

**TOWN OF DARIEN
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2011**

ATTENDANCE: Jane Branigan; Charlie Goodyear; Susan Daly; Bob Marchesi;
Erika Morris; Marianne Gutierrez (7:37 p.m.)

STAFF: Susan Swiatek, Director; Jim Coghlan, Assistant Director

OTHER: Linda Santarella, Police Commission; Cheryl Russell

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Branigan called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Ms. Gutierrez arrived at 7:37 p.m.

APPROVE MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING JULY 20, 2011

The changes to the minutes of the regular meeting of July 20, 2011 are as follows:

On page 4, last paragraph, 1st sentence, change “**EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 30, 2011**” to **EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2011.**”

On page 6, under **UPDATE ON WEED BEACH MASTER PLAN PROJECT**, the 4th sentence should read: “Some proposed changes to the original estimates include changing to a standing seam roof from an asphalt shingle roof, stone veneer from split face block, and clapboard to cedar shake.”

**** MS. DALY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JULY 20, 2011.**

**** MS. GUTIERREZ SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION ON
DONATION REQUEST FROM STEVEN GIBSON – TREE IN MEMORIAM**

**** MR. GOODYEAR MOVED TO APPROVE THE DONATION OF A RED MAPLE TREE PLANTED AT THE POND’S EDGE IN TILLEY POND MARK IN MEMORY OF MRS. GIBSON.**

**** MS. MORRIS SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

TOWN OF DARIEN
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 19, 2011

**REQUEST FROM DARIEN BOAT CLUB TO RUN SEWER LINE TO CLUB
HOUSE FROM PEAR TREE POINT ROAD**

Mr. David Deevers explained that the plan is to run a sewer line through the parking lot to Pear Tree Point Road from the Darien Boat Club. The boat club has had a large septic tank, which has several fields off of it. It is in good shape and is serviced every other year. However, several years ago there was an e-coli problem at the beach. Tests were done, and it was determined that the septic tanks were not the cause of the problem. At the Town's request, the boat club started looking into tying into the sewer line. The DEP would be willing to put money forward if the boat club tied into the sewer and put a sanitary pump out station on the dock. That would pay up to 70% of the cost. The agreement is that the boat club would have to service those who want to be pumped out. The boat club went to Redniss & Mead, who drew up plans to put in a line between the boat club and the docks and get rid of the septic tank. In addition, they would tie into the stub already on Pear Tree Point Road. The boat club received DEP approval. He said it was basically a "cut and cover" operation. They then met with 6 contractors. The request for bids are in front of them, and the boat club has requested them back by October 3 in time for their board meeting. He explained the affected parking lot area is from the gate of the boat club diagonally over to the hydrant by the guard shack. It involves 2 holding tanks, 2 pumps, and removing the old septic tank. They will put down a new water line and 3 conduits for future use. This work should begin in November when the boat club closes and last through December 15. There should be minimal impact, except in the area of the boat ramp, due to the time of year. Mr. Deevers explained that the boat club will cover the remaining 30% of the expenses.

**** MR. GOODYEAR MOVED TO APPROVE THE INSTALLATION AND CONNECTION OF THE SEWER LINE FROM PEAR TREE POINT ROAD TO THE DARIEN BOAT CLUB ACROSS THE BEACH PARKING LOT, WITH ALL DISTURBED AREAS TO BE RESTORED.**

**** MR. MARCHESI SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

UPDATE ON WEED BEACH MASTER PLAN PROJECT

Ms. Swiatek said the construction project has been mobilized, with the bathhouse being partially demolished. The site is open to the public even though work is being done. She said the contractor has submitted a phasing plan, which includes 12 phases. The plans are available in her office for viewing. She said they are laying out the warming hut, removing the asphalt, and doing the curbing. The trees are wrapped in yellow tape. They are not being removed. She said they are working with CL&P for the disconnections, removal of lines, installation of new lines, etc. They are trying to get the paddle tennis courts up and running by October 10, and the trailer will be arriving next Friday.

Ms. Swiatek said that she, Ms. Branigan and the Building Committee went before the Board of Selectmen for funding of three add-ons, or items that had been value-engineered out, to be added back in. Two were approved – the stone veneer and cedar shake shingles. The copper roof didn't get approved, as it was stated that it would not last long in a waterfront environment. She said she has met with Kate Clark in Finance and the Owner's Rep to make sure all the reports are together.

