construction activity, but the end result should be spectacular new additions to both our residential and commercial tax base, and new living, shopping and dining opportunities. I hope next year I am up here saying that all of our planning is going well and as exactly as designed and envisioned.

One last thought...I can remember when Grove Street in downtown was very different than it is today, and the proposed improvements for the area were considered a big change for our downtown. Today, it seems like we have a “mini Arthur Avenue District” in downtown Darien, which contains a Butcher, a Fish Market & our new Bread Baker. I continue to be excited about the changes that are imminent, and believe that they will all contribute to a better Darien.

Thank you again for your time this evening. I look forward to working with all of you in the year ahead.



State of the Town Address

Stephen Olvany
Planning & Zoning Commission Chairman

December 9, 2019

1

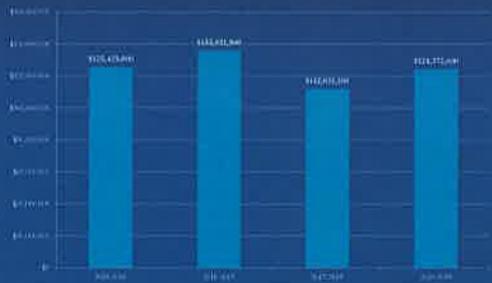
Number of Zoning Permits



Source: Darien Planning & Zoning Department, December 2019

2

Value of All Building Permits



Source: Darien Building Department, December 2019

3

New single-family residential construction

(average of about 30 annually—
almost all are "replacements" not on vacant land)



4

Kensett Phase II



5

Old Town Hall Homes—The Royle at Darien (now under construction expected completion 2020)



6

Noroton Yacht Club



Ox Ridge Riding & Racquet Club



320-330 Boston Post Road



364 Boston Post Road



- Orange Theory has taken about 50% of the space formerly occupied by Meile and Jacks Fabrics.
- Pasta Viva will take a part of the remaining space.

The Residences at Selleck's Woods

- Assisted Living & Memory Care Facility

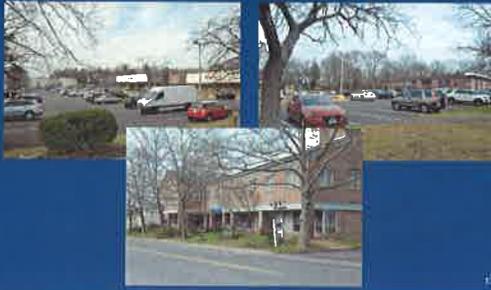


New businesses



Federal Realty Properties

- Mixed-Use Development (east end of Heights Road)



13

Noroton Heights Shopping Center Redevelopment

- Mixed-Use Development (west end of Heights Road)



14

The Corbin District (Baywater Properties)

Corbin District mixed-use redevelopment

First phase=demolition of gas station at corner of Corbin Drive & Boston Post Road.

The construction will start on the east side of Corbin Drive (the buildings on the left in the photo below).



Darien Grand List Growth 2003-2018



Source: Darien Assessors' Office, December 2018

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State of the Town Address

Stephen Olvany
Planning & Zoning Commission Chairman

16

Good Evening Mr. Moderator, members of the RTM, fellow elected officials and all those in the community, both here and watching on channel 79. On behalf of my colleagues from the Board of Education, it is my pleasure to update you on our work for the children, families and taxpayers of Darien.

While I may be a familiar face, I again stand here to introduce a new Superintendent of Schools.

NEW SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Last year the Board of Education completed its highly competitive National Search for a new Superintendent. The amount of strongly qualified applicants is a testament to this community, and its reputation for supporting strong public schools. At the end of a rigorous and thorough process, we were proud to announce that Dr. Alan Addley had accepted this essential position.

Dr. Addley is a native of Northern Ireland, and began his career as a mathematics teacher. He has thirty-five years of administrative and teaching experience in private and public schools in the United States and Ireland. Prior to arriving in Darien, Dr. Addley was Superintendent of Granby Schools for eleven years.

A highly respected and exceptional school leader, Dr. Addley is a Governing Board member for the national superintendents' association (AASA) and a Past President of CAPSS and the Hartford Area Superintendents' Association. He was the recipient of the 2017 UCONN NEAG School of Education Outstanding School Superintendent Award and was the 2019 Connecticut Superintendent of the Year.

Along with his strong resume, strength of character and passion for his profession, Dr. Addley stressed to the Board his long term commitment to Darien and its children. Please take a moment in the coming months to introduce yourself and get to know Alan. The Board is sure you will be pleased to have done so.

ENROLLMENT

Currently 4,656 Children are enrolled K-12 in the Darien Schools, with another 100 children in our ELP program. Our most recent enrollment study, by the independent firm Milone & MacBroom, projected out to 2029-2030 noting a slight decline of about 100 students by that time. As the Commissioner of Education noted at a recent meeting here in Darien, we are a high growth and high achievement district.

Our current average cost per pupil is \$21,930, which has grown, but still places us squarely in the median range in our comparable district reference group.

BUDGET INITIATIVES 2019-2020

When we last met, the RTM approved the 2019-2020 budget. We would like to take a moment to update you on some of the work that your votes made possible.

