



TOWN OF DARIEN NEWSLETTER

April 14, 2023 - Issue 29

MESSAGE FROM MONICA MCNALLY

Dear Darienites,

Spring is an exciting time of year when we watch our surroundings come to life, and it always fills me with renewed enthusiasm for the coming months. May 5, 2023 is the closing date on Great Island, the 60+ acres of land the Town is purchasing along the coastline. Before residents may access the property, there is immediate site preparation work to be done. This Phase 1 work will include, but is not limited to, widening access roads, remediation of certain environmental issues, establishing initial parking areas and determining property hours.



On April 3, 2023, the Board of Selectmen discussed and voted to create a Great Island Advisory Committee, which will include elected and appointed officials, and four full time Darien residents. Members of this Committee will work to address the stated mandates of the Committee's [Charge](#) beginning with Phase I, access to Great Island.

While I think it is all very exciting, I expect great interest in Phase II, which will focus on developing and implementing the longer-term vision for Great Island. This will be the phase that generates the big picture view of Great Island. How do we want to use the property in the years to come and how will we bring that vision to life? Together our community will make these decisions and together we will experience the beauty and tranquility of this coastal land for generations.

If you have skills that would benefit the work of this Committee, we would love to hear from you. The [application](#) to join the committee and answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ) is available [here](#).

Please continue to keep in contact with me with your thoughts, questions, and concerns.

Sincerely,
Monica McNally

DATES & INFORMATION

UPCOMING MEETINGS

**ADVISORY COMMISSION ON
COASTAL WATERS**
4.17.23 7:30 PM

RTM
4.17.23 8:00 PM

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
4.18.23 8:30 AM

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
4.18.23 7:30 PM

BUDGET UPDATE

On April 6, 2023 the Board of Finance voted to approve the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 budget for the amount of \$165,572,094 for Town and Education operations (the General Fund), and \$4,667,767 for Town and Education capital. The total property taxes needed to fund the budgets is \$155,169,658. This amount results in a 2024 Mill Rate of 17.62. The RTM will have final vote to approve the budget on May 8, 2023.

Terminology and calculation explanations:

OPERATIONS PLANNING COMMITTEE

4.19.23 8:30 AM

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

4.19.23 7:30 PM

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

4.19.23 7:30 PM

4.26.23 7:30 pm

MENTAL HEALTH TASK FORCE

4.25.23 10:00 AM

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

4.25.23 7:30 PM

The complete meeting schedule of all Boards and Commissions is available [here](#). Most meetings can be viewed on DarienTV79.com.

For additional events and programs happening within Darien, click [here](#) to view the Darien Community Calendar available through the Darien Chamber of Commerce.

Mill rate = taxes needed divided by the adjusted grand list, then multiplied by 1000. The Mill Rate establishes the taxes paid per \$1000 of assessed value. Therefore, a property assessed at \$1,000,000 value will pay taxes totaling \$17,620.

The Grand list = all properties including vehicles, businesses, and personal property. Properties are assessed at 70% of market value.

Adjusted Grand list: the grand list is adjusted for estimated exemptions. That number is then multiplied by an estimated tax collection rate setting an adjusted grand list.

Taxes needed= total budget less non-tax revenues

FOLLOW THE TOWN ON SOCIAL MEDIA

#TownofDarienCT
@TownofDarienCT



RESIDENT REMINDERS, NEWS, & TIPS

Sewer Bills

Residents have until the end of April to pay the second installment of their sewer bill before receiving a late fee. Payments can be made [online](#), through the mail, or in the Tax Collector’s office, Room 104, at Town Hall.

Tax Day

April 18, 2023 is Income Tax Day. All federal and state income tax payments must be postmarked April 18, 2023, or submitted electronically by 11:59 PM on April 18th.

Free Bulk Pick Up


Each residence is permitted one free bulk waste pickup from the Department of Public Works per calendar year. Pickup is by appointment only and runs through June 14, 2023. Residents should utilize the Town’s website and QAlert system to schedule pickup appointments. Go to www.darienct.gov, and click on Citizen Service Requests to schedule.

Connecticut Food Protection Program

The State of Connecticut has recently completed the process of implementing the [FDA Food Code](#), which replaces previous State regulations pertaining to food safety. These new regulations change the inspection and permitting process for all food service facilities in Darien and across the State. Instead of the previous numerical scoring system, the FDA-based inspection system categorizes violations according to the risk potential for causing foodborne illness. One consequence of this change should be immediately evident to patrons of our local restaurants who have become accustomed to viewing ratings (A, B, or C) posted in visible locations at each establishment. Since ratings were based on an inspection “score” which has been discontinued, the Rating Program has been suspended. Instead, a notice informing customers that inspection reports of the facility are available for viewing upon request will be posted in the same location where the rating had previously been located. This notice includes a QR code linking to the Health Department Search Inspections website, where detailed inspection reports can be viewed.


The Department does plan to reinstate the Ratings Program at some point in the near future.

