

**TOWN OF DARIEN  
COMMISSION ON AGING  
REGULAR MEETING  
OCTOBER 19, 2016**

**ATTENDANCE:** Joe Pankowski, Chair; Christine Castles, Mary McCarthy, Geraldine Genovese, Ray Slavin, Ron Heinbaugh, Jennifer Geddes, Ann Marie Rayhill, James Metzger

**STAFF:** Beth Paris, Mather Senior Center Coordinator; Olive Hauser, Human Services Director

**OTHERS:** Anthony Hormicki, Tax Assessor; Milagros (Mili) Millan-Garcia, Deputy Assessor; Frank Kemp, RTM TGS&A Chair

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Pankowski called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. A quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**

**July 20, 2016**

**\*\* MS. GENOVESE MOVED THE MINUTES OF JULY 2016.  
\*\* MR. SLAVIN SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE JULY 2016 MINUTES AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**September 21, 2016**

**\*\* MR. HEINBAUGH MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 21, 2016.  
\*\* MR. SLAVIN SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 21, 2016 MINUTES AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**MATHER SENIOR CENTER.**

Ms. Mather presented her report. (See attached).

**HUMAN SERVICES.**

Ms. Hauser presented her report. (See attached).

**Discussion with Anthony Hormicki, Town Assessor and Milagros (Mili) Millan-Garcia, Deputy Assessor with respect to veterans' tax benefits in the Town of Darien.**

Mr. Pankowski introduced Mr. Hormicki, the Darien Tax Assessor, and Ms. Millan-Garcia, the Darien Deputy Tax Assessor, who were in attendance. Ms. McCarthy distributed copies of a report showing a comparison of the local towns with Darien in terms of Tax Relief for Veterans. (See attached). She reviewed the numbers with those present.

Mr. Hormicki pointed out that the Assessor's Office had updated the information and had copies of the various ordinances for increasing the relief to veterans with low incomes or disabled.

Mr. Pankowski asked Mr. Hormicki about what he and Ms. Millan-Garcia thought about the levels of relief. Mr. Hormicki said that the number of veterans that would qualify was fairly small. Mr. Pankowski said that using a set percentage off the assessment might be more advantageous for the tax payer. He asked Mr. Hormicki to produce a report that would show the fiscal impact by using a percentage to reduce the assessment.

The discussion moved to the past history of tax relief for the elderly and the veterans. Ms. McCarthy pointed out that recently State legislation had been approved that gave towns a local option. (See attached).

Mr. Pankowski encouraged everyone to consider this issue carefully because it has to be brought before the Selectman.

**Frank Kemp will discuss a Proposed Blight Prevention Ordinance and the Commission on Aging's potential role in connection therein.**

Mr. Frank Kemp came forward to speak about the blight ordinance. He distributed several documents. (See attached). He noted that Newtown has some special conditions that have to do with farms.

He spoke about the properties that were owner occupied and had become neglected. There are also properties where the non-local bank owns a property which becomes deteriorated. There is also another group where someone has acquire property with the goal of developing it or they have inherited it.

Mr. Kemp then reviewed the criteria that would determine whether a property met the definition of "blight". The break out for various towns and the RTM Executive Summary along with how the ordinance compares with the other towns. Based on the figures from other municipalities, two thirds of the properties in violation will not be owner occupied, he explained.

Mr. Kemp pointed out earlier efforts did not include any connection with Human Services or reference to the compassionate aspect for those residents who are involved. Compassionate issues are ones where the resident is either too frail or not able to afford the cost of repairing the property. There needs to be careful coordination between Human Services and Blight Prevention officer for cases like those. He outlined how the blight process would work.

A blue ribbon panel would review the situation and authorize the issuance of a fine. A member of the Human Services Department and a member of the Commission on Aging will be on the board. Ms. Hauser said that the Human Services department would like to be involved in case management. Discussion followed.

