

It was moved by Alderman Schauer and seconded by Alderman Stompanato to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussion of Collective Bargaining Section 2(C)(2) of the Open Meetings Act at 7:03 P.M., with no action to be taken.

MOTION DULY CARRIED

MOTION DULY CARRIED

A WORK SESSION WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:17 P.M. BY MAYOR MARCHESE FOR THE PURPOSE OF REVIEWING ITEMS ON THE AUGUST 3, 2026 AGENDA WITH THE CITY COUNCIL. THE WORK SESSION ADJOURNED AT 7:26 P.M.

7:30 P.M.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Darien was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by Mayor Marchese.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Marchese led the Council and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **ROLL CALL** — The Roll Call of Aldermen by Clerk Ragona was as follows:

Present:	Thomas J. Belczak	Ted V. Schauer
	Eric K. Gustafson	Ralph Stompanato
	Joseph A. Kenny	Mary Coyle Sullivan
	Gerry Leganski	

Absent: None

Also in Attendance: Joseph Marchese, Mayor
JoAnne E. Ragona, City Clerk
Michael J. Coren, City Treasurer
Bryon Vana, City Administrator
Gregory Thomas, Police Chief
Austin Jump, Deputy Chief
Daniel Gombac, Director of Municipal Services
Ryan Murphy, Senior Planner

4. **DECLARATION OF A QUORUM** – There being seven aldermen present, Mayor Marchese declared a quorum.

Mayor Marchese deviated from agenda and moved Summer Interns Capstone Presentation from Mayor's Report.

Mayor Marchese commented on six-week Internship Program. He introduced participating high school seniors: Shivani Joshi from Hinsdale South High School and Anvi Krishnardulla & Leo Popovich from Downers Grove South High School. Interns provided a brief biography, including interests & career aspirations; importance of Internship Program; experience/learnings gained through department rotations (City Administration, Public Works, City Planning, Police Department, Government Operations and Business Connections). Students provided a presentation of Capstone Project on Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Alderman Leganski spoke of FOIA being the topic of conversation of every municipality in the State.

Mayor Marchese stated the Internship Program was expanded to include Downers Grove South and Hinsdale South High School students. He thanked Ryan Altenburg, Career and Technical Education Teacher, at Downers Grove South High School and Dr. Kyle Burritt, Assistant Principal for Operations, & Dr. Kari Peronto, Principal, at Hinsdale South High School for their due diligence in selecting students. Mayor Marchese stated interns will be presenting their Capstone Project to the Board of Education for District 86 & District 99.

Ryan Wahlheim, President Darien Lions Club, congratulated and presented interns with a check as a token of appreciation. There was a round of applause.

5. **QUESTIONS, COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS – GENERAL**

Bill Lyons...

...thanked Public Works for doing a great job in taking care of the storm damage.

...spoke of past & recent history of Carmelite's "White House" also known as Castle Eden, importance of landmark, and discontent with communication regarding demolition plans. In order to avoid future lack of transparency, he suggested a wait-hold period for demolition of large & old buildings. He cited wait periods implemented by nearby municipalities & DuPage County.

Numerous residents located on Gail Avenue, 71st Street, Darien Lane, & Ailsworth Drive spoke of flooding issues & concerns including: financial hardships/need for assistance, permit freeze, power outages, better communication, low areas between Hickory & Timber, engineering survey inclusions, flood protection barriers, guidance in moving forward, qualifications for overhead sewers, rear-yard drainage, relocation of ComEd transformer box, and diameter of drainage pipe.

Director Gombac, Administrator Vana, & Mayor Marchese commented and responded to resident & Council questions regarding: financial assistance; permit holiday; DuPage County Overhead Sewer assistance/qualifications; City's Overhead Sewer Pilot Program; engineering survey – locations, completion, results, & solutions; Stormwater Ordinance history; and recent storm comparisons.

Lisa Schmidt, 7500 block of Grant Street, inquired about high school district boundary lines and ability for graduates of Eisenhower Junior High School to choose between Downers Grove South & Hinsdale South High Schools. She commented on distance to schools and importance of friendship bonds that form through elementary & junior high school. Mayor Marchese stated City does not govern school boundaries; boundaries are

determined by school districts. Alderwoman Sullivan suggested contacting District 99 School Board about redistricting.

Cynthia Haney, 1000 block of Juniper Lane, stated upon receipt of RV parking violation, she elected to seek a variance to be compliant with the intent of the City ordinance. She explained unique circumstances of property, indicated ordinance compliant location would place camper in full view of Juniper Lane, and stated existing location is screened by trees and is less visible. She asked Council to consider variance request to allow RV to remain on driveway. Mayor Marchese stated request will be discussed under New Business.

