

Monuments and Ceremonies Commission Meeting

Tuesday, September 14, 2010

Chairman, Phil Kraft called the meeting to order at 3:30 P.M. with the following Commission members present: Edward Carabillo David Polett, Karen Polett, Charles Scribner, Bob Riith, and George Walsh.

Minutes of the June 8, 2010 meeting were accepted as read on a motion by Walsh, second Carabillo.

Phil explained that a miscommunication between our Commission and The Darien Boat Club resulted in the wreath donated by Springdale Florist and the Color Guard being prepared for a September 5, 2010 ceremony at the Boat Club. The Boat Club was not prepared to do a ceremony at this time so Phil did a very simple blessing, placed the wreath in the water and had the firing squad perform. We will endeavor to get our dates confirmed with the Boat Club for next year's ceremony honoring veterans lost at sea. The Commission felt that Memorial Day weekend would be the best time to conduct this ceremony in 2011. After much discussion, our Commission decided to write a letter to the Boat Club after our October 12, meeting.

Chick Scribner requested use of the Town Hall display case for the Andrew Shaw Memorial Trust for October 2010, and Kiki Karpen requested use of the case for November 2010, for the 60th Anniversary of the Darien Community Fund. Both requests were approved unanimously on a motion by Riith, second D. Polett.

Phil noted that our Commission desperately needs more man power. We currently have 9 members and should have 15. It is becoming more difficult to run a successful Memorial Day Parade with so few members able to walk the distance and willing to help at the Parade and other ceremonies. We are extremely short handed and it is making our job very difficult. George Walsh suggested we try to form a sub-committee of Parade participants who would only help with the Parade. Perhaps a meeting of the heads of various marching units could be planned for January.

The 4 Commission members who attended the 9/11 ceremony at the Middle School noted that the general attendance was better than in any previous years. Perhaps, the Saturday date was good for the working public. Members noticed that the Sugar Maple tree planted at this memorial needs to be replaced. One tree is large and healthy looking while the other looks diseased.

Karen looked in past minutes and found September 12, 2006 when Josh Doying was to be contacted by Phil Kraft as to whether any money from the 9/11 Memorial was still in the People's Bank. At that time, it was noted that one tree was missing. Also found in past minutes was the original letter from Josh Doying to Mr. Harrel (dated December 12, 2002) describing the proposed 9/11 Memorial design which Doying actually chose, collected funding for, and completed. Someone will check on this account and also whether it was re-deposited with the Town's General Fund.

Commission members agreed that photos for The Darien Patch were outstanding and captured the true feeling of 9/11 and Dave suggested they be contacted to perhaps put these photos in the display case. Also, Lauren Spicehandler is the new contact for The Darien Times.

Mention was made as to whether Commission members could serve on two Town Commissions. Currently Bob Riith serves on both the Monuments and Ceremonies Commission and the Sewer Commission.

Dave also noted that The Wreaths Across America contingent will be stopping in Darien for a ceremony on December 8, at 3:30 P.M. at the Darien Town Hall and that they will be dining that evening at the Darien VFW once again courtesy of the Masonic Clubs of Darien and New Canaan. A brief ceremony/moment of silence for recently deceased Maine VFW Commander Williams, a moving force in the Worcester Wreath Company, will be held prior to dinner at the Darien VFW.

A wreath presentation and ceremony will be held at 8:15 A.M. at Darien High School on the morning of Thursday, December 9, 2010. The Commission agreed that publicity for these events needs to be improved this year and letters to the Selectmen, politicians and community leaders need to be sent. Local dignitaries will be invited to the VFW dinner this year. Dave noted that 19,000 wreaths are being taken to Arlington Cemetery this year and that Wal Mart has funded the wreaths for the entire Section 60, of recently interred casualties of the wars.

A ceremony for Veteran's Day is planned for November 11, at 11:00 A.M. at the Veteran's Memorial Circle at the Darien Town Hall. Karen will contact Springdale Florist for the floral tributes.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 P.M. on a motion by Karen Polett, second Ed Carabillo. The next meeting of the Monuments and Ceremonies Commission will be held on Tuesday, October 12, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Kreitzberger Polett

Secretary