



TOWN of DARIEN
MONUMENTS & CEREMONIES COMMISSION
Town Hall, 2 Renshaw Road, Darien, Connecticut 06820

November 1, 2016 Minutes of Monuments and Ceremonies Commission Meeting

Commissioners present: Rollie Holub, Terry Gaffney, Rebecca Siciliano, George Walsh, Phil Kraft, David Polett, Karen Polett, Sueanne Schorr, Charles Scribner, Ken Reiss, guests First Selectman, Jayme Stevenson and Cemetery Chairperson, Sharon Kells.

Chairman, Phil Kraft called the meeting to order at 3:36 pm. On a motion by George Walsh, second David Polett, the minutes of the October 11, 2016 M&C Commission were accepted as read.

Terry presented a brief and impressive summary of Monuments in the Veterans Circle. (See attached.) He first plans to do this for every monument on public property. After that is completed, he will also compile a list of all monuments in the Town as a permanent record. His presentation included the history of the monument, who it commemorated, size, location, dedication, inscription, material made from, why conceived, etc. Photos need to be added to this presentation which is a major undertaking and an ongoing project. Terry asked about the identification of Michael J. DeLeonardis and Peter Pund and reason for their monuments.

Karen suggested the "Monument of the Month" could be published in the Darien Times to garner interest from the townsfolk. The Monument and description will be placed on the Town's website. Jayme suggested a Geomap location could also be included.

As background information, Karen distributed the September 22, 1997 minutes of the Repr Town Meeting when the Monuments and Ceremonies Commission was established. These minutes list the M&C Organization, Procedure, Duties and Powers. She also passed out the Proposed Guidelines for Monuments approved July 11, 2000 by the M&C Commission.

Karen introduced newly appointed Cemetery Chairman, Sharon Kells who gave a detailed report outlining her goal and the progress made at the Noroton River Graveyard where Sharon has been overseeing and personally paying for the majority of the cleanup. Darien Public Works did some of the heavy dump runs. Giovanni's restaurant has cooperated by planting trees, and several volunteers have also helped. The transformation is amazing. She and Jayme are looking at other cemeteries for restoration. (See "Our Goal" attached.) Fundraising was discussed.

David distributed a Report of the Cemetery Committee (Lindley M. Franklin, Jr; Philip A. Morehouse; Bertha Mather McPherson and Clark L. Dexter) of the Darien Historical Society's Annual Meeting in 1959, which was forwarded to then First Selectman, Mr. Thomas I. Kerrigan on October 8, 1959. Selectman, Kerrigan noted that "the proper maintenance of abandoned cemeteries is the responsibility of the town in which they are located, according to the statutes of the State of CT." He asked that more funds be placed in the Darien town budget and asked

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

Public Works to prepare a request for funds in the 1960 budget. Specific recommendations are included. David noted that the town was concerned with the "neglected nature" of its cemeteries 57 years ago. (See attached)

David also distributed a letter from April 12, 1952 in which The CT Central Veterans Association, Inc in Stamford CT requested that graves of veterans of the Revolutionary War, Civil War, WWI and WWII located in Darien (each veteran and cemetery location of the grave is listed) "be cleaned up so that the same can be decorated during the latter part of May as per Sec. 486 of the Statutes." (Attached are copies of the current CT State Statutes 119, 119a and 123 regarding veterans)

Becky noted that additional funding for cemetery restoration is needed now. Jayme asked that our Commission send a letter to her stating the need for cemetery restoration and that additional funding is required.

Ken Reiss mentioned the Murals at the Darien Town Hall and Holmes School and that these need to be categorized perhaps by artist. Terry has some of these already on his inventory. All Commissions agreed that these are Darien Town treasures and need to be preserved. Ken mentioned that the Town Hall murals were refurbished either prior to or during First Selectman, Ann Mandel's term and that we ought to locate any documentation relating to this refurbishment. Dave has photographed all murals for the current Darien Historical Society Exhibit.

Phil requested a safe secure place for our Commission to store its flags, buntings etc. Currently, we use the downstairs of Phil's office on West Avenue and that may not be available. No action taken.

