

**Regular Meeting
of the
Planning, Zoning and Housing Committee (PZH)
of the
Representative Town Meeting (RTM)**

DRAFT MINUTES

Date: January 14, 2013
Time: On or around 7:30 PM
Place: Room 119, Darien Town Hall
Present: Elisabeth Bacon (EB), Carolyn Bayne (CB), Courtney Haidinger (CH), Joanne Hennessy (JH), Ted Hawkins (TH), Bob Kernan (BK), Spencer McIlmurray (SM), Holly Schulz (HS), John VanderKieft (JV), Rob Young (RY)
Absent: Lucy Fiore (LF), Shedd Glassmeyer (SG), James Howe (JH), John McLean (JM)
Guests: Fred Conze (FC), Chairman, P&Z Commission and Jeremy Ginsberg (JG), P&Z Director (Staff)

Meeting called to order by PZH chairman, JH. JH introduced FC to give an overview of P&Z Commission and Staff.

FC outlined current workload of P&Z as being primarily related to property damage resulting from Hurricane Sandy:

While all parts of Darien sustained damage, Noroton Bay was badly hit leaving many home owners still living in their damaged homes or in temporary housing. As a rule, older low-lying homes (first floor elevations of 7-8 feet above Mean Sea Level (MSL) sustained the most damage, while recently renovated and elevated homes (13'-0" MSL) remained relatively unaffected. Owners are requesting permits that run the gamut from minor repairs to full-blown teardown renovations. Regardless of scope, all new work must meet or minimum Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA) construction standards while still remaining within the limitations of the special Noroton Bay zoning regulations regarding height, coverage and setbacks. While most Darien homes are well within the allowable 20% lot coverage requirement, all lots in Noroton Bay are undersized and are considered legally non-conforming. Because of this non-conformity, any proposed work generally requires a review by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). In addition, new FEMA regulations will increase floor elevation requirements to 14'-0" MSL. The dilemma facing the P&Z Commission is how to fairly and expeditiously deal with both renovation extremes. JG said P&Z staff is overwhelmed with permit applications. They have streamlined their normal review process. A public hearing is to be held in February to consider new regulations for Noroton Bay.

FC gave an update on the P&Z litigation facing the Town and how it remains a significant expense to the Town.

FC gave an update on all current and proposed affordable housing developments in Town. This led to a general discussion of affordable housing planning in Darien. FC noted that the 2007 Affordable Housing Plan was updated in 2012. He also noted the new overlay zones and fee-in-lieu of payments to the Town as being steady progress in this regard.

As Allen O'Neill representative, BK gave a review of the last (December 2012) Darien Housing Authority (DHA) meeting, (see attached).

FC noted that the Town Plan of Development is written by P&Z and is due to be updated in 2016. This generated a discussion regarding sidewalk planning.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15PM, Rob Young, Substitute Clerk