

Darien Beautification Commission

MINUTES of the MEETING

March 15th, 2023

Darien Town Hall, 2 Renshaw Road

Room 206, 9:00am

Attendance, In Person: Elizabeth Hall, Alicia Peperone, Sarah Schwarz,
Colleen Kalvaitis By Phone: Tracey Whitehead

1. Welcome and Establishment of a Quorum and Approval of Minutes:

Chairperson Elizabeth Hall welcomed everyone. Minutes of the last meeting on February 8th were approved as presented.

2. Update on Adopt a Garden reLaunch. Alicia Peperone discussed the updated document that she had put together for AAG. She has estimated pricing on the 3 year commitment for the Adopt a Gardens. Each garden should be about \$3800/3 year commitment. The next step being to reach out to Landscapers for bids.

- a. discussion on whether emails should be from darien.gov email addresses
- b. Ed Gentile will need to address the edges to some gardens before we can start planting (e.g. Tokeneke)
- c. Garden 11 will need a powerwash, fix broken slates and TLC to the wood benches. This might be done by Elder.

3. Treasurer's Report.

- a. Tracey presented. Our new budget amount has not yet been approved
- b. We should know around July 1st what the approved budget will be
- c. The estimate to water the baskets for this summer is \$8000 which leaves about \$5000-\$6000 in the account.

- d. Alicia asked if we could allocate some of the excess money to go towards a clean up of the gardens so that they appear nice before we reach out to sponsors and landscapers. The estimate is \$1200 for a clean up. The commission approved to allow up to \$4000 to be used for this. A member will call Elder to coordinate this. It was noted that clean up will not include mulch. Amy's Smile Garden and Ledge Rd by I-95 will be included but not the Berm by the Darien Train Station.

4. Transitioning from Juliet Cain's position:

- a. Accessing the email account: Elizabeth will look into this
- b. Web page access: Elizabeth will look into this
- c. Summer interns: It is too late to get seniors from DHS for the summer interns for 2023 but Elizabeth will talk to her son to ask how to put in a request for volunteers for summer 2024
- d. Deliverables owed to the town government and their timing - i.e. annual report, financial info: Elizabeth will look into this
- e. Any point of contact on other commissions or in the town government: Elizabeth is going to research the other commissions and create a contact list of relevant members and then present it to the committee so that we can all reach out to contacts to maintain relationships across town committees
- f. Candidates for Chairperson position: No decision was reached.
- g. Status of two open position on DBC: We still have two open positions. Tracey is trying to get a neighbor to get involved

5. Discuss DBC goals and objectives for 2023:

- a. Adopt a Garden is a big focus
- b. Hanging baskets
- c. Slope
- d. Make connections/relationships with other town departments
- e. Town signs: Sarah is going to explore if we can wrap this into our responsibilities as it would be better to have uniformity across all signs

in town (e.g. not just *Welcome to Darien*, but other signs like *Mechanic Place, Tilley Pond*, the Adopt a Garden signs)

6. **Next Meeting Date:** It was decided to move the next meeting to April 19th to avoid conflicts with Darien Public Schools spring break.

7. **Any other business:**
 - a. Discuss the Beach Bucket Foundation, plastic buckets at stations at each beach to help with trash pick-up at our Beaches. Sarah shared that she is still working with Park & Recs to get this implemented.
 - b. Veteran's Circle benches: Elizabeth will ask if the senior group at the Senior Center can clean those up.
 - c. Elizabeth said that we should come up with a plan to give away plants from the slope
 - d. Alicia pointed out the Noroton Heights Shopping Center if finally being torn down, but now there is some inappropriate graffiti. It would be nice if DBC has some ability to have this removed.

8. **Adjourn:** There being no further business, the Board moved to adjourn at 10:03am.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Schwarz
Secretary