

## Beautification Commission (BC)

Meeting Minutes

February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012

9:00am, Town Hall Room B-3

**Present:** Suzanne Schutte, Heather Pommernelle, Marcia Meinerth, Sandy Drimal, Sabina Harris, Phyllis Hawkins, Sig Buchmayr, Sandy Filmer

**Absent:** Pam Elliot, Cindy Ryan, David May, John Schlachtenhaufen, Marianne Wadleigh (due to school delay)

Action items are noted in red.

### New Member update

- Marianne Wadleigh will be joining; her confirmation meeting with the DTC is being set up.
- We have one additional opening at this time. 3-year terms.
- Clarified that if someone resigns from the board, they do need to write a resignation letter, and send it to Jamie Stevenson's office. The letter will initiate a request for a replacement member.

### Financial

- MM resubmitted tax forms to Whole Foods so they can reissue a check to BC for approximately \$165 from last year's "bring your own bag" promotion. **MM/PH to follow up.**
- MM distributed tax-exempt document to use at the time of purchase, so we're not charged tax. **HP to scan and email to members for their use.**
- MM confirmed available balance of \$12,648.07.
- New budget requests, to use remaining unbudgeted funding:
  - Darien Post Office, clean-up & replant next to post box drop - \$500. **HP to look at what to be done.**
  - Fire station stump replanting - \$200 - in spring, **SB/HP/CR to remove stump and plant.**
  - Town hall basket + six Noroton Heights containers - \$350 – SD to manage NH baskets, SS for the town hall basket.
  - Giovanni Welcome to Darien sign, clean-up and edging - \$200
  - Hollow Tree Ridge, replace low planting with rocks - \$200
  - Tokeneke Road clean-up – to use left-over budget. **SF to look at what should be done across from the row of merchants (nearest Post Road).**
- New budget procedures
  - MM distributed two forms BC members are to complete going forward
    - Request for disbursement check: complete and attach to invoices for purchases. The town will expedite reimbursements to members.
    - Submittal of checks for deposit forms: complete and attach with any check received.
  - **MM will have updated versions at the next meeting.**
  - **MM to prepare summary of requested budget items to compare against \$12.7m remaining budget**

### Adopt-A-Gardens (AAGs) – separate account

- SS clarified that \$1200 received for a new AAG is not the amount to plant. \$200 is for their sign and \$500-600 is for watering/maintenance over the season, which leaves just \$400-500 for the planting. So we must be careful not to overspend/overstate what we'll spend.
- Consistency of AAGs going forward: discussed whether all AAGs need to be consistent in appearance, or the amount spent on the gardens. Agreed that, since some sponsors may wish to spend more to make the bed even better, gardens don't need to be exactly the same.
- The board agreed that going forward, due to the large amount of additional work required for memorial gardens (finance, contact with donors, etc.), going forward we will not create more memorial gardens. HP suggested we refer donors to the Tree Conservancy of Darien, where they have a memorial tree program.
- HP/CR/PH distributed spreadsheet with expenses and basic plan for all AAGs for the rest of 2013.
- New garden updates
  - Amy's Smile: SH/CR are working with landscape designer, Karen Hughan, and awaiting a proposal. **Once numbers are clear, SS to write a letter to the sponsors to clarify the number of years their funding will cover the garden.**
  - Varina's garden: MM clarified spending on Complete Designs, and what was from BC and what was from contributions to the garden. The garden has sufficient funds for this full year, but will

need annual contributions for future years. PH/MM will put together a letter to donors, clarifying that annual donations will be requested.

- Paw Prints/Exit 11N. We no longer have potential funding for the full island, and will focus just on this AAG. SS submitted paperwork to gain approval for planting on this space. HP/CR/SS/PH to create the design (potentially using another plan). SD suggested a large sign is warranted on this very visible space.
  - In the spring, HP/CR/PH to update and replant Rowayton Seafood's new garden.
  - PH to reconfirm that 1020 Post will sponsor the Darien Train Station.
- HP to distribute updated AAG map for all.

#### Hanging baskets/Urns

SD

- SD brought a basket to the meeting for all to see.
- Worked through watering and basket budget for the year. Confirmed 78 baskets for the town, 15 for Penny Glassmeyer, and substantially more fertilizing and watering than last year. Approximately \$34/basket plus delivery.
- SD to bring chains to March meeting; members to bring clippers, and we'll remove the 4<sup>th</sup> chain that's no longer required.
- SS and MM to run numbers to determine estimated amount to pay Elder for summer contract based on 78 baskets and increased watering/fertilizing schedule (per SD).
- SD to determine placement of 78 baskets.

#### Cemeteries, etc.

- JS's forecasted \$800 for clean-up.
- SS to contact JS to ask him to visit cemeteries before March mtg. to determine how much work is needed and estimated manhours to be added to Elder contract.

#### Berm update from DM (via SS)

- Phase 1 (center berm area): needs at least 2 clean-ups, 8 hours each, before 6/30/13 and we may need to do weekly watering if there is a dry spell. David estimates this will cost \$1000. An additional \$500 was requested for Elder to cut back the tall grasses. Group agreed to use any remaining budget funds (end 6/30/13) for berm additional plants required.
- Phase 2 (Stream Area): 2 weeping beaches will be planted by the TC near the stream. David will create a planting plan with anticipated expenses of \$1,000 for maintenance and for planting of about 10-12 shrubs near the stream. We also need to decide what to do with the thread leaf maple donated tree/where to plant it. Sig offered to help with the removal and replanting at the berm.
- JS advised SS that no additional expenses will be required for trees planted by the Tree Conservancy of Darien, as long as we continue to have water sponsorship from Penny Glassmeyer. SS to email JS to reconfirm water sponsorship.
- MM suggested we look to hire high school students to help with watering, if funds allow.

#### Adopt-A-Spot from SF

- Hollow Tree Ridge Rd/Post Road island: \$200 allocated for SF/SH to clean-up this space.
- Expenses to 6/30/13 (include postcard mailing) – nothing further.

#### Signage:

- Sabina suggested that we contact Bob to ask him to keep us posted if he notices any signage infractions.
- SS to email BB to request that he do so.

#### Request list for George

- Fix the bricks at the Goodwives roundabout
- Moving the urns in NH.
- Moving the boulders at the berm
- To please reserve good mulch for the AAGs

#### For our March meeting, topics will include:

- Elder's contract
- Spring clean-up (SS to contact Marianne W. to ask for her assistance in locating kid groups to volunteer.)

- Gain a dump sticker for BC/Elder

Next Meeting March 11<sup>th</sup>, 9am Town Hall Room B-3