

MINUTES
OPERATIONS PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
October 17, 2013

First Selectman Jayme Stevenson called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m. in Room 206 of Town Hall.

Present were First Selectman, Jayme Stevenson; Board of Education Chairperson, Betsy Hagerty-Ross; RTM Moderator, Sarah Seelye; Planning & Zoning Chairman, Joe Spain; State Representative, Terrie Wood and Town Administrator, Karl Kilduff.

Planning and Zoning

Mr. Spain noted that the P & Z Commission recently changed some regulations. The changes were of a routine nature to allow for more administrative efficiency.

An application to sub-divide property on Five Mile River Road is expected to draw a lot of public comment as some neighbors have expressed concern over the size of the two proposed houses with pools. Additionally, a significant amount of rock removal would be required to move forward with the stated building plans. The removal of the rock would raise noise concerns and result in a high volume of truck traffic to remove the rock. Mrs. Stevenson asked Mr. Spain to please make sure the Five Mile River Commission is aware of this project.

Finally, Mr. Spain discussed downtown business applications and traffic/parking. Mrs. Stevenson commented that some parking changes may affect the Grove Street lot which would enable more downtown parking for customers, which in turn may affect business applications for downtown.

State Representative

Mrs. Terrie Wood recently met with the Commissioner of Housing, Evonne Klein, the Director of Strategic Initiatives, Katie Durand and Speaker of the House, Brendan Sharkey to discuss proposed amendments to 8-30g. Mr. Sharkey showed support for modifications to 8-30g recommended by SWRPA. Commissioner Klein supports 8-30g without modifications. Mrs. Stevenson hosts a meeting with Commissioner Klein to discuss 8-30g on Tuesday, October 22, 2013.

The new legislative session begins in Hartford on February 3, 2013.

RTM Moderator

Mrs. Seelye is asking the Rules Committee to look into changing the charter to allow the State of the Town to be changed from December. The group agreed that holding the State of the Town at a later date, possibly in the spring, would make sense.

Board of Education

Mrs. Hagerty-Ross will have official enrollment numbers for the Darien schools. A discussion ensued about trying to project enrollment numbers, especially where large housing developments are concerned, and how those projections affect school facilities.

The Darien Athletic Foundation (DAF) has received the approval of the P&Z Commission to build a concession stand at the high school. The next step will be the acceptance of the gift by the BOE. The BOE has requested that three studies be done before it considers accepting the additional DAF gift of three turf fields at the high school. The studies include: traffic, usage (including noise) and Title IX.

John Verre has been named Special Education Ombudsman.

Board of Finance

Mrs. Mao noted that Mr. Orr has replaced Mr. Duwan on the BOF. Two additional BOF members, Lori Bora and Martha Banks will be stepping down and Mrs. Mao mentioned that she appreciated their participation and dedication to the BOF over the years.

Mrs. Mao stated that she took an opportunity at her most recent BOF meeting to clarify a misrepresentation in the local papers that the BOF underfunds the education budget.

First Selectman

Mrs. Stevenson reported that she has been working on land acquisitions. Additionally, she continues to work on creative parking and housing solutions. The BOS will be discussing the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and the Darien Affordable Housing Advisory Committee at the meeting scheduled for Monday, October 21, 2013.

Finally, Mrs. Stevenson said that the Office of Policy & Management has been notified that SWRPA intends to merge with the Housatonic Valley. Regions may be adjusted as border towns select the region they want to align with and the assignment of Bridgeport is determined.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:53 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 17, 2013 at 8:30 a.m. in Room 206.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda O'Leary
Recording Secretary