

**Town of Darien**  
**Advisory Committee on Sustainability**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
April 12, 2023  
Meeting Held Virtually *Via* “GoToMeeting”

**Members Present:** Carolyn Bayne, Kathy Finnegan, Cliff vanVoorhees, Amanda Craig and Mohan Ganadal

**Members Absent:** Christine LaJaunie, Dan Dolcetti and, *ex-officio*, Ed Gentile, Director of Public Works.

**Also Present:** Luz Elena Bueno and from Parks and Rec, Pam Gery and Cassie Schull.

**12:02 pm** Call to Order with a quorum

**Public Comment:** Luz Bueno offered three comments:

1. Darien should consider Wilton’s approach to recycling, a consignment (sic) shop staffed by volunteers with proceeds going to the schools.
2. There is a growing number of Amazon boxes, and Darien should consider how to get these reused/ better recycled.
3. She has not yet seen the Swap Shop Volunteer Agreement.

**Approve Past Minutes**

- Minutes from the March 8, 2023 meeting were approved.

**Town Presentation - Parks and Rec**

- Pam Gery informed the committee about three initiatives in her department
  - Better recycling at town beaches, parks and at community events
  - Clean Beach Buckets Project which will be set up as a scouting project. A shelf with buckets will be provided so that residents can take one onto the beach and collect trash.
  - In collaboration with the Invasive Species Working Group, the town is removing invasive species from Weed Beach and Cherry Lawn. 160 truckloads have been removed from Weed Beach alone, and large spaces have been opened up for recreational purposes.
- There was a brief discussion covering ways that our committee might support these initiatives, including helping to publicize them.
- Pam invited new ideas from the committee at any time.

**Earth Day Initiatives (Saturday, April 22)**

- Kathy will make a presentation on recycling, with some focus on the food scrap program at the Library. A few food scrap kits will be raffled off.

- Caroline Bayne will mount a table at the Nature Center to present information on recycling, again with a focus on food scraps.
- Amanda will mount a one-off food scrap recycling collection point at Whole Foods from 09:00- 12:00, as an educational initiative.

### **Swap Shop Volunteer Agreement**

- After a short discussion, the draft of this agreement that was circulated prior to the meeting was approved unanimously as the committee's recommendation to the Town. Kathy will forward the agreed draft to Ed Gentile for final town approvals and implementation.

### **EV's**

Kathy reported that a subgroup of the Sustainable Fairfield County group is focused on EV's, and that she learned from them that Eversource is offering grants of up to \$20,000. in the form of rebates, to support the installation of charging stations by town governments.

Mohan reported that he has received the inventory of town vehicles and has engaged with DPW where the focus has been mostly on the vehicles. He is encouraging a more comprehensive approach with equal focus on charging stations.

### **Food Waste**

Caroline reported that USDA has established grants in support of food waste recycling. The Center for Eco Technology is encouraging towns to work on food waste recovery from schools and local businesses. Applications for the USDA grants must come from government entities, and it seems best if a few towns need to join together. It is hoped that Fairfield will lead the way for a grant application that Darien could join.

1:02 pm      Adjourn

Respectfully submitted,

Cliff van Voorhees, Secretary Pro Tem

### **Focus in 2023**

Expand food scrap recycling,  
Investigate leaf blower ordinance,  
Sustainability events,  
Collaborate with schools,  
EV infrastructure information/funding