Mr. Hormicki spoke about how this proposal factored in the compassionate perspective and moved to having the Town assist in making the repairs for those owner occupied residences where the resident cannot afford the repairs.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Pankowski welcomed Mr. Jim Metzger to the Commission. Mr. Pankowski announced that Mr. Peter Eder will be presented to the Board of Selectmen for appointment to the Commission on Aging in the near future.

The next scheduled meeting is November 16, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. in Room 119 of Darien Town Hall.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* MR. HEINBAUGH MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* MR. SLAVIN SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

S. L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Service

## **Commission on Aging Report**

Darien Senior Programs at Mather Center

October 19, 2016

Respectfully Submitted: Beth Paris , Director

October welcomes back the Garden Club of Darien Pleasure through Plants Program and Darien Library Monthly Themed Program return. Center is also hosting another flu shot clinic, seminar on Medicare Choices program with Human Service... We continue to enjoy great participation and attendance. October Fest is back by popular demand themed lunch and entertainment. Also continues to explore My Senior Center Computer Program. Participated in strategic planning session for Department on Aging.

**Highlighted Classes & Programs:** 3 Lunch and Learns this month- new Tai Chi class added

**Health & Wellness:** *RVNA – Defining Dementia; Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County- Myths about Aging \*\*\* Osborn Home Care- General Info Session\*\*\*; Ct Pharmacy- Arthritis Treatments; Bright Star Home Care- Benefits of Good Nutrition\*\*\*; Stamford Hospital –Upper Extremities and Orthopedics; Walgreens- Medication Adherence (\*\*\*) complimentary lunch)*

**Educational & Informational:** *Art Gottlieb LCSW- St Patrick's Cathedral; Stanford University Live Well Series; Eric Rambush-Great Decisions- The Rise of ISIS; Medicare Choices with Ali Ramsteck MSW; Caregiver Educational Support Group; Darien Library –The Story Behind the Painting; Kelly Johnson LCSW Family Center's Good Lit –Good Life; Reminisce with Geri Genovese*

**Creative Pursuits:** Water Color, Oil Acrylic Painting; Stain Glass; Knitting and Crocheting; Themed Crafts; Woodshop; Garden Club of Darien- Pleasure through Plants Program

**Entertainments;** Ct Entertainment Oktoberfest; Kenny Carpetta Halloween Musical Fun; Monday Movies

**Services:** Blood Pressure Screening 1<sup>st</sup> Monday morning 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday afternoon VN & Hospice of Fairfield County; - Darien Health Department; Hosting **Flu Shot Clinic** Darien Public Health **October 17<sup>th</sup>**; **Flu Shot October 20<sup>th</sup>** VN & Hospice Fairfield County; Ask a Lawyer by appointment only; Supportive Counseling as needed/requested

**Program Days:** 20 (Closed Columbus Day)

**Caregiver Support:** 7

**Human Services Referral:** 11

**At Home in Darien:** 8

**Caregiver Options Counseling:** 11

**Family Inquiries:** 7

**EMS calls:** 1

**Ongoing Work this Month:**

Daily Statistics

Newsletter

Program Planning: Late Fall Winter

Silver Start Project

Intergenerational Programs Ox Ridge Girl Scouts

Alzheimer's Caregiver Course for Spring 2017

Strategic Planning session for Department on Aging  
Staff Meetings for Planning  
SWCAA Advisory Board

**Building Issues:** Part Changed on Elevator end of September will ensure elevator stops at floor not above or below; 3rd rail on lobby stairs NOT installed; generally cleaning and maintenance is more difficult once P&R; TH use and Darien Arts Use resumes.

