

Darien Beautification Commission June 7, 2010 Special Meeting 8:30 AM

Attendance: Suzanne Schutte, Jonathan Olmsted, Sandy Filmer, Bob Baker, John Schlachtenhaufen, Marcia Meinerth, Pam Elliot, Sabina Harris  
TV Channel 79 taped meeting.

May minutes approved.

Opening statements: Suzanne S. put to vote to eliminate Aug. meeting. No Aug. meeting, next meeting scheduled Sept 13.

For July meeting Sandy F suggests dedicate to signage. Group agrees and also invite First Selectman and other interested groups.

Town Signage walk w/ 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman: Suzanne S, John S, Chris M., Pam E, Sandy F. All walked starting from Darien Sports Shop along Boston Post Rd to Starbucks. Various redundant signs, old detour signs were pointed out. Suggestions were given to the First Selectman regarding curb painting and removal of signs. John S suggests setting up a committee involving Police Dept., DPW and Beautification C to pursue this matter.

Terms Update: Bob B reappointed. Sabina Harris nominated but not yet approved by BOS. Suzanne was contacted by Karl Kilduff regarding if our Commission has a balance of all political Parties. All agreed our Political affiliation has nothing to do with this Commission. Other note if Tree Commission is made an Official organization John S. and Lesley Kroll may have to resign for BC.

Highway off ramp sign: Various town Officials and Groups and Whole Foods have been encourage to write to Governor Rell to ask if temporary signs can stay. DOT signage is not fitting with town appeal.

Town Hanging Baskets: Chains still missing. Suzanne suggests Town to replace them for next year. Cost \$700. Open discussion of what to do next year: options - black wires, plant directly into our baskets and new chains..... Ask Chris M to see what alternatives Bed and Borders can do. To be continued. Other note Library thanked us for hanging the baskets at the library. Suggestion made to ask library for donation for future flowers/basket cost.

Budget: Marcia M (Treasure) 2010 –2011 Landscape budget \$26,100. (Not including new Adopt A Gardens (AAG)

For 2009-2010 spent \$26,500 as of June 1. still outstanding bills. Will use Special Account to cover \$10,000. in remaining expenses. May need to return \$1200. to Keith from the Gardener's Center because we are unable to plant at Exit 11. On going issue with drainage from DOT.

Marcia to be the sole contact to Susan Haynes. Need to work with her to better control her expenses on watering and care of baskets and islands.

Sandy D and Suzanne suggest other ways to plant and develop the AAG. Possibly use Elder for planting.

Sandy D has ordered the Ext 11 & 13 signs for AAG. Cost \$120

Suzanne planted \$80. of annuals in the mini gardens. Discussion open on planters around Town. Ask merchants to water and move some from the High School to more visible areas in town. Ask George S - DPW to possibly help move them?

Noroton Hghts. Train Station And other Gardens: Suzanne spoke with Jim Cameron, he will ask if the Democratic Party is interested in Adopt A Garden at the train station. Jon O gave update on other AAG. The Garden Club will take the area on Ledge Rd near entrance ramp to I-95. Sandy D confirmed. Jon explained Splash Car Wash interesting in the area across from their store but the situation with State ownership of this land could lead to problems regarding mowing and maintenance. Chris M and Pam to ask if Halstead Realtors interested in AAG near the Berm.

Berm Update: Suzanne stated Elder and his crew has cleaned area and planted 2/3 of the berm with pachy. So far Berm has cost approximately \$6000. in plantings and clean up. Open discussion of where to go from this point. Plant some of Pat Copeland's donations. – All agreed. Also buy remaining amount of pachy to fill the berm. – All agreed. Could also supplement with donations of our own pachy if needed. Elder also suggested to plant grass farther up the berm. Also spread wood chips to help with moisture control. Suzanne will contact George Swift for chips.

At Green Team meeting Rich Jacobsen gave name of person, Richard Wendell, will donate river rocks for bank near the stream of the berm. All feel the Berm design needs to be more self-sustaining. Similar to the right side of stairs. This area was planted a few years ago. Possibly find a group to Adopt the area or part near the other staircase. On going discussion.

Meeting adjured 10:15.