

Darien Beautification Minutes, March 22, 2010

Member attendance: Suzanne Schutte (Chair), Jon Olmsted, Sandy Drimal, John Schlachtenhaufen, Marcia Meinerth, Pam Elliott, Cindy Ryan, Lesley Kroll, Sabina Harris

Motion to approve and accepted minutes from Feb 10, 2010 meeting. Passed

Budget Update: Marcia stated new budget for 2010 is \$30,000. which is \$3000 than last year. Would like to be able to roll \$4,000. into next years special account.

Going forward there is enough money for the Berm plantings.

Need to look into cost of town wide planters and basket watering.

Chris, Pam, Susan, Sandy and John will meet with Susan Haines to discuss baskets and island expenditures for 2010.

Cost of maintenance of baskets and island plantings for 2009 was \$9,500. and watering was \$13,500. (60% of our budget)

Projected 2010 cost for maintenance \$10,500. (Due to increase # of baskets) would like to decrease watering cost to about \$12,000. for 2010.

John S will give update in April on budget costs for Historical Cemeteries clean up due to storm damage.

Term Update: Suzanne reported Bob Baker has not been reinstated. Also no conformation from Board of Selectmen about instating Sabina Harris and Lesley Kroll to the BC.

Question how should Beautification members be listed on town web site? Should have term limits listed. Follow up needed – we should be listed consistent with other town commissions.

Also need to discuss our Mission Statement and update our Charter.

Spring Grove Memorial Project: Lesley has worked on redesign and cost for the Police dept. and Veterans group that is over seeing the Project. Completion date May 30,2010.

Whole Foods: John stated not much information has been shared with Beautification regarding the tree plantings for the parking area or the “pocket park”. Requests to meet with the Landscape architect have gone unanswered. Suzanne & John S brought up other issue regarding signage ordinance. Should BC become more involved with P&Z rulings/meetings and voice the opinions of for the public? Further discussion needed.

Spring Projects:

The Berm: Lesley & Suzanne discussed weed treating the area before plantings are put in, what to do with the black plastic, and when and what to mulch the area with. Is it OK to use the wood chips the Town wants to give us? Need to consult with Susan H or other landscaper for recommendations.

Also need to contact George Swift on tree removal date. Planting costs - ivy for berm and other areas – Cindy & Suzanne

Noroton Hghts garden: Suzanne voiced concern of finding the correct plantings for this area because it is used to pile the plowed snow from the parking lots. Need to find hardy plants.

Earth Day: Suzanne reported getting many responses from town groups that are willing to help with the town wide clean up Saturday, April 24. Sabina stated that Middle School group might not be involved this year because teacher is on maternity leave.

Planters @ Town Hall & N. Hght : should they be moved and what should be planted in them? Sandy Drimal to give update after discussions with Susan Haines on suggestions on what to plant in them.

Adopt A Garden: Jon presented updated map showing the 12 sponsored gardens. 7 are maintained by landscape garden sponsors and 5 are maintained by Complete Designs on behalf of Beautification Commission. The Gardener's Center will pay an additional \$1200 for new Exit 11 southbound island which we will plant and maintain. We will need to get bids to plant this new Exit 11-S island after new Whole Foods exit ramp is complete. This is in addition to Gardener's Center existing Exit 11 northbound island which we also maintain for \$600 per season. Susan Haynes will plant and maintain a new expanded garden at Exit 13 for her own Complete Designs sponsorship. We will add mulch to existing Railroad berm site to right of stairs to cover black plastic weed control sheet and see if Halstead Property will sponsor.

Spring Trash Pick Up: John & Suzanne report no response from Selectmen on canceling the trash pick up. Town workers are needed elsewhere, mainly because of the damage clean up needed from the storm. Should letter be put in the Papers regarding our concerns in conjunction with another letter to the town Selectmen? On going discussion.

Tree Conservancy Organization: John explained this new group would work with established groups in town to promote education, proper care and maintenance of our town trees (both public and private trees) they will help raise money for these projects. The Conservancy will have a presentation on April 22 (Earth Day) to introduce their new group.

Chamber of Commerce: Carol Wilder Tamme (Head of Chamb. of Comm.) contacted Suzanne to see if the BC would support a Fall Biking Tour of Darien? All agreed to assist in some way.

Bid List: Marge Dwyer informed Suzanne of a new tree supplier from Long Island, Mr. Evan Goldstein. His name has been added to our records for future reference.

Meeting adjourned 10:55AM

Next Meeting April 12, 2010 @9AM