

**Town of Darien  
Representative Town Meeting  
Rules Committee  
Minutes for September 3, 2013**

**Present:** Sarah Seelye (M), Joanne Hennessy, Jim Patrick, James Howe, Seth Morton, Debra Ritchie, Peter Kelly, Gary Swenson, Dennis Maroney, MariLu Cleary, Patricia Bumgardner

**Absent:** Jeff Marston, Frank Kemp

**Audience:** Wayne Fox, Ed Schmidt, Bruce Orr, Jayme Stevenson, Chris Nethersole, Lloyd Plehaty, Cheryl Russell, Shirley Nichols.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to Order at 8:07PM

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes for the August 19 Meeting were approved with a comment to add that minutes for the prior meeting were approved. Ms. Hennessy moved and it was seconded that the minutes be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Seelye spoke on her decision to change the Agenda at the last Meeting.

**Hecker Avenue Land Purchase-** Ms. Nichols spoke on why Darien Land Trust supports the purchase of the property. She mentioned that it is an opportunity to assist the Town; it provides for a Conservation Easement, and it provides a benefit for an underserved part of Town. The Land Trust Preserve sees an opportunity to preserve natural habitat. She mentioned that the Town Plan of Development calls for preservation of open space. In addition the project will help prevent erosion and improve habitat by removing dead or diseased trees. She saw a potential pathway from Hecker Avenue to the Town Hall campus and creation of a small Park.

Mr. Nethersole spoke on why Land Trust is involved. Acquire land. He sees improved habitat and a public-private partnership, which is a model that has worked with the Town for many years.

Various questions were raised in debate about the maintenance costs of the project.

**Allen O'Neill Payment-** A question arose about the origin of the proposed loan to the Allen O'Neill project. Mr. Schmidt noted that the idea came from the possibility that funds available from the 35 Leroy Senior Housing Project, which could be used. The money would come in the form of a Grant of \$250,000 from HUD. At the time there was debate on whether the Town should take the Grant from HUD because of the stipulations attached to the Grant. In the end the Town applied for the Grant, but did not take the money from HUD. The Developer for the Allen O'Neill Project had thought Darien would take the Grant, so the money was included in the financing plan for the project. As it stands the \$250,000 would be loaned to the project to be paid back in less than 30 years. In examining a copy of the Plan, Ms. Hennessy noted that there appeared to be a requirement for an additional \$62,500 in funding from the Town as part of the construction financing. Mr. Schmidt was to verify if that is the case.

**Affordable Housing Trust Fund** – A concern was raised about the Town contributing money to a Trust Fund for land acquisition by the Town for Affordable Housing. An Advisory Commission was set up by Board of Selectmen to investigate this possible Fund. The Intention would be to for use for capital expenditures, not toward operating expenses. It would provide funding to help execute planned inclusionary zoning.

Mr. Maroney moved and it was seconded to assign TGS&A as the Primary Committee with Planning Zoning and Housing secondary. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Seeyle- noted that there would be Public Hearing on a regulation about Canvassing before an election. The purpose of the Regulation is to bring Darien Regulations in conformity with State Statutes.

The Agenda for September 23 was set.

1. Announcements- Olive Hauser will report on Funds for Social Services
2. Mr. Jessup appointment to the Five Mile River Commission
3. Affordable Housing Trust Fund
4. Hecker Avenue Purchase
5. Allen O'Neill Funding

Mr. Maroney moved The Agenda and Mr. Swenson seconded. The motion passed with Ms. Hennessey Abstaining.

Mr. Morton moved to Adjourn. And it was seconded.

The Meeting adjourned at 9:47PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Seth W. Morton, Clerk