Additional information about what local Health Departments look for when conducting restaurant inspections can be found on the Darien Health Department page on the Town of Darien [website](#).



*Town of Darien
Health Department*

In accordance with Chapter 8-304-11(K) of the 2022 US-FDA Food Code, the inspection report for this food establishment is available for public review upon request or may be viewed at the Darien Health Department website by scanning the following Code:



Car Safety

Please remember to take your bags and valuables with you when you park and lock your cars. There have been recent reports of “smash and grab” incidents on parked cars in public places. Thieves target locked cars with bags and valuable left in them. According to the Darien Police Department, these thieves operate as an organized group from Florida to Maine and are lightning quick. They will be at your car, smash the window and flee with your valuables within 30 seconds or less. If nothing is in view they simply move on to a different target.

Keep Waterways Clear

The Town is continuously doing everything possible to keep waterways and storm drains on Town owned land clean and clear of debris. Private property owners are responsible to clear and maintain waterways on their land. The Town is not permitted to maintain waterways on private property, and cannot legally access private property to perform maintenance. Blockages on private property impede water flow and can cause preventable flooding along a watercourse. Please do your part!

COMMUNITY NEWS



Talking Trash: Rethinking What You Toss, Recycling Right, and Why it all Matters!

Tuesday, April 18th, 10am
Darien Library

Talking Trash: Rethinking What You Toss, Recycling Right, and Why It All Matters

On Tuesday, April 18th from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM the Darien Library, in partnership with the Darien Nature Center, will welcome members of the Darien Advisory Committee on Sustainability who will 'talk trash' and explain how important it is for each of us to properly dispose of our trash. They will demystify the ongoing challenges of waste disposal in Connecticut, and detail its rising costs.

Once you understand the big picture, it's easy to understand why what we do at home matters and why we should all play a part in solutions to reduce, reuse and recycle. The speakers will offer reasons to "recycle right", and help you navigate the services available in Darien to make it easy to accomplish in your daily life. They will also explain why food scrap recycling is one of the most important keys to solving the current waste crisis.

Registration for the event is available via this link:

<https://www.darienlibrary.org/event/talking-trash-rethinking-what-you-toss-recycling-right-and-why-it-all-matters>

Youth Commission Food Drive

The Darien Youth Commission "drive through" food drive for Person to Person will be held on Saturday, April 29th from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM at the Koons parking lot by the Darien Train Station (across from Tilly Pond Park). Suggested donation items include: soups, cereal, oatmeal, pancake mix, peanut butter, jelly, canned fruits and vegetables, dried and canned beans, fresh produce, pasta, sauce, protein/granola bars, shelf-stable milk, and baby food.

Out of the Darkness Campus Walk

The Town of Darien Mental Health Task Force is encouraging residents to participate in the Out of the Darkness Campus Walk on Sunday, April 30, 2023 at 10:00 AM. The Darien High School Administration and mental health staff have partnered with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) to plan this Suicide Prevention event. The event will bring our entire community together to honor, remember and promote awareness of mental health. Event details and registration can be found [here](#).

"Demystifying Resilience in Children and Adolescents"

Research on resilience shows that building resilience skills is one of the most important things we can teach our children. Children and adolescents with good resilience skills are better able to cope, and manage stress and anxiety. On Thursday, May 4th at 7:00 PM please join this important community event sponsored by the Mental Health Task Force of Darien, Darien Public Schools, Child Guidance Center, Family Centers, and Kids in Crisis. Zoom registration available [here](#).

DEMYSTIFYING RESILIENCE IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS



An informational event for parents of children in grades K-12. How to foster resilience in your child.

Thursday, May 4th - 7 pm

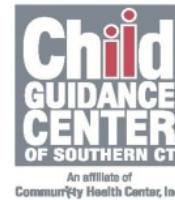
Scan link to register

https://us06web.zoom.us/join/register?registerfrom=registerWN_M2CP1NtoQgCcZR1vfayvDA



Community Event Sponsored by:
Mental Health Task Force of Darien, Darien Public Schools,
Child Guidance Center, Family Centers and Kids in Crisis

For more information please call: 203 656 7328



PUBLIC WORKS

Road Paving

Spring road paving has begun. The complete Town paving schedule is available under [News](#) on the Town of Darien website. Minor traffic delays may occur during paving, so please plan accordingly. You may call the Department of Public Works at 203.656.7346 with questions or for further information.