**Meetings Attended:** Department Head/BOS Quarterly Report; Human Services/At Home 10/4;  
Department Head Retreat 10/7; ; 10/14 Library Strategic planning Meeting; SWCAA Advisory Board  
Annual Meeting; 10/21 COA Meeting

## Commission on Aging Meeting

October 19, 2016

### Human Services Report

- Ali has begun reviewing and taking new applications for Medicare Part D. While she is doing this she also checks to see if client has any other programs available to them.
- The Renter's Rebate program has closed and we have not heard, yet, whether there will be any reductions in the grants. 45 elderly and/or disabled individuals will receive checks anywhere from \$50 to \$700. Totaling over \$24,000.
- We are preparing for our holiday programs. If anyone knows of any senior, family or singles that could use our support please let us know.
- Our energy assistance programs are underway. We have a goal this year to sign up as many EAP clients as we can for the weatherization program. Again, if you anyone who is concerned about their heating bills please let us know.
- The DDAC, Darien Domestic Abuse Council, staged their annual ***Walk a mile in their shoes*** event. A great and fun event. The weather was not ideal but it went off without any issues. Please remember that Domestic Violence and Abuse is NOT just a young person's problem. Violence and abuse are found throughout life, ages, sexes and income. It is an equal opportunity offence. Elders are particularly vulnerable as it may be coming from a spouse, a child, a friend or a caregiver and the statistics are climbing. Elders are also very reluctant to report this behavior for many different reasons, shame being a big factor.

**REGULAR & LOCAL VETERANS EXEMPTIONS**  
*Information as of 9-14-16*

	Regular		Based on Income		Income guidelines
	STATE	LOCAL	STATE	Additional LOCAL (CT Statute Section 12-81f)	
BRIDGEPORT	\$ 1,000	\$ 500	\$2,000	\$1,000	Follows state income guidelines
BROOKFIELD	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,000	\$4,000	\$10,000	Follows state income guidelines
DANBURY	\$ 1,000	\$ 500	\$2,000	10% off assessment	Income: Single 60,200 married 67,900
DARIEN	\$ 1,000	\$ 500	\$2,000	no local option	
EASTON	\$ 4,000	\$ 2,000	\$8,000	no local option	
FAIRFIELD	\$ 8,000	\$ 4,000	\$16,000	\$8,000	Follows state income guidelines
GREENWICH	\$ 8,000	\$ 4,000	\$16,000	no local option	
MONROE	\$ 1,000	\$ 500	\$2,000	\$5,000	Follows state income guidelines
NEW CANAAN	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,000	\$4,000	no local option	
NEWTOWN	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,000	\$4,000	10,000 or 10% off assessment	Income: Single 41,200- married 45,000
NORWALK	\$ 4,000	\$ 2,000	\$8,000	\$10,000	Follows state income guidelines
REDDING	\$ 1,000	\$ 500	\$2,000	no local option	
RIDGEFIELD	\$ 1,000	\$ 500	\$2,000	\$10,000	Income: single 45,000 & married 50,000
ROCKY HILL	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,000	\$4,000	\$2,000	Follows state income guidelines
SHELTON	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,000	\$4,000	\$2,000	Follows state income guidelines
STAMFORD	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,000	\$4,000	\$20,000	Income: single 100,000 & married 120,000
TRUMBULL	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,000	\$4,000	no local option	
WESTON	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,000	\$4,000	10% off assmt	Income: single \$54,800 & Married \$61,500
WESTPORT	\$ 4,000	\$ 2,000	\$8,000	\$20,000	Income (State income requirement +25,000)
WILTON	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,000	\$4,000	no local option	

10k doubled after 2007 reval  
 10k doubled after 2005 reval

**STATE INCOME GUIDELINES**  
 (FOR ELDERLY & DISABLED 2015GL, & VETS 2016GL)  
 SINGLE \$ 35,200  
 MARRIED \$ 42,900

**DARIEN INCOME GUIDELINES**  
 (FOR ELDERLY TAX RELIEF)  
 44,200  
 51,900

Same income guidelines as the state (35,200 single and 42,900 married)

<u>Vets count</u>	<u>Additional local exemption</u>	<u>mill rate</u>	<u>\$ tax per vet</u>	<u>ttl \$ tax all vets (not disabled)</u>
45	50% state match (\$1,000)	15.77	\$ 15.77	\$ 709.65
45	100% state match (\$2,000)	15.77	\$ 31.54	\$ 1,419.30
45	\$5,000 exemption	15.77	\$ 78.85	\$ 3,548.25
45	\$10,000 exemption	15.77	\$ 157.70	\$ 7,096.50