Karen mentioned that she has ordered the flowers and the laurel wreath for the Veterans Day Ceremony scheduled for Friday, November 11, at 11 am. at the Town Hall Veterans Circle.

Funding for the Wreaths Across America was explained by Phil Kraft. Money goes through his Veteran's Non-Profit and that allows us to get three wreaths for every two paid for. Wreath sponsorships have been collected every Saturday in October and on November 5, 2016.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm on a motion by Charles, second Rollie.

Submitted by,

Karen Kreitzberger Polett

Karen Kreitzberger Polett

Secretary

Veterans Graves

Sec. 27-119. Veterans' headstones, services to be provided by state. When the grave of any person who, in time of war, served in the military or naval forces of the English colonies in America, prior to 1776, or the grave of any veteran, which is located in this state, is unmarked by a suitable headstone, or is marked by a bronze marker erected by this state, the Commissioner of Veterans' Affairs shall, upon application made not later than two years after the death of such veteran or two years from the interment of the remains of such veteran from abroad, provide payment for the costs of erecting headstones provided by the federal government and shall furnish transportation costs, where none are provided, for said headstones from the nearest destination point to which the federal government will deliver such headstones, to the gravesite, provided such payment is requested not later than one year from the date of the approval of such application. The expense of transportation and the erection or installation of such headstone to an amount not exceeding an amount prescribed by the commissioner, shall be paid by the Comptroller.

(1949 Rev., S. 2941; 1969, P.A. 170, S. 1; P.A. 73-501; P.A. 88-285, S. 15, 35; P.A. 97-150; June Sp. Sess. P.A. 98-1, S. 55, 121.)

History: 1969 act increased ceiling on cost of headstone from \$50 to \$75; P.A. 73-501 deleted provisions pertaining to furnishing headstones and provided for payment of cost of erecting and transporting headstones provided by the federal government; P.A. 88-285 replaced veterans' home and hospital commission with commissioner; P.A. 97-150 limited requirement of commissioner to pay cost of erecting headstones to cases where application for payment occurs no later than two years from date of death or interment of remains from abroad and authorized payment for certain expenses of headstones to an amount not exceeding amount prescribed by commissioner; June Sp. Sess. P.A. 98-1 added specific reference to Commissioner of Veterans' Affairs, effective June 24, 1998.

Contract for headstones made under former statute held discharged by second contract. 124 C. 304.

1937 change in statute discussed. 5 CS 495.

Sec. 27-119a. Markers for graves of Colonial and Revolutionary War Veterans. The commissioner shall, upon application made by the chief executive authority of the town, city or borough wherein the deceased is buried, cause a metal marker and flag holder to be placed on the grave of any person who, in time of war, served in the military or naval forces of the English colonies in America, prior to 1776, or who served in the military or naval forces of the United States in the Revolutionary War, which grave is not so marked.

(February, 1965, P.A. 588, S. 1; P.A. 88-285, S. 16, 35.)

History: P.A. 88-285 replaced veterans' home and hospital commission with commissioner.

Sec. 27-123. Graves of soldiers and sailors. In each city and town there shall be appointed annually, by the chief executive authority of the city or town, a committee of three citizens of the city or town, who are veterans and whose duty it shall be to see that the grave of any person who served in time of war in the military or naval forces of the English colonies in America, prior to 1776, or of the state of Connecticut or in the armed forces of the United States, shall be suitably kept and cared for. If the cost of such care and maintenance is not paid by private persons or by the trustees of the cemetery where any such grave is situated, it shall be paid by the city or town; * and cities and towns are authorized to appropriate money for such purpose. Money so appropriated may be expended directly by the city or town or may be paid to the trustees or manager of the cemetery in which any such grave is located; but the sum paid in any year shall not exceed for any such grave the sum usually charged for the annual care and maintenance of a grave in the same cemetery or, if no such charge is made in that cemetery, it shall not exceed the sum charged in other cemeteries in the same city or town for such service, provided, when any such grave has settled appreciably, such sum may be exceeded.

(1949 Rev., S. 653; 1957, P.A. 163, S. 12; 350, S. 1.)

Attachments to Darien Monuments and Ceremonies Commission Meeting

Minutes November 1, 2016.