Town of Darien Department of Public Works,
2023 Spring Paving Program Press Release

The Town of Darien paving program for the Spring of 2023 is as follows:

<u>STREET NAME</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>	<u>START MILLING</u>	<u>FINISH PAVING</u>
Old Oak Rd	Leeuwarden Rd	Cul De Sac	4/6/23	4/13/23
Hollow Tree Ridge Rd	West Ave	Middlesex Rd	4/10/23	4/13/23
Leeuwarden Rd	Leeuwarden La	Cul De Sac	4/6/23	4/14/23
Leeuwarden Rd	Leeuwarden La	Christie Hill Rd	4/10/23	4/14/23
Georgian La	Christie Hill Rd	7 Georgian La	4/11/23	4/17/23
Christie Hill Rd	Hoyt St	Hillcrest Ave	4/11/23	4/17/23
Christie Hill Rd	Leeuwarden Rd	Top O'Hill Rd	4/12/23	4/18/23
Stephanie La South	Stephanie La	Cul De Sac	4/12/23	4/18/23
Stephanie La	Hollow Tree Ridge	Cul De Sac	4/13/23	4/19/23
Four Acres Rd	Highland Ave	Cul De Sac	4/14/23	4/19/23
Priscilla La	Highfield La	Cul De Sac	4/14/23	4/20/23
Highfield La	Academy St	Mansfield Ave	4/14/23	4/20/23
Roland Dr	Mansfield Ave	Cul De Sac	4/17/23	4/20/23
Morehouse La	Prospect Ave	Cul De Sac	4/17/23	4/20/23
Highland Ave	Academy St	Mansfield Ave	4/17/23	4/21/23
Fairview Ave	Highland Ave	Cul De Sac	4/18/23	4/21/23
Academy St	Post Rd	Fairview Ave	4/18/23	4/21/23
Baily Ave	Leroy Ave	West Ave	4/19/23	4/24/23
Renshaw Rd	Post Rd	Park Pl	4/19/23	4/24/23
Archer St	Fitch Ave	Cul De Sac	4/20/23	4/24/23
Ash St	Hecker Ave	Cherry St	4/20/23	4/25/23
Saint Johns Pl	Fitch Ave	Cul De Sac	4/20/23	4/25/23
Cherry St	Fitch Ave	Cul De Sac	4/20/23	4/25/23
Pleasant St	Gardiner St	Cul De Sac	4/20/23	4/25/23
Nickerson Rd	Nearwater La	Cul De Sac	4/21/23	4/26/23
Berry La	Five Mile River Rd	Cul De Sac	4/21/23	4/26/23
Pondfield La	Old Farm Rd	Cul De Sac	4/24/23	4/26/23
Settlers Trail	Locust Hill Rd	Clocks La	4/24/23	4/26/23
Valley Forge Rd	Half Mile Rd	Cul De Sac	4/24/23	4/27/23
Shagbark Rd	Half Mile Rd	Cul De Sac	4/24/23	4/27/23

Hanson Road Bridge

Progress on the Hanson Road Bridge continues. The design of the bridge is currently 45% complete, and the Department of Public Works is preparing to submit the design plans to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) for the permit. The Department will also be applying for funding through the State Local Bridge Program.

Noroton/West intersection

The work on the intersection at Noroton Ave. and West Ave. is in its final stages. The replacement traffic light has been installed and is running temporarily. The final testing will take place soon and paving of the intersection is scheduled for next month.

Drainage Study Results

The drainage study conducted by Tighe & Bond Engineers and Environmental Specialists has been completed for the area including the following roads: Seagate Rd; Post Rd (near Seagate Rd & Salt Box La); Salt Box La; Salt Box La East; Coachlamp La; Thomasina La; and Pleasant St. The complete drainage study is available [here](#) on the Town of Darien website.

A public information meeting regarding the study findings will be held in the Town Hall Auditorium on Thursday, May 11, 2023 at 7:00 PM. The results of the drainage study will be explained in detail and members of the public will be given an opportunity to ask questions and make comments.

Darien Awarded Neglected Cemeteries Grant

Many small cemeteries were originally owned and maintained by families, but as family members passed away, or moved out of the area, the cemeteries became neglected. When this happens, the land becomes the responsibility of the Town to maintain.

The Town of Darien has been awarded a \$5,000 Grant from the State of Connecticut to perform repairs in four cemeteries in town. The Public Works Department will repair/reset headstones, repair walls, clear weeds, mow the grounds and remove fallen branches with

the grant funds. The cemeteries where grant-funded work will occur are: Waterbury Cemetery #2 on Hoyt Street; Andrews Cemetery on Middlesex Road; Bates Cemetery #1 on the Boston Post Road, and Bates Cemetery #2 on Christie Hill Road.

GOVERNMENT 101

Commercial Blight Ordinance

During the March 20, 2023 Representative Town Meeting (RTM), the RTM voted to update the Town Code of Ordinances, Chapter 12 – Blight Prevention. The ordinance will now apply to all residential *and* commercial properties. The initial Blight Ordinance was added to the Town Code in 2016 and applied only to residential properties. The decision to add commercial properties was first brought to the RTM Town Government Safety & Administration Committee then to the Planning, Zoning & Housing Committee and finally to the RTM for the final vote on March 20th. Members of the RTM voted 69 in favor, 2 abstentions and 0 opposed. The commercial fine structure will be reviewed by the Blight Review Board in the future, but will remain identical to the residential fine structure at this time.

Sign up here to receive the
newsletter



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