*Darien has 7 applicants with disability getting the maximum additional exemption from the state*

<u>Vets count</u>	<u>Additional local exemption</u>	<u>mill rate</u>	<u>\$ tax per vet</u>	<u>ttl \$ tax all vets (with disability)</u>
7	50% state match (\$3,000)	15.77	\$ 47.31	\$ 331.17
7	100% state match (\$6,000)	15.77	\$ 94.62	\$ 662.34
7	\$5,000 exemption	15.77	\$ 78.85	\$ 551.95
7	\$10,000 exemption	15.77	\$ 157.70	\$ 1,103.90

Same income guidelines as the elderly local option (44,200 single and 51,900 married)

<u>Vets count</u>	<u>Additional local exemption</u>	<u>mill rate</u>	<u>\$ tax per vet</u>	<u>ttl \$ tax all vets (not disabled)</u>
48	50% state match (\$1,000)	15.77	\$ 15.77	\$ 756.96
48	100% state match (\$2,000)	15.77	\$ 31.54	\$ 1,513.92
48	\$5,000 exemption	15.77	\$ 78.85	\$ 3,784.80
48	\$10,000 exemption	15.77	\$ 157.70	\$ 7,569.60

*Only 3 more vets will qualify on the 2015 gl for the 2016 gl there are 10 more that would qualify*

<u>Vets count</u>	<u>Additional local exemption</u>	<u>mill rate</u>	<u>\$ tax per vet</u>	<u>ttl \$ tax all vets (with disability)</u>
7	50% state match (\$3,000)	15.77	\$ 47.31	\$ 331.17
7	100% state match (\$6,000)	15.77	\$ 94.62	\$ 662.34
7	\$5,000 exemption	15.77	\$ 78.85	\$ 551.95
7	\$10,000 exemption	15.77	\$ 157.70	\$ 1,103.90

*Darien has 7 applicants with disability getting the maximum additional exemption from the state*

Ridgefield

ARTICLE VII  
Tax Exemption for Veterans  
[Adopted 6-16-2004 (§ 13 1/2-5 of the 1974 Code)]

**§ 317-15. Amount of total exemption; eligibility.**

The Town shall provide that any veteran entitled to an exemption from property tax in accordance with either Subsection (19), (21)(a), (21)(b), or (22) of C.G.S. § 12-81 shall be entitled to a total exemption not to exceed \$10,000 of property assessment, commencing with the October 1, 2004, assessment year, provided that the total of such veteran's adjusted gross income as determined for purposes of the federal income tax plus any other income of such veteran not included in such adjusted gross income, individually if unmarried or jointly if married, in the calendar year ending immediately preceding the assessment date with respect to which such additional exemption is allowed is not more than \$50,000 if such veteran is married or not more than \$45,000 if such veteran is not married.

**§ 317-16. Application for exemption.**

Any veteran submitting a claim for such additional exemption shall be required to file an application biennially on a form prepared for such purpose by the Assessor, not later than the assessment date with respect to which such additional exemption is claimed. Each such application shall include a copy of such veteran's federal income tax return or, in the event such return is not filed, such evidence related to income as may be required by the Assessor for the tax year of such veteran ending immediately prior to the assessment date with respect to which such additional exemption is claimed.

**§ 317-17. Termination upon death or sale of property.**

If any person entitled to the assessment credit pursuant to this article dies (not having a surviving spouse and/or child residing in the property for which the tax credit is granted) or sells the property on which the assessment credit is granted, no additional assessment credit shall be allowed for his or her interest in the property for any portion of any assessment year remaining after the date of death or sale, or for any assessment year commencing after said date of death or sale.

Sec. 54-160. - Exemption—Entitlement; qualifying income.

