

Public Works committee Special Meeting Minutes
December 17, 2018
Darien Town Hall Room 119

Committee Members Present: Monica M. McNally, Chairman
Jim Cameron, Tom Moore, Terrence Duffy,
Lindsey Kelly, Patrick Keane, Rolf Obin,
David Bayne, Arpita Muchhal
Frank Adelman

Meeting called to order: 7:30

Presentation by Bring Your Own (BYO) Lucia Zachowski, Co-Chairwomen

BYO Darien presented a proposal for an ordinance to phase out plastic and non-recycled paper checkout bags. BYO are concerned Darien residents about single-use waste/plastic bags. The ordinance would phase out the use of plastic bags in favor of reusable bags in Darien. Lucia and the BYO committee stated that 95% of the local businesses favored eliminating plastic bags. The remaining 4-5% that did not support the band for various reasons, such as plastic bags needed to keep newspapers dry when it rains.

Discussed the ordinance of Greenwich and Stamford, including the use of penalties to enforce the use of reusable or paper bags.

Jim Cameron- I am rethinking my vote against the plastic bag ordinance from six year ago and now inclined to favor an ordinance to phase out plastic. I do have a question of why are some bag okay and shouldn't we eliminate all plastic bags?

Lucia stated product bags, like garbage and dry cleaning bags would be exempt.

BYO- starting small by banding shopping bag with the goal of banding all plastic bags, including product bags in the future.

Terry Duffy- what was the position of the retailers in regards to charging a fee of ten cent a bag.

Lucia stated most retailer want to charge the fee.

Jim- Jamie Stevens and the selectmen have stated the ordinance should not cost the Darien taxpayer and the town should not pay for additional staff to enforce it.

BYO- In Greenwich it is the Town Conservation group with enforces the ordinance.

Monica- Big issue is how to enforce the ordinance; if a fine is in place then the town needs to enforce it.

Monica- I would like to know how to answer our neighbors and friends this holiday season when asked question about the ordinance?

Do our constituents support the fee/tax/charge concept?
How would we enforce the ordinance?

BYO- it's really up to the town on how to enforce the ordinance and/or charge a fee.

Jim- Commends the BYO committee for their time and efforts. However, you (BYO) may need to take this ordinance to a town wide referendum.

Monica- Jim this is not what we have to cover here tonight.

Jim- this topic will require a long debate and you (BYO) may need to take it to a referendum.

David- While I agree being friendly to businesses is important, they may or not support it; it's up to the community to support the band. I do see a lot of support for this and like to see it more forward.

Monica- question for the BYO committee- Are there other items you would like to band.

BYO-yes we would like to see other plastic items banded, such as plastic straws etc.

David- is the state of Connecticut looking to create a statewide ordinance banding plastic bags.

BYO-Not at this time- the state would like the towns to issue their own ordinance and regulations.

Monica- Thank the BYO committee for their time.

Monica- we need to schedule a town hearing.

Jim- we need TGS&A and Public Safety committee involved, these are the committees that the question has been referred to by the rules committee.

David- it is simply, have a public notice posted in a local paper and reserve a room for a public meeting to hear comments and questions.

Monica- will you (David) update the committee on CT legislation status and Max Patrick can you contact town hall for a location. The date should be in February- avoid the school break.

Monica- Frank please review the Public Works Presentation to the RTM 9/24/12 and report back.

Discussion then moved to opportunities to act as a liaison with pertinent Town Boards and commissions. Frank explained his interactions with the Sewer Commission.

Committee Liaison:

Monica- Public Work Dept. and Rules Committee

Frank- Sewer Commission

Rolf- Environmental Protection Commission

Lindsay- Beautification Commission

David and Arpita- Town Transfer Station/Sustainability

Terry-Pedestrian Issues

Motion made and carried to adjourn meeting at 9:03