REPORTS

a) Director

Ms. Swiatek said her provided report was lengthy, as there was no meeting in August. She said she noted special things that they addressed, in addition to the regular maintenance. She said all fields are up and running. She was impressed with Darien's response to the recent storm cleanup. The preparation done in advance of the storm was a huge benefit. The Weed Beach tennis courts' floating surface sat under salt water for three days; a company was called in to repair some of the seams. Pear Tree Point was back up and on-line by the following weekend. The ground breaking will take place at Weed Beach tomorrow at 10:30 a.m.

b) Assistant Director

Mr. Coghlan said as they were ready to begin the transition from summer to fall, the storm hit. It hit Pear Tree Point pretty hard, and he had lifeguards cleaning the bathhouse. Movie night was postponed for a few days; 150 people showed up at Tilley Pond Park on 9/16/11 for the rescheduled movie night. There was no power at Town Hall for three days, which delayed registration from 8/30/11 to 9/1/11. The registration numbers were comparable to last fall's numbers. The paddle tennis season starts on October 10. There will be portable power for the paddle tennis courts beginning next week.

c) Chairman

Ms. Branigan complimented the Parks & Recreation Commission and the Public Works Committee for the wonderful job done during the recent severe storm. She said she spoke with Police Chief Lovello regarding the Dogs in Parks rules and regulations. There appeared to be some confusion regarding residents driving into the beaches and then walking their dogs on the beach, which is not allowed. She will be sending the Rules & Regulations to the Darien Times newspaper prior to October 1st. She also said she will be attending the RTM meeting.

d) Sub-Committee

Mr. Goodyear distributed a sign up sheet for the Commission members to volunteer for one hour a week during the leash required hours. He felt there were two courses of action the Commission could take to fulfill their roles in their involvement with this ordinance. He said they could put up the signs in November and leave it to the police to enforce. They can also put the announcement of the rules and regulations in the paper. There is one enforcement officer and 10 parks. The second course of action would be what was stated in June and July, which would be to become actively involved in communicating the rules, checking compliance, working with benchgroups, and monitoring the results. It was mentioned that a meeting should be set up with the DDOG group to clarify roles and responsibilities. It was clarified that the ordinance will be reviewed 6 months after implementation.

Ms. Branigan said she spoke with the Police Department, and the signs may not be ready by October 1. Ms. Morris said she will speak to the DDOG group and have communications set up. Ms. Swiatek said she uploaded the dog rules and regulations on the Town's website, and sent a copy to the Police Department. She said that she sent the sign information to the sign company with a request for a quote. She is waiting for a quote, estimated delivery time, and a proof.

Ms. Branigan introduced Ms. Linda Santarella, a member of the Police Commission, who said that at their afternoon meeting, the Police Commission's position was to have better signage at the beaches regarding the dog rules and regulations. She said the Police Department will enforce the dog rules and regulations, issuing \$90.00 fines to violators. She said that she is a frequent beach-goer, and this summer was the worst as far as people bringing their dogs to the beach. She had to continually remind people that dogs were not allowed at the beaches. She complimented Mr. Coghlan on doing a great job with the beaches. She said the Police Commission is more than happy to partner with the Parks & Recreation Department to enforce the dog rules and regulations. Ms. Santarella offered to give Ms. Swiatek the names of some sign companies. Ms. Daly offered to proofread the signs before final production.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Cheryl Russell said she was not speaking tonight as a member of the Parks & Rec Committee of the RTM, but as Cheryl Russell, taxpayer of the town. She said she had requested many times to be on the Parks & Rec Commission's agenda to discuss the dog issue. She is a frequent beachgoer who was busy this summer fielding questions from residents about the dog rules and regulations, and monitoring the people who brought their dogs to the beaches, and then did not pick up after their dogs. This is a health issue. She said that even after signs were moved to more noticeable locations, violations still occurred. Now there are even more residents with dogs going to the beaches because they think the beaches are closed. The beaches are never closed. She urged the

Commission to have money put in the budget for the fence continuation from the picnic area all the way down to the gatehouse, similar to the way it was years ago. This would alleviate residents getting past the gatehouse, and into the beach and picnic area, with dogs. When the fence was in place years ago, it did seem to deter residents and dogs from the beach and picnic area.

Ms. Russell mentioned that the trees at Pear Tree Point seem to be dying. It was confirmed that it was due to the recent storm and exposure to saltwater.

Ms. Linda Santarella, a member of the Police Commission, mentioned that there is a crack in the gazebo. She said she brought this to the Commission's attention a year or two ago. Now the crack is across the entire gazebo, and in the concrete. This gazebo is a focal point for Darien. It's a place where all realtors bring prospective new homeowners to. She spoke with the Board of Selectmen about money for a fence, which they are trying to gain support for. She said that people need to be responsible for taking their own garbage out of the beach area. She commended the Parks & Rec Commission for doing a great job cleaning up the beach.

Mr. Goodyear mentioned that Mr. Chris Filmer is currently in Stamford Hospital. He said cards can be sent to 10 Harriett Lane in Darien. Emails can be sent to Chris@chrisfilmer.com.

NEXT MEETING: Regular Meeting October 19, 2011 7:30 p.m.
Darien Town Hall, Room 119

ADJOURN MEETING

- ** MS. DALY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** MS. GUTIERREZ SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting ended at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Marr
Telesco Secretarial Services