Pursuant to C.G.S. § 12-81f(a), any veteran entitled to an exemption from property tax in accordance with C.G.S. § 12-81(19) shall be entitled to an additional exemption applicable to the assessed value of property in the amount of \$10,000.00, provided such veteran's qualifying income does not exceed, by more than \$25,000.00, the applicable maximum amount as provided under C.G.S. § 12-81I.

(Code 1981, § 134-26)

MONROE

§ 470-25 Additional exemption for veteran.

Any veteran eligible for a property tax exemption under Connecticut General Statutes § 12-81(19) shall be entitled to an additional property tax exemption applicable to the assessed value of his/her property in the amount of \$5,000, provided that said veteran's qualifying income does not exceed the applicable amount under § 12-811 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

§ 470-26 Additional exemption for surviving spouse.

Any veteran's surviving spouse eligible for a property tax exemption under Connecticut General Statutes § 12-81(22) shall be entitled to an additional property tax exemption applicable to the assessed value of his/her property in the amount of \$5,000, provided that said surviving spouse's qualifying income does not exceed the applicable amount under § 12-811 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Failure to file such application in said manner and form within the time limit prescribed shall constitute a waiver of the right to such exemption for the assessment year.

B. A property tax exemption for solar energy heating or cooling systems is authorized. (Prior code § 28-2)

**3.16.050** **Veteran's additional tax exemption.**

The common council of the city does approve, ratify and confirm in all respects the adoption of Public Act No. 82-318 which enables municipalities to allow veterans an additional exemption from property tax if qualified under certain income requirements. (Prior code § 2-210)

**3.16.060** **Tax deferment for installation of improvements designed to aid the handicapped.**

Pursuant to authority granted in Section 12-65G of the Connecticut General Statutes, the tax assessor is authorized to enter into a written agreement with an owner of any real property who agrees to improve, rehabilitate or renovate any existing building therein to meet the standards of design and construction of the state building code to accommodate physically disabled persons, as set forth in article 21 of the state building code, to fix the assessment on such property as of the date of the agreement for a period of not longer than five years and to defer any increase in assessment attributable to such improvement, rehabilitation or renovation during such period, provided: (1) the agreement shall be approved by the local building official, and (2) such improvement, rehabilitation or renovation shall be completed not later than three years from the date of the agreement and, upon completion, shall be subject to inspection and certification by such building official as being in conformance with the applicable provisions of such code. This authorization applies only in situations where said owner is not required by any federal, state or local law or ordinance to make said improvements, rehabilitation or renovation. (Prior code § 28-3)

**Article II. Real Property Tax Relief for Senior Citizens**

**3.16.070** **Transfer of state tax relief program for the elderly.**

Pursuant to subsection (b) of section 4 of Public Act 82-322, the responsibilities and duties relative to the administration of the state tax relief program for the elderly shall be, and they are, transferred from the municipal assessor's office to the department on aging. (Prior code § 28-4)

**3.16.080** **Homeowner's taxes—Billing on quarterly basis.**

Any homeowner who is eligible for property tax relief pursuant to Section 12-129b or 12-170aa of the Connecticut General Statutes may pay such homeowner's taxes in quarterly, rather than semiannual, installments as provided in Section 16 of Connecticut Special Act 88-80, as amended by Section 9 of Connecticut Special Act 89-47. Upon a determination by the Bridgeport tax assessor that such homeowner is qualified for tax relief under Section 12-129b or 12-170aa, the Bridgeport tax collector shall bill such homeowner for his or her real property taxes on a quarterly basis and such taxes shall be due and payable in quarterly installments on July 1st, October 1st, January 1st and April 1st of each year rather than in semi-annual installments on July 1st and January 1st. This section shall be effective for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1990. (Ord. dated 2/5/90)

