

## Minutes from Darien's RTM Public Works meeting May 5, 2014

Meeting began at 8:05pm with Adiletta, Bumgardner, Miller, Keith, Hardison, Cameron, Schulz Amatruda, Adelman, Coyne, Stolar in attendance. Absent were Poli, Young and Moore.

### **First item: Approval of the minutes from previous meeting.**

**Second item: Discussion of curbside leaf pickup.** Katie Keith and Jim Cameron met with Bob Steeger, Director of Public Works with First Selectman Jayme Stevenson in attendance on Feb 11th. Bob said DPW doesn't have specialized equipment for leaf suction pickup. The present suction truck is specialized for sewers so it would involve incremental equipment which would be several thousand dollars plus labor. At present the town of Darien offers a leaf pickup program in which bagged leaves are picked up in late December and brought to the Darien Recycling Center.

There was a discussion of encouraging composting vs loose leaf pickup. The committee's concerns were the additional cost of the truck and labor could make taxes go up, manpower resources, safety concerns of standing piles of leaves and whether it is considered a core essential service for Darien. The essential services are roads, sidewalks, Christmas tree pick up, signage and bagged leaf pickup. Since we already offer this, there was a motion for no change and to keep the status quo. (See attached minutes from the sub committee for more specifics from their meeting with Mr. Steeger.

### **Third item: Pedestrian Safety Committee**

Holly Schultz gave a detailed update (see attached minutes). A committee was developed for Pedestrian Safety with 6 members from the RTM and there is a representative from each district along with a rep from the RTM PH&S and P&Z committees Their goal is to be part of the P&Z monthly review process. The committee would push for a formal sidewalk installation policy, a ranking chart, data facts on speed in areas, survey of residents via a link which has been set up to give suggestions.

### **Fourth item: Operating budget for Public Works and Capital Projects**

Jay Hardison and Dick Poli met with Bob Steeger on 3/25/14 to discuss the 2014 Public Works proposed budget. Bob said the operating budget for Public Works is flat. There is a little increase for repaving streets. They asked about the two capital project that were mentioned in the First Selectman's State of the Town but there is nothing on the Public Works agenda for the projects. The two flood mitigation projects, Interval Drainage and West Avenue Drainage have been stalled because of easements issues. (see attached minutes for more details).

### **Fifth item: Darien Recycling Center and Swap Shop**

Alison Stolar discussed how the town is making money off of single stream recycling. She said 50% of residents belong to the Recycling Center. Suggestions on her committee include making an In and Out sign, additional paving, doing a bright yellow line to improve flow of traffic, additional signage. The program got \$10,000 from the Board of Finance for renovating the existing map and for doing recycling programs for Darien schools. There are one day permits to use the DRC which can be obtained at the library. City Carting will be providing recycling garbage cans at the elementary schools. There is a powerpoint presentation for the schools, an Art for Auction program and Fifth graders at Ox Ridge in the video club did a video on recycling.

A motion was called and the meeting was adjourned at 9:35pm.

At our meeting May 5th in addition to presentations from subcommittees which I forwarded previously recall the Chair provided a recap of the proposed budget for the Public Works Department. Overall no extraordinary items were noted. Consistent with past years all core services are to be maintained, no meaningful discretionary items were added and the department continues to operate with lean personnel staffing and costs. This in the face of extraordinary events like Irene in 2011, Sandy in 2012 and record winter 2013/14. An overall increase of under 3.9% is reflected. Bottom line is resources continue to be used efficiently, no headcount additions or material increases in personnel costs, and implementation of new programs like those at the recycle center further reduce costs and increase revenue without reducing core essential services.