BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION PROPOSAL TO
THE DARIEN PLAN ON CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT
JANUARY 13, 2015

RECEIVED
JAN 14 2015
TOWN OF DARIEN
PLANNING & ZONING

AREAS TO CONSIDER FOR IMPROVEMENTS:
-Both the Darien and Noroton Heights train stations including the buildings, landscaping, parking lots, and general maintenance.

RATIONALE:

-The train stations can be considered a "gateway" into Darien similar to the North and South street gateway entrances at the Norwalk and Stamford borders.
-These areas are heavily trafficked and highly visible by Darien residents and visitors to the town.
-Improving the overall appearance of the train stations would also improve the general public perception of Darien.
-Train station renovation attempts should track current revitalization projects in the downtown areas.
-Current landscape and maintenance efforts at both train stations rely heavily on volunteers, Senior Men's Association, student groups such as girl scouts and the Depot kids, Beautification Commission members, outside landscapers offering their services free of charge, and the DPW. While their efforts are commendable, the overall outcome leaves room for improvement.

SUGGESTIONS:

-#1 priority in terms of train station improvement is to renovate the "Quonset hut" building at the Noroton Heights train station into a structure more fitting with the overall town look. This building is truly an eye sore.
-Consideration should be given to providing increased sheltered space for "new/ecological" modes of transportation that are increasingly being used by Darien residents such as bicycles, motorcycles and Vespas.
-Increased emphasis should be placed on maintenance at both train stations. The amount of trash (newspapers, paper cups, water bottles, etc.) cluttering the parking lots at both stations is unattractive and unacceptable. The trash bins are frequently overflowing. These areas require increased and regular maintenance efforts.
-Landscaping renovation should occur at both sites. The Tree Conservancy has presented their proposal on ways to improve the Noroton Heights train station thru the addition of upgraded gardens, new tree plantings, and the addition of public spaces for commuter use.
The Beautification Commission also is recommending similar upgrades to the Darien train station, specifically to finalize the renovation of the Southwest section of the berm (near Leroy Avenue), and to turn the berm area along Squab Lane into a public space with park benches for commuters.
-We recommend that the town agree to approve and work with both the TC and the BC on these train station area renovations.

The remainder of this document is the BC proposal on ways to accomplish, in a cost efficient manner, the final renovation of the berm on Squab Lane.

FINAL BERM RENOVATION-Objectives:

-To finalize renovation of the SOUTHWEST section of the berm (near Leroy Avenue) to ensure a consistent look with the center and Northeast sections where work has been completed.

GENERAL BERM RENOVATION-Background:

The berm renovation off of Squab Lane has been a work in progress for the BC for over 10 years.
Phase I commenced in 2003 and involved the total renovation of the East side of the berm (60 yards) by a landscaping firm at an approximate cost of $18m. Phase II, begun in 2009, involved the cleanup of the large center section (80 yards) and the stream, including ongoing weeding and invasive plant removal, reseeding the grass area, and planting numerous grasses, flowering shrubs, donated flowers, native plants, and several thousand daffodil bulbs. The Tree Conservancy additionally planted numerous flowering and hardwood trees in this area. All Phase II work was done by volunteers, and was funded using the BC budget or donated plants. The concept used in designing this section was the High Line gardens in NYC and the Lurie Garden in Millennium Park, Chicago, which provide a healthy habitat for a wide variety of plants and wildlife with minimal maintenance requirements. The species of perennials, grasses, shrubs and trees were chosen for their hardiness, sustainability, textural and color variation, and are a mix of native and non-natives. The plantings also provide shelter for migratory birds, butterflies, honeybees, and insects.
All work in these 2 areas is now complete with the exception of ongoing maintenance.