**3.16.090** **In general.**

The city enacts tax relief for elderly real property owners pursuant to Section 12-129(n) of the General Statutes of the state of Connecticut for eligible residents of the city for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 1987 and each ensuing fiscal year on the terms and conditions provided in this article. Wherever herein reference is made to the General Statutes of the state of Connecticut, reference shall be to the statutes cited, any amendments thereto or any successor statutes, as may be applicable to this article. All relevant General Statutes of the state of Connecticut are incorporated in this article so far as they may be applicable and in the event of any discrepancy between this article and any General Statute the General Statute shall control and this article shall not be invalid but shall be deemed to be in conformity with that General Statute. (Prior code § 28-31)

**3.16.100** **Eligibility.**

Pursuant to Section 12-129n of the General Statutes of the state of Connecticut, any resident of the city who owns real property in the city or who is liable for the payment of taxes thereon under Section 12-48 of the Connecticut General Statutes and occupies that property as his or her principal residence shall be eligible for the real property tax relief set forth in this article provided they meet all of the following conditions:

A. At the close of the calendar year next preceding the year in which the claim for tax relief is filed and approved such resident shall be sixty-five (65) years of age or over; or the spouse of such resident shall be sixty-five (65) years of age or over; or such resident shall be sixty (60) years of age or over and the surviving spouse of a taxpayer who

SB 202

PA 16-191

**Public Act 16-191 (SB202)**

**Signed By The Governor 6/7/2016**

\* AN ACT CONCERNING VETERANS' PROPERTY TAXES.

- \* Increases the local veteran's exemption maximum for those eligible under 12-81(19) from ten thousand to twenty thousand. Amount to be set by ordinance.
- \* Also applies to surviving spouse eligible under 12-81(22)
- \* Adds those eligible under 12-81(20) (disabled vets) as being entitled to a local option exemption of not less than three thousand in assessment.

**Local-Option Additional Veteran's Exemption**  
**§12-81f**

Section 12-81f is a local-option exemption statute that allows towns to provide an additional exemption of up to \$10,000 to veterans receiving an exemption under certain subdivisions of §12-81. Alternatively, a town may exempt up to 10% of a veteran's property tax assessment. To qualify for this additional benefit, in a town whose governing body has voted to adopt the provisions of §12-81f, a claimant must be eligible to receive an exemption under subdivision (19) or (22) of §12-81 - the basic veteran's exemption and the one available to a veteran's surviving spouse or minor child. The amount of a local-option veteran's exemption under §12-81f may be increased following a revaluation, pursuant to §12-62g.

A disabled veteran receiving an exemption under §12-81(2) may be entitled to a local-option exemption under §12-81f, if he is eligible for an exemption under subdivision (19). A person can be receiving an exemption under §12-81(20) based on a disability rating, but can also be eligible under §12-81(19) because he served at least 90 days during a period of war.

The additional exemption provided by §12-81f can be granted only if a person meets certain income limits. Pursuant to §12-811, these limits are the same as those applicable to the state reimbursed property tax relief program for elderly and totally disabled homeowners. However, towns can opt to increase the maximum amounts established under §12-811, by up to \$25,000.

An application for this local-option exemption must be filed with the assessor of the veteran's town of residence on or before October 1<sup>st</sup>. Proof of all taxable and non-taxable income received in the previous calendar year must be submitted. Income received by both husband and wife is considered in determining the eligibility of married veterans. A Holocaust victim settlement (also known as Holocaust reparations) is not counted as income for this program, pursuant to §1-11. Veterans' disability payments do not count as income for this program, pursuant to §12-811. Once a veteran is approved for this local-option additional exemption, he must submit an application on a biennial basis.

**RESOLUTION OF THE REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING OF THE  
TOWN OF DARIEN APPROVING A BLIGHT PREVENTION  
ORDINANCE**

**WHEREAS**, The Connecticut General Statutes allows a municipality to adopt legislation dealing with the problem of housing blight;

**WHEREAS**, the intent of the Town is to define and regulate hazardous blight; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town's further objective is to protect the public's health, safety and welfare.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Representative Town Meeting of the Town of Darien hereby adopts the proposed Blight Prevention Ordinance attached hereto and made part hereof.