Jeff Sturgeon demanded Council end mass surveillance of Darien citizens. He spoke of Flock cameras, removal, and stopping the expansion of surveillance.

Emily Polacek, 7800 block of Stratford, commented on one-size-fits-all ordinances being unfair and an example of government overreach. She stated Ms. Haney provided a valid argument, as not everyone can park their RV or boat in allocated spots designated in the Ordinance. She suggested a solution would be for City to instill a permit application and fee. Ms. Polacek asked Council to consider Ms. Haney's request and not turn down due to precedence.

6. **RECEIVING OF COMMUNICATIONS**

Alderman Kenny...

...forwarded communication to Alderman Gustafson regarding a resident in his Ward not being able to hear tornado sirens in Ward 6.

...Larry Keslinke, 1000 block of Hickory, regarding power outage caused by fallen tree.

Alderwoman Sullivan received communication from...

...Andrew Kelly suggesting solutions/initiatives the City can take regarding Carmelite property. She shared/discussed information with City staff, City Attorney, Darien Historical Society & Carmelites. The Carmelites are not interested in entertaining alternatives and plan to move ahead with demolition plans.

...Sylvia McIvor regarding Flock cameras.

...Emily Polacek & Cynthia Haney regarding RV variance.

...Yasmeen Panawala, Carriage Greens resident, regarding flooding and easements.

...Ron Leban, Foxhill Place, who shared videos & pictures of heavy rains that occurred in Carriage Greens neighborhood.

7. **MAYORS REPORT**

Mayor Marchese expressed his profound sadness on the passing of a friend and former colleague, Sean Durkin, on July 30. In 1997 they were both elected as aldermen in the City of Darien and served on City Council for six years together. Those on the Council knew Sean as a principled leader whose only motivation was to do what was best for Darien residents and the community he loved.

Following his service to Darien, Sean continued his lifelong commitment to public service by serving on the Downers Grove Village Council for ten years. In 2025, he was appointed as a Trustee for the Village of Woodridge, where he continued to bring the same dedication, integrity, and genuine concern for his constituents.

Mayor Marchese expressed heartfelt condolences to Sean's children and entire family.

In honor of Sean's life, a visitation will be held on Thursday, August 6, from 3:00 – 9:00 P.M. at Modell Funeral Home, with Mass of Christian Burial at St. Mary of Gostyn Church on August 7 at 10:00 A.M. A City announcement will follow in Direct Connect eNews.

Alderman Kenny expressed missing his friend and mentor who gave his heart to all.

8. **CITY CLERK'S REPORT**

There was no report.

9. **CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

There was no report.

10. **DEPARTMENT HEAD INFORMATION/QUESTIONS**

A. POLICE DEPARTMENT – NO REPORT

B. MUNICIPAL SERVICES – NO REPORT

11. **TREASURER'S REPORT**

A. WARRANT NUMBER 26-27-07

It was moved by Alderman Kenny and seconded by Alderman Schauer to approve payment of Warrant Number 26-27-07 in the amount of \$1,045,108.82 from the

MOTION DULY CARRIED

B. MOTION NO. M-104-26

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE OF BUDGETED FUNDS TO PURCHASE PROFESSIONAL CONSULTING SERVICES FROM TESTING FOR PUBLIC SAFETY, LLC (TPS, LLC) TO ESTABLISH A SERGEANT PROMOTIONAL ELIGIBILITY LIST IN THE AMOUNT OF \$14,800.00

C. ORDINANCE NO. O-29-26

A MOTION APPROVING A VARIATION FROM SECTION 5A-7-2-6(A) OF THE CITY CODE TO PERMIT AN ENCLOSED PATIO WITHIN THE REAR YARD OF 1623 GOLFOVIEW DRIVE (PZC-26-9: 1623 GOLFOVIEW DRIVE)

D. ORDINANCE NO. O-30-26

A MOTION APPROVING A VARIATION FROM SECTION 4-3-10-(B)-3 OF THE CITY'S SIGN CODE TO PERMIT AN ELECTRONIC MESSAGING SIGN INSTEAD OF A MANUAL CHANGEABLE COPY SIGN FOR A REMODELED CULVER'S GROUND SIGN LOCATED AT 541 PLAINFIELD ROAD (PZC-26-10: 541 PLAINFIELD ROAD)

E. MOTION NO. M-105-26

A MOTION DIRECTING STAFF TO RESEARCH AND PREPARE ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENTS ALLOWING ELECTRONIC MESSAGE BOARDS ON GROUND SIGNS BY-RIGHT