At the Elementary Level we are implementing:

- Math in Focus (also known as Singapore Math) in grades K-4. This has been a very successful rollout
- New STEM units at our elementary schools- facilitated by our DHS students who come into the classroom to work with their younger counterparts as role models in learning.
- Wilson Foundations- a systematic program in critical foundational skills, emphasizing phonics, reading fluency, handwriting and comprehension strategies.
- The Responsive Classroom Model.

Also, the addition of a second psychologist to each elementary school was an important and often discussed initiative. While we are only three months into the school year, early reports from building administrators show service goals to meet student needs are being achieved. As a Board we look forward to a comprehensive update on this addition in the future. Also, as we continue conversations around the State we find we are not alone or unique in seeing a rise in requests for staffing related to mental health, especially at the primary level.

At the Secondary Level we are implementing a:

- Health and Wellness/Social Emotional Learning curriculum
- New STEM program with the implementation of the Project Lead the Way (PLTW)
- CAPSTONE project beginning in 6th grade and carrying through until 8th grade graduation.

District-wide

- Our students now have access to technology from home to school in grades 5-12 with our 1:1 initiative. Students in grades K-4 have access to technology in their classroom setting.
- The district is now maintaining a digital warehouse for curriculum across departments, grades K-12.
- Students have a very clear support model for structured intervention when needed across English/Language Arts, Mathematics, and Social Emotional Learning, which includes benchmark assessments and a data system (for content areas)
- We have exciting new units of study in social studies and science that are aligned to the frameworks and Next Generation Science Standards.
- Teachers and Administrators participate in learning rounds as a mode of providing formative feedback as we support our highly-qualified teachers.
- We continue to invest significantly in offering the most qualified intervention staff.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

It is most important to note some of the impressive work of our students. A brief and never complete list includes:

- National Merit Program (NMSQT) : 9 Semi - finalists and 28 Commended Scholars
- 65 Athletic Teams in 22 Different Sports, with both FCIAC and CIAC championships won this Fall
- Student Artists from across the District were exhibited in Town Hall for their exceptional work
- Theatre 308 put on an Exceptional performance of Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime this Fall, and Chicago last spring
- Students' performance across standardized and nonstandardized assessments continues to be exceptional
- Our Middlesex Quizbowl team has been successful in Championships once again
- And we are proud to report that U. S. News & World Report named Darien High School the #1 Public High School in CT (2019), and Newsweek named DHS one of the 100 Best STEM High Schools in the Nation (2019)

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT LEVEL OF WORK

In the new year we will work with both the Education Committee and the Finance & Budget Committee to communicate the details of the Teachers Contract. At the high level, the BOE successfully negotiated a contract that respects our teachers, and initiated workload changes which will provide the Town with both immediate and long term savings.

The Board feels that investing in our teachers is an essential investment for our students. It allows us to attract and retain dedicated professionals. They play a vital role in the daily lives of our children all day, 5 days a week. The value of our human capital cannot be underestimated. We look forward to continue this conversation with the RTM.

The Board of Education is engaging in strategic planning and some of you may be asked to participate. The Board and the Administration firmly believe it is time for a Strategic Plan that will help set the course for the future and provide a road map for the community as the Board moves forward with our goals, objectives, and capital projects.

We thank the Board of Selectmen, and the RTM for their support of the new Ox Ridge Elementary School. We have been encouraged by the strong work of the Building Committee. This is the type of thoughtful collaboration Darien can be proud to engage in.

The Board is beginning to plan for the removal of portables across the district. These temporary solutions have stood in place for far too long, and in today's changing world, bring concerns of safety and security, and educational best practice.

ACCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS

Students are always our top priority. We plan for all children and their educational needs. Our job is to educate all of our children as they come to us. It is important to remember that all students are general education students first, and those that receive services do so...in order to access their education.

Student identification is rising across almost all districts. It is a reality.

At a recent Legislative breakfast Dr. Addley and I, along with many Fairfield County Districts implored our state representatives to look again at appropriate funding mechanism for education and specialized grants for student services. The Complexities of Federal and State funding are detailed and can be unpredictable. I believe that once again this year you will hear robust conversations related to funding, and especially Excess Cost Reimbursement.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As we head into budget season, I leave you with a few overall thoughts. Budgets engender important practical and philosophical debate; and, it is true that the School budget is a large portion of the overall tax base. However, our schools are an essential community service. Robust, strong schools are a generational investment. They drive residential real estate markets, and related commercial economic growth.

Our schools help make Darien a destination. A place where families grow, graduate and as many of you know return. Our last three years of budgets have shown the smallest percentage increases compared with recent history and compared to many other Mill Rate impact areas. We carry no debts or surpluses. Any unused funds are returned to the Town to benefit the overall financial wellbeing of the Town.

As a community, we have a proud tradition of delivering financial responsibility and educationally sound school budgets, it is our calling card.

