

## Minutes for the Public Works Meeting on March 13, 2017

Public Works held a joint session with F&B and PH&S with 8 members in attendance from Public Works. Ed Gentile, Director of Public Works spoke on the plans for the West Ave/Noroton plus the Hecker Avenue plans.

### Noroton Ave/West Ave Intersection

In March 2016 Ed Gentile researched widening the intersection, creating a left turn lane, upgrading the traffic signal hardware and increasing the traffic efficiency at Noroton Avenue and West Avenue. He estimated it would cost \$1 million dollars and asked for \$1.2 million to be set aside. It will include site testing with posts driven 10 feet deep into the soil and likely easements from the gas stations for a small right of way for the left turn lane. Allen O'Neill had given the town a 10 foot easement on the north side of West Avenue years ago. The existing pole with lots of fiber optics on the corner will also have to be addressed.

Questions- Jack Davis, Chairman of F&B asked what our cost would be for the project since the West COG/State grant will be paying for it. Ed said the town cost would be \$160,000 and the COG will give us \$1.2 million. If it ends up costing more, we can go back and ask the West COG for more money but Ed's goal is to stay within the \$1.2 million budget. He said a lot of the cost is signalization which will help multiple areas including the lights at Ledge and in the Noroton Heights area. Lois Schneider of PH&S asked if other intersections would be available for West COG money down the line and he said yes. It was asked if the \$1.2 million include easement costs and the answer was no but that he plans to value engineer so he can take the easement costs out. The \$160,000 is the construction estimate from the engineer. Ed looked at similar intersections and their costs and they were \$1.1 million from the West Cog so he asked for \$1.2 million to cover the costs. Tom Moore from PW asked how was this intersection picked. Three years ago when Ed was analyzing trouble spots for Darien, Jeremy Ginsberg help him target several intersections along with the consultants. Since the Allen O'Neill project was just finished that was a factor as it added additional traffic to the area. The project would include signalization, two signals, concrete paving, utility resolution which is expensive and the lines paved.

4 Resolutions - Public Works Committee voted unanimously 8-0 to approve the four resolutions tied to this project. PH&S voted unanimously 7-0 and F&B voted unanimously 11-0.

Ed Gentile thanked us for combining the three committees for this meeting as it was an effective way to answer many questions and see the perspective of three different committees at that same time.

### Hecker Avenue Project

The 4 resolutions include authorizing the purchase of 1.245 acres of land on Hecker Avenue and approving the State Funds from the DEEP and a gift from the Darien Land Trust grant. Tom Moore moved it for PW. There is \$2500-3000 coming from an existing fund of land acquisition in Darien from years ago. There is an estimated cost of cleaning up and maintaining the area but that would be absorbed by the Parks and Rec department. There is an anticipated one time cost of \$7,000 given to the Darien Land Trust to clear out the evasive plants. Patti Bumgardner asked if this could be a Eagle Scout project to help reduce that cost and help an Eagle Scout earn his badge. The land is being purchased and will remain open space which will also help with the flooding in that area. There is an option to have a natural or gravel path. It was estimated at \$3,000 for someone to donate it and establish the Friends of Hecker Park. Kate Buch said the intent is to leave the overall Hecker Avenue property in its natural state

except for pulling out the invasive plants. There will be no buildings, no permanent structures and it must stay as open space in order to receive this funding from the State/DEEP and the Darien Land Trust.

Questions - Jack Davis asked if we can do replanting of natural plants in the area to help reduce flooding. Tom Moore asked if we will own it now and the answer is yes and Park and Rec will manage it but it will not be designated as park land. It is 1.245 acres and there will be no line item in the budget for maintaining it.

#### 4 Resolutions

1) Accept the funds from the State/DEEP for the acquisition of the 1.245 acres of the Hecker Property. The PW committee voted unanimously in support of the acquisition. F&B was unanimous except for Brad Pattelli who abstained.

2) Accept the gift of \$137,000 from the Darien Land Trust. The PW and F&B Committees both voted unanimously to accepted the gift.

3) Conservation easement. PW voted unanimously and F&B passed on voting as Jack didn't feel it was for their committee.

4) Easement to the Darien Land Trust - PW voted unanimously.