F. MOTION NO. M-108-26

A MOTION AUTHORIZING TO PURCHASE AND DEPLOY A WEB-BASED, WORK ORDER MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE, FOR THE MUNICIPAL SERVICES/PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT SERVICE PLATFORMS, WITH BRIGHTLY SOFTWARE INC, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$40,745.83

Roll Call: Ayes: Belczak, Gustafson, Kenny, Leganski, Schauer, Stompanato, Sullivan

Nays: None

Absent: None

Results: Ayes 7, Nays 0, Absent 0

MOTION DULY CARRIED

16. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. AN ORDINANCE APPROVING A VARIATION FROM SECTION 5A-5-11(A) OF THE CITY CODE TO PERMIT A RECREATIONAL VEHICLE WITHIN THE FRONT YARD OF 1008 JUNIPER LANE (PZC-26-11: 1008 JUNIPER LANE)

It was moved by Alderwoman Sullivan and seconded by Alderman Schauer to approve the motion as presented.

Alderwoman Sullivan and Alderman Kenny expressed their reasons for siding with the petitioner; allowable area was more visible and agreed with conditions set by Staff. Alderman Schauer spoke of Ordinance history and did not want to create a precedence for more variances. Alderman Stompanato agreed stating it would be an open avenue for more variances.

ORDINANCE NO. O-31-26

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING A VARIATION FROM SECTION 5A-5-11(A) OF THE CITY CODE TO PERMIT A RECREATIONAL VEHICLE WITHIN THE FRONT YARD OF 1008 JUNIPER LANE (PZC-26-11: 1008 JUNIPER LANE)

Roll Call: Ayes: Kenny, Sullivan

Nays: Belczak, Gustafson, Leganski, Schauer, Stompanato

Absent: None

Results: Ayes 2, Nays 5, Absent 0

MOTION FAILED

B. A MOTION APPROVING VARIATIONS PURSUANT TO SECTION 7-5-1(C) OF THE CITY CODE TO ALLOW REDUCED SETBACKS AND ALTERNATIVE SCREENING MEASURES FOR A PROPOSED CHICKEN

COOP, PERMITTING THE STRUCTURE TO BE LOCATED ADJACENT AND WITHIN AN EXISTING ACCESSORY STRUCTURE AND SCREENED THROUGH LANDSCAPING IN LIEU OF A REQUIRED PRIVACY FENCE AT 2208 CARLOW DRIVE

It was moved by Alderman Belczak and seconded by Alderman Schauer to approve the motion as presented.

Council discussion ensued regarding definition of fence, fence code, and proper anchoring of fence in the ground.

David Mekhiel, petitioner, assured Council fence would be staked into the ground in accordance with Code.

Director Gombac suggested adding a condition to the motion, to secure fence panels to a supportive structure within the ground with a minimum depth of 32 inches.

MOTION TO AMEND

Alderman Belczak motioned and Alderman Kenny seconded to amend motion as follows: A motion approving variations pursuant to section 7-5-1(c) of the city code to allow reduced setbacks and alternative screening measures for a proposed chicken coop, permitting the structure to be located adjacent and within an existing accessory structure and screened **through alternative fencing** in lieu of a required privacy fence **on the condition that the alternative fencing be structurally secured in the ground, with a minimum depth of 32 inches**, at 2208 Carlow Drive **AS AMENDED**.

There was a call for the question on the amendment.

Roll Call:	Ayes:	Belczak, Gustafson, Kenny, Leganski, Schauer, Stompanato, Sullivan
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Nays:	None
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Absent:	None
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Results: Ayes 7, Nays 0, Absent 0

MOTION DULY CARRIED

There was a call for the question on the original motion.

MOTION NO. M-106-26

**A MOTION APPROVING VARIATIONS
PURSUANT TO SECTION 7-5-1(C) OF THE**

**CITY CODE TO ALLOW REDUCED
SETBACKS AND ALTERNATIVE
SCREENING MEASURES FOR A PROPOSED
CHICKEN COOP, PERMITTING THE
STRUCTURE TO BE LOCATED ADJACENT
AND WITHIN AN EXISTING ACCESSORY
STRUCTURE AND SCREENED THROUGH
LANDSCAPING IN LIEU OF A REQUIRED
PRIVACY FENCE AT 2208 CARLOW DRIVE**

as amended.

Roll Call: Ayes: Belczak, Gustafson, Kenny, Leganski, Schauer,
Stompanato, Sullivan

Nays: None

Absent: None

Results: Ayes 7, Nays 0, Absent 0

MOTION DULY CARRIED

**C. A MOTION APPROVING AN OVERHEAD