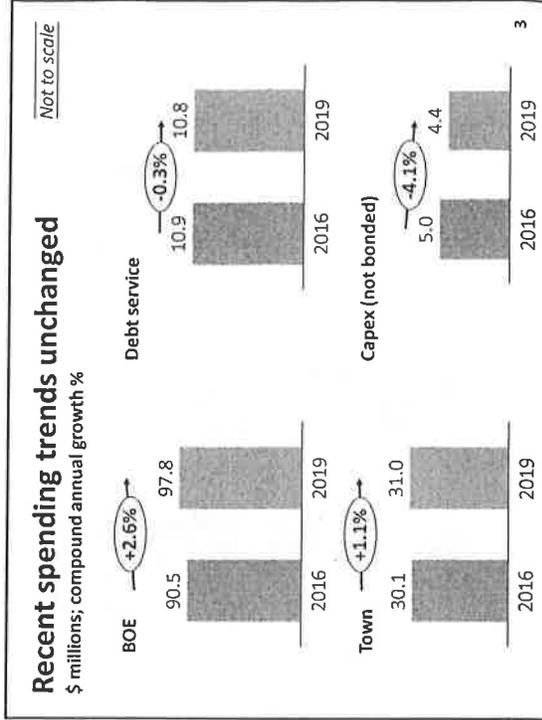
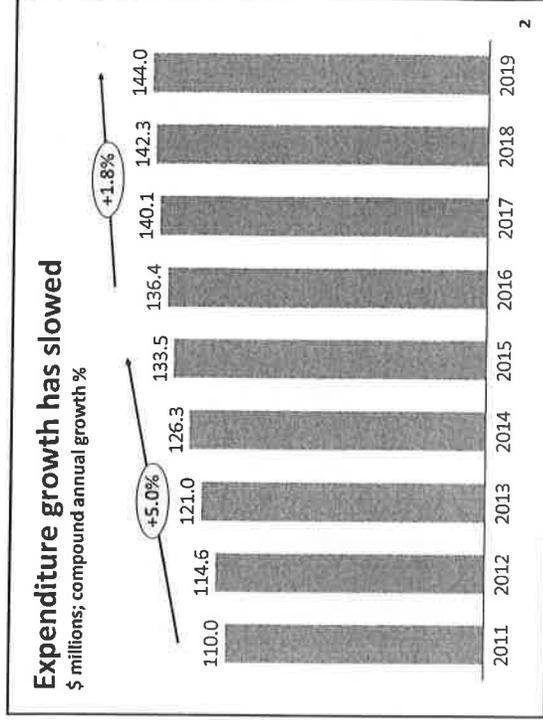
We support our counterparts on the Town side in bringing forward innovative, thoughtful initiatives. We will continue to do the same, and we look forward to working with you all to keep Darien vibrant and our children's future at the forefront of our decisions.

On behalf of the entire Board of Education I thank you for this opportunity, wish you a happy holiday season, and look forward to engaging you in the New Year

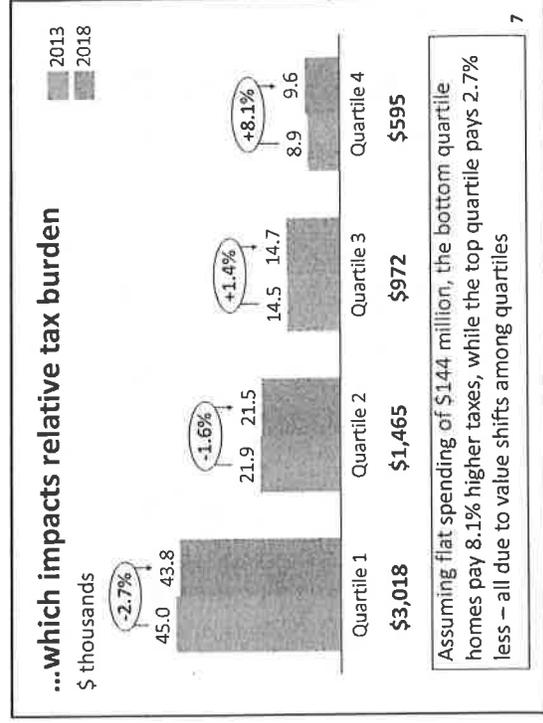
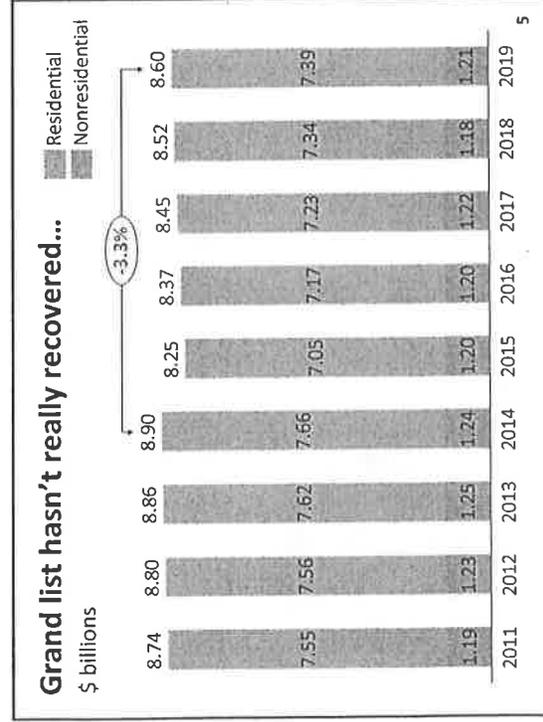
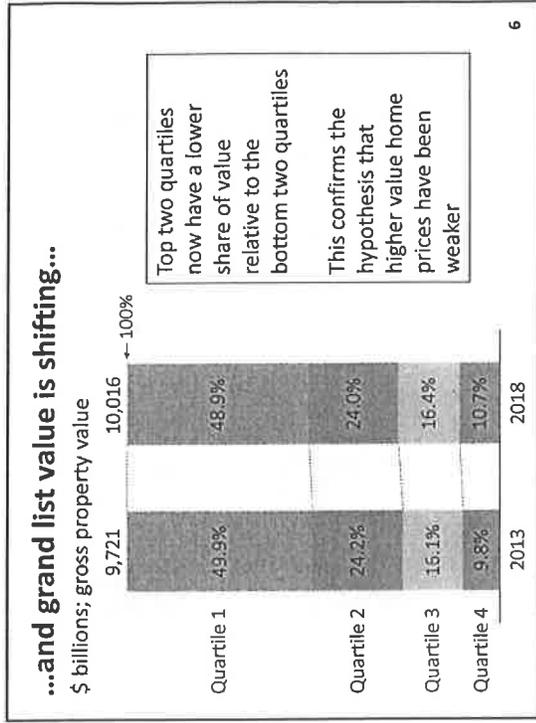
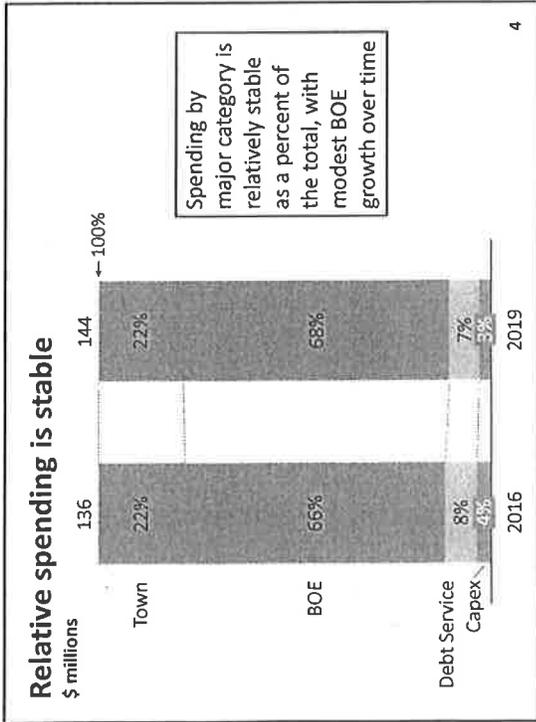


State of the Town Address

Darien Board of Finance
 Jon Zagrodzky, Chairman
 December 9, 2019

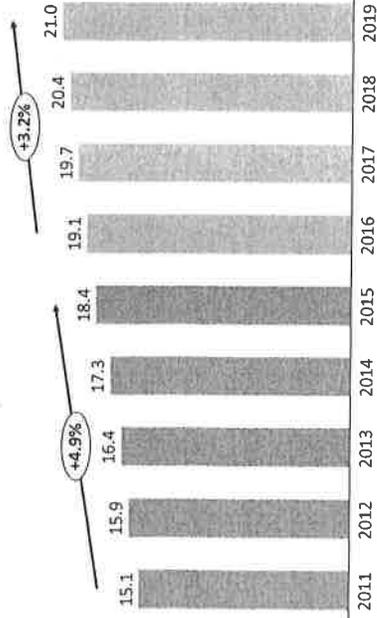


- ### Topics
- Yesterday: recent financial trends
 - Today: current finances
 - Tomorrow: five-year forecast
 - 2020-21 budget guidance
 - Concluding thoughts



BOE expenditures per student

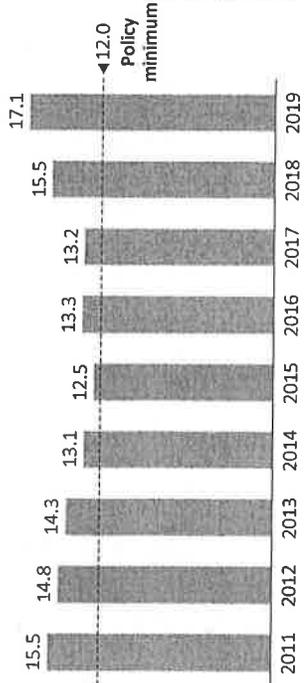
\$ thousands



8

Fund balance

Unassigned Fund Balance – % of Budgetary Revenues



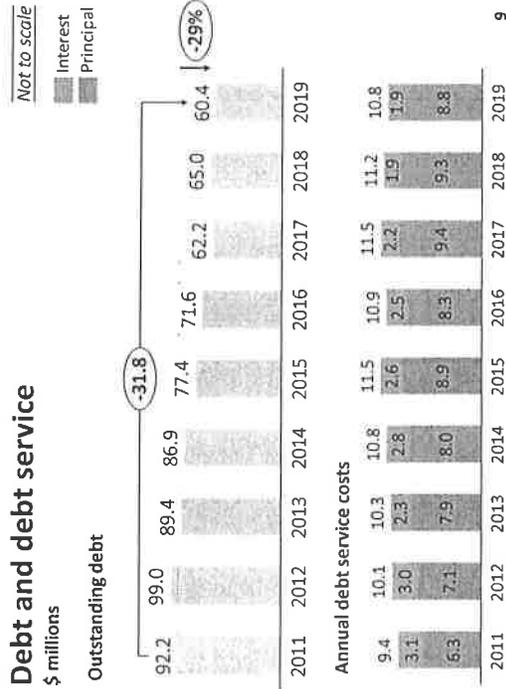
Unassigned Fund Balance – \$ millions

2011	17.2	2012	17.0	2013	17.4	2014	16.5	2015	16.7	2016	18.2	2017	18.4	2018	22.3	2019	25.1
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10

Debt and debt service

\$ millions



9

Recent history – observations

Stable financial picture – spending and debt levels, fund balance

A concern: shifting tax burdens

The town and the schools remain well-managed from a financial standpoint

11

Topics

- Yesterday: recent financial trends
- **Today: current finances**
- Tomorrow: five-year forecast
- 2020-21 budget guidance
- Concluding thoughts

12

2019-20 budget – update

\$ millions

	Budget	Actual	Difference
Revenues			
Property taxes	138.7	138.7	0.0
Other revenues	8.6	8.6	0.0
State grants	0.5	0.5	0.0
Fund balance draw	0.0	2.2	2.2 *
Total revenue	147.8	150.0	2.2
Expenditures			
Town	33.9	33.9	0.0
BOE	100.1	100.1	0.0
Debt service	10.7	12.9	2.2 *
Capex	3.1	3.1	0.0
Total expenditures	147.8	150.0	2.2
Contribution to fund balance		-2.2	-2.2

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2018-19 Budget – final

\$ millions

	Budget	Actual	Difference
Revenues			
Property taxes	137.2	137.9	0.7
Other revenues	7.9	8.2	0.3
State grants	0.1	0.6	0.5
Fund balance draw	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total revenue	145.2	146.7	1.5
Expenditures			
Town	32.3	31.0	1.3
BOE	98.1	97.8	0.3
Debt service	10.8	10.8	0.1
Capex	3.9	4.4	-0.4
Total expenditures	145.2	144.0	1.2
Contribution to fund balance		2.7	2.7

13

Capital projects

\$ thousands

	Budget	Actual	Surplus / (Deficit)
Recent			
Public works garage	6,545	6,030	515
Cafeteria expansion	1,957	1,899	52
Turf field	585	570	15
			Nearly \$600K in surpluses versus final budget
Current			
Ox Ridge Elementary	63,000		
Holmes roof	1,020		
Highland Farms	609		
Hindley roof	558		
Town hall generator	250		
<i>Pear Tree Point</i>	2,500-3000?		
<i>Noraton Heights Train Station?</i>	???		

Notes:

- Ox Ridge estimates coming in high; education specs and capacity plans under review
- Pear Tree Point on hold pending further public input, but in my view, renewal of this town asset remains a necessity

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Perspectives on the Teacher Contract

Headline three-year increase of 11.3% (~3.6% p.a.) driven by:

- Step and wage increases in combination
- Relatively higher number of lowered tenured teachers

There's lots more to this:

Complex process
Many other provisions

Overall, my judgment is that yes, it's expensive, but it's not unreasonable

Future contracts: tighter collaboration between BOF and other Boards

Example from contract overview

Step	Current	New	Wage % inc.
15	88.7	89.1	0.5%
16	92.6	93.0	0.5%
17	96.6	97.1	0.5%
18	101.4	102.0	0.5%
19	108.1	109.7	1.5%

- Lower tenured teacher above gets step and wage increase: 4.9%
- Top step teachers gets wage increase only: 1.5%

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Topics

- Yesterday: recent financial trends
- Today: current finances
- **Tomorrow: five-year forecast**
- 2020-21 budget guidance
- Concluding thoughts

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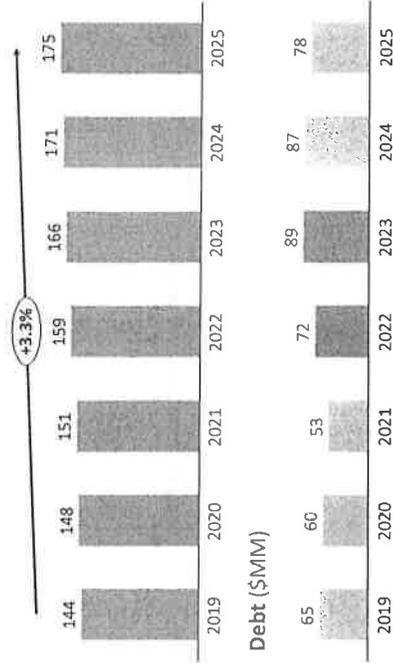
Current situation – observations

- Welcome surplus from last year
- Current budget on track
- Capex on track as well, with possible turbulence: Ox Ridge and Pear Tree Point
- Fund balance surplus being used for debt reduction, but overall fund balance level remains healthy
- No major concerns at the moment**

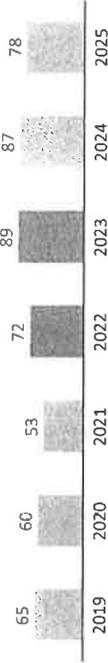
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Baseline forecast

Expenditures (\$MM)



Debt (\$MM)



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Some crystal ball comments

Fact-free observation: my intuition does not square with forecasts of student enrollment decline. Darien is too attractive, there is a lot of proposed new housing, and the NYC commute is quite favorable versus other towns



Our personnel costs are largely driven by union contracts, and these annual costs are all well north of 3%. The 3.3% increase figure I just showed may be optimistic – we'll see

It is a little unclear to me how the state resolves its financial predicaments without significant additional sacrifice from richer municipalities. We should remain vigilant.

We have not yet forecast the tax revenue impact of new developments about to get underway – both direct (from the properties themselves) and indirect (overall town improvement resulting from these developments)

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Topics

- Yesterday: recent financial trends
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- **2020-21 budget guidance**
- Concluding thoughts

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Long-term management philosophy

Loss of state support; imposition of pension costs

Major items under our control

Minor items, even if the movement is significant

- Elections matter
- Contact your State officials

- **Focused attention**
- **Multi-board engagement**
- **Thoughtful scrutiny**

- Avoid micromanagement
- Let the professionals do their jobs
- Focus on the overall guidelines

Keep these items under control!

- Headcount growth and benefits
- Capital project management

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2020-21 budget guidance

Core operations

- Existing personnel, benefits
- Existing operational requirements
- Initiatives already in place

New projects or investments

- Net headcount growth
- New capital projects
- Significant changes in programs or benefits
- Significant new initiatives

Total spending growth should not exceed 3% in any case

1.5 to 2.5% increase, flat headcount

- New efficiencies?
- Same with less?
- Over this guidance → let's talk

For discussion!

- Thorough presentations and explanations
- "Make the case"

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Concluding thoughts

- Lots of confidence in the new Superintendent...
- ...but I would still like to see OpenGov implemented for the education budget
- A huge thank you to all town and education employees
 - I am regularly impressed by their dedication, commitment and skill
- I would like to reiterate support for the Board of Selectmen's effort to develop a Community Values Statement

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Thank you!



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First Selectman, Jayme Stevenson
State of the Town Address
12/9/2019

Good evening Mr. Moderator, members of the RTM, fellow elected officials and everyone watching from home on TV79. I'd like to recognize our newest RTM members ...would you please stand so we can give you a warm welcome.

I would also like to recognize our wonderful Town Clerk, Donna Rajczewski, who is retiring on December 31st and extend to her our gratitude for her 23 years of service to our town and ten terms as our Town Clerk.

We welcome Caryn Diller as our Town Clerk along with all the other newly elected officials including my Board of Selectmen colleagues Christa McNamara, Sarah Neumann and David Martin. We are going to have a great year with the depth of experience these folks bring to our work. I'm deeply grateful for the contributions of my former colleagues, Pam Sparkman, Marc Thorne and Susan Marks and wish them well on their new endeavors. The great news is that they have each taken on new volunteer roles in service to our town.

How fortunate are we to have the best Superintendent in the state, Dr. Alan Addley, here in the home of the Blue Wave? Welcome Dr. Addley. Your care and concern for our kids, teachers, staff, families and community is evident and we know that your work with the Board of Education will redefine excellence in education here in Darien.

And speaking of the Blue Wave...although this wasn't our year to win the Turkey Bowl, Darien did win the "Most Generous Town" award beating New Canaan in a battle of giving to the Darien and New Canaan Community Foundations. Way to go team!

Tonight I address you for the 9th time as your First Selectman. Thank you for continuing to put trust and faith in me to captain our team both here at home and on the regional and state levels. I appreciate this annual opportunity to share with you our notable accomplishments and to frame our goals and challenges ahead.

Over the past year, the Darien Police Department has been transformed with the retirements of Chief Ray Osborne and Captain John Lawlor and the promotions

these retirements facilitated. On September 2nd, after 36 years with the Darien Police Department, Captain Don Anderson became the 11th Darien Chief of Police, a job his father, the late Bruce Anderson, held from 1988 to 1993. Don and his father are not the only father/son team to serve the Darien Police Department. In June, 23-year veteran Jeremiah Marron, Jr was promoted to the rank of Captain...the same position his late father, Jeremiah Marron Sr held in the 1980's. Lieutenant Bob Shreders was promoted to Captain and Sergeant Alison Hudyma was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant becoming the first woman Lieutenant in the history of the Darien Police Department.

I'm very pleased to share that several years of collaboration between the Board of Selectmen, the Board of Education and the Darien Police Department has resulted in the placement of a School Resource Officer at Middlesex Middle School. School, community and cybersecurity are priorities for the Board of Selectmen and we stand ready to work with the district and through our shared IT service model on best-practice security measures.

We now have 6 civilian dispatchers giving us full civilian coverage for the day and evening shifts. The goal of hiring professional tele communicators was to put sworn officers on patrol, to facilitate the placement of an SRO in the middle school and to dedicate an officer to narcotics investigations. I believe we've succeeded in 2 of these 3 goals.

On behalf of the Darien Police Department I want to remind you to lock your cars! Car burglaries and thefts continue to plague our town. The problem isn't unique to Darien but leaving your cars unlocked...often with the keys or key fobs inside...is inviting crime into your neighborhood.

2019 has been another very busy year for our Public Works and Parks & Recreation Departments. Solar installations are complete on the roofs of the town garage, police station and here at Town Hall. The Stony Brook River sedimentation basin adjacent to the Mather Center was successfully dredged this fall and prep work for the new Town Hall generator has begun. Several town hall safety improvement projects are underway and, as you can see from these design boards, the schematic design for a new Noroton Heights Train Station facility is complete. Next steps on the train station improvement project are to receive the final draft feasibility study and meet with CTDOT to outline our project partnership.

Not quite as exciting but equally as important is the work underway to improve our sanitary sewer system. Some issues you will be hearing in the coming months are "illicit connections", "I &I" and "FOG". Darien's sanitary sewer system collects sewage and pumps it to the Stamford Water Pollution Control Authority facility for treatment. Darien pays Stamford significant sums for sewage treatment and any excess water entering the system from illegal sump pump and roof leader connections and ground water infiltration, adds to the capacity and financial burden.

"FOG" stands for fats, oils and grease that get into the sewer system from food establishments and cause blockages. If your fascinated by this stuff like I am...google "fatbergs" and be prepared to be grossed out. We've hired a consultant for a multi-year project to help us find ways to reduce I&I and improve our sewer system.

Phase one of the Eversource natural gas main and Aquarion water main installation projects are complete. Additional phases have not been identified although we are exploring whether we can get natural gas to the new Ox Ridge Elementary School site to help realize significant energy savings. We are now in the 18-month natural gas customer connection period after which roads will be repaved.

Kip Koons, Duke Dineen and the entire Ox Ridge Elementary School Building Committee are doing an excellent job with this very complex construction project. Schematic design is nearly complete and a robust "value management" process is underway to bring costs back in line with original estimates and the RTM's \$63 million appropriation.

Installation of the permanent parking areas and walking path at Highland Farm will be completed in the spring. Our chosen contractor's schedule didn't allow for project completion before asphalt plants closed this fall. As promised, we will be meeting with adjacent neighbors in the coming months to discuss landscape buffers and we hope to install a Pollinator Pathway meadow on the property.

Commercial redevelopment activities are in full swing. Noroton Heights Shopping Center (aka Palmers) tenants have been relocated and ground breaking is scheduled for this Wednesday. Site work and demolition has begun on the Federal Realty property. The Noroton Heights Stop n' Shop will close on December 19th. If you're

a customer, don't despair, the company has made significant investments in their Goodwives property that will serve our community well.

While we eagerly wait for the Corbin, Palmer and Federal Realty projects to take shape, there is robust small business development happening in Darien. Flour, Water, Salt; J. McLaughlin; Caffe Nero; Anju Breathing Space; Osteostrong; Shoes n' More; BonBon Hair Salon; Orange Theory Fitness; Everwell and HAVYN Co-Working spaces and the Residence at Selleck's Woods, are just a few of the businesses that have opened within the last year. The Royle Senior Housing is scheduled to open next summer. My colleagues across the state have heard about all the great things happening here in Darien.

We have our fiscal house in order and we fund our pensions; we invest wisely in our schools, parks, beaches and keep our infrastructure well-maintained; we take care of those among us who need a helping hand and we are mindful stewards of our environment. By the extraordinary efforts of the Advisory Committee on Sustainability, Darien has received SustainableCT Bronze Certification! (show plaque) Certification is awarded to participating towns that have demonstrated achievements in 9 areas of community action.

- Thriving Local Economy (C-PACE)
- Well-Stewarded Land and Natural Resources (Watershed Education)
- Vibrant and Creative Cultural Ecosystems (Map Tourism and Cultural Assets)
- Dynamic and Resilient Planning (Sustainability in our Town Plan)
- Clean and Diverse Transportation Systems and Choices (Nelson Nygaard Parking Study)
- Efficient Physical Infrastructure and Operations (LED Streetlight Conversion)
- Strategic and Inclusive Public Services (Sea Level Rise Panel Discussion, Recycling Services)
- Healthy, Efficient and Diverse Housing (Housing Needs Assessment)
- Inclusive and Equitable Community Impacts (Transportation/Coupons for Farmers' Market and Access to Swap Shop)
- Innovation Action (Single Use Bag Education, Pollinator Pathway)

We received 210 points for 18 actions. Our certification is effective until the end of 2022 giving us time to take our sustainability efforts to the next level. The

Advisory Committee on Sustainability is eager to continue their work and have outlined opportunities and recommendations to guide the next phase of the certification. Craig Flaherty, Kathy Finnegan, Carolyn Bayne and the rest of the committee and town staff deserve special recognition for their efforts. The Board of Selectmen has made "sustainability" throughout town government a priority. I invite the Board of Education and all town businesses and agencies to partner with us on this effort.

It's been another busy year for the Darien Parks & Recreation Commission and staff. Over 4000 people attended the town fireworks and the Darien Sport Shop Tree Lighting was as fabulous in spite of the foul weather. Parks & Rec has successfully taken over the organization of these two beloved town events and as a result, they are better than ever! Program registrations are up over 16% in the last 2 years and staff continues to innovate on new program offerings for our community.

Facilitated by the Darien Athletic Foundation and the Darien Community Foundation, a new cross country running trail at the Diller Park property and the Darien High School is nearly complete and plans are well underway for the Weed Beach Meadow and Trial project which will finally integrate the Short Lane parcel into the park. These projects demonstrate the value of collaboration and public/private partnerships. We are very grateful to our community partners for their extraordinary generosity.

Mark your calendars for the second annual Old Fashioned Holiday this Saturday, December 14th from 3-5 at Tilley Pond Park and Christmas Caroling on Sunday, December 15th at 5pm with the Friends of Gorham's Pond at 71 Goodwives River Road.

2020 is going to be a fabulous year! We ring in our Bicentennial Birthday year with an opening ceremony here in the Town Hall Auditorium on Friday evening January 10th beginning at 6:30pm. 60 Minutes correspondent, author and Darien, resident Scott Pelley will be our special guest. A reception in the Darien Arts Center will follow. Al Miller, Maggie McIntyre and the entire 2020 Bicentennial Committee are working hard to organize a wonderful year in celebration of our town's 200-year history. Volunteers and donations are welcomed.

The year 2020 gives us a great opportunity to look back not only at our history but to reflect on opportunities we were wise enough to seize. As our community continues debating the merits of the Pear Tree Beach improvement project, I'm reminded of when I first joined the Board of Selectmen. Our priority goal was to build a new senior center to more respectfully support the seniors in our community. Some of you will remember the repurposed elementary school (Hollow Tree Elementary School) that served as our senior center...a non-ADA compliant building with a leaky roof and child-sized bathroom fixtures included. At the time, the program supported less than 250 seniors. This body debated and some passionately objected, but the project was ultimately supported.

Today, we have nearly 1800 seniors who participate in Mather Center programs and our center is the envy of the state. We are making a positive difference in the lives of so many seniors in our beautiful center under the direction of our skilled staff.

My point in sharing this story now is that we must think about the future as we debate the best plan for Pear Tree Beach. Keeping an open mind, thinking about how we want to use the beach for the next 50 years and understanding that Pear Tree Beach is a treasured town asset meant to be enjoyed by all Darien residents is essential to thoughtful planning. Let's work together on a plan that we all can be proud of.

In 2020, the Board of Selectmen looks forward to collaborating with other town bodies on a Community Values Statement...a guiding principle that will define the culture we wish to cultivate throughout our community, in our work and through our interactions with each other. We will continue our efforts to make our town more pedestrian-friendly and to address our downtown parking challenges and must begin the conversation on the opportunities and challenges of 5G technology. Governor Lamont is committed to Connecticut being an early adopter of 5G wireless technology. There are significant land use implications and I recommend we take a proactive approach to preserving local control over 5G infrastructure. The conversation about the economic development potential unlocked by 5G is overshadowing the health concerns of exposure to radio frequency fields. Senator Richard Blumenthal, in a hearing before the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee earlier this year blasted the FCC and FDA for failing to conduct research into the safety of 5G technology. WestCOG is convening a 5G task force to help provide information to our member towns.

I've had the great honor of serving as Chairman of WestCOG and the Southwestern Region Metropolitan Planning Agency since 2017. My term will end in January 2020. I believe the Town of Darien has been well-served by my leadership and collaboration with my WestCOG colleagues. I will continue to represent you in my capacity as Chairman of our municipal insurance agency, CIRMA, and in my newly elected role as Second Vice President of CCM (Connecticut Conference of Municipalities).

WestCOG is also facilitating a regional bike plan that includes a pilot project to develop a bicycle route providing connectivity from downtown New Canaan to the shoreline in Darien. The proposed bike loop is approximately 30 miles long and will connect other key destinations like schools, train stations parks, trails and recreational facilities. The deliverable will be an action plan that includes a route, facility design guidelines and recommendations on how to complete the trail. The action plan should be completed by year end.

Other notable work by WestCOG includes the preparation of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy; a Regional Plan of Conservation and Development; identifying opportunities for voluntary service sharing between member towns; compiling a comprehensive municipal fee inventory; public safety consolidation for interested communities and technical support for local transportation projects.

There are several issues that are being studied that will likely appear on the 2020 legislative agenda. Tolls may come up for a vote in a January special session. The Governor is holding municipal aid for road paving and maintenance hostage to his proposed tolling/transportation infrastructure plan.

The Governor's new Task Force on Transit Oriented Development is focusing on "untapped economic potential in Fairfield County" that may include the development of state-owned rail station property for affordable housing and commercial development. CCM has convened task forces to study alternative revenue sources to help offset the over-reliance on local property tax and solutions for the state and municipal pension crisis. A working group in the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) is studying alternate methods of valuing motor vehicles. I look forward to working with my fellow board chairs to keep you updated on proposed legislation that will impact our community.

The November election was a great time to knock doors and talk with folks about our community. It is wonderful to see so many young families choosing Darien as their home. Our schools and parks get high marks and everyone is eager for the redevelopment projects to transform our commercial centers. Keeping property taxes low was a common refrain. They're counting on us to be good stewards of their tax dollars.

I must extend a special thank you this year to the Darien Fire Commission for working with me to significantly reduce the use of the audible fire horns. After years of discussion, a 90-day trial began on November 1st to limit horn use in an effort to improve the quality of living for folks living and working near our firehouses. And finally, a big shout out to our fantastic town staff who, with good cheer, keep the wheels of town government moving to make all of our lives a little bit better.

Warm holiday wishes to you and your families!

Thank you,
Jayme Stevenson, First Selectman