SOUTHWEST RENOVATION-Proposal:

-Complete the berm renovation by cleaning up the final stretch near Leroy Avenue -
Replicate existing plantings using hardy, low maintenance species -
Use town facilities to minimize costs:

a. Ask DPW to remove existing shrubs/weeds and prepare site to dirt level
b. DPW to provide topsoil and mulch from the dump
c. Use BC members and other volunteers for plant installation

-Undertake the renovation during the fall months when cooler, wetter weather would require less watering and maintenance
-Ongoing maintenance to be included in annual BC budget as long as funding levels remain at current levels

-Consider purchasing numerous park benches to be placed along the entire stretch of the berm to provide seating area for local residents and commuters

ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS:

Plantings: $3700 - $4000

Benches: $2000 - $3000 dependent upon numbers purchased

Please see attachment for before/after photos of berm.

Questions/Concerns/Follow up:

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Chairperson – Darien Beautification Commission

Railroad Berm Along Squab Lane

Northeast section after replanted, April 2005

Northeast section maturing, August 2008

Northeast section after replanted, April 2005

Southwest section of tangled weeds

Center section of tangled weeds

From: **Bob Wolkwitz** bob@caphillusa.com
Subject: Fwd:
Date: January 12, 2015 at 7:38 AM
To: wolkoworld1@gmail.com

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Robert Wolkwitz <bob@caphillusa.com>
Date: June 16, 2014 at 2:11:37 PM EDT
To: wolkoworld1@gmail.com

DARIEN CEMETERIES

Name / Location	No of Graves	Earliest Stone	Latest Stone	Predominant Families	Kept By	Sign	Comments
Andreas Hoyt Middlesex Rd, west side, south of Ox Ridge Lane	*90	1823	1928	Andreas, Hoyt		N	well taken care of
Bates #1 Post Road and Old Kings Highway North near Masonic Lodge	98	1800	1913	Bates, Whitney, Waterbury, Scofield		N	needs mowing, weeding, a few branches need cutting
Bates #2 Christie Hill Road, nearly opposite Leewrden Road	17	1828	1873	Bates, Talmage		R	very rustic, dead/fallen tree against wall, metal gate in need of repair
Bell *Interior site* off Midbrook Lane, bounded by private property	21	1825	1884	-Bell			interior site
Howe *Interior site* between Hollow Tree School and Middlesex Middle School, on town property	1	1804	1804	Jacob Howe			moved per Anne Mandel
Leeds Hoyt Street, west side, between Lake Drive and Echo Drive	*138	1787	1930	Leeds, Weed, Hoyt		R	needs general maintenance
Noroton River Post Road, south side, near Stamford line	*418	1732	1927	Many different families		R	needs general maintenance
Raymond *Interior site* on private property off Good Wives River Road	6	1813	1880	Raymond, Tuttle, Francher			interior site
Slawson Hanson Road, north side, near Middlesex Road	*190	1811	1933	Slawson, Waterbury		N	well taken care of
Stevens #1 *Interior site* on private property Hoyt Street, west side near New Canaan Town Line	4	1804	1879	+Stevens			interior site
Stevens #2 *Interior site* on private property, west of 510 Hoyt Street, and north of Woodway Golf Course	25	1810	1900	Stevens, Tallmage			interior site
Mather Stephen Mather Road, south side, east of Brookside Road	*165	1830	1959	Mather, Weed		N	appears to be active, well taken care of
Pelton *Interior site* behind property of 171 Old Kings Highway South	2	1798	1799	+Pelton			interior site
Waterbury #1 Hoyt Street, west side, btw Echo Drive and Shirley Lane	27	1835	1932	Waterbury, Lockwood		Y	needs general maintenance
Waterbury #2 Hoyt Street, east side, opposite Leeds Cemetery	17	1777	1848	Waterbury, Husted		N	needs general maintenance
Waterbury #3 Mansfield Avenue, east side, north of Middlesex Road	24	1820	1891	Waterbury, Weed		N	very overgrown, difficult to access because of traffic
Weed #1 Pasture Lane, south side, east of Nearwater Lane	9	1798	1838	Weed		Y	new sign and hardware, very rustic, well taken care of
Weed #2 *Interior site* on Cove Pond across from Hampton Road	*96	1763	1944	Weed, Foster			interior site

* approximate number of graves
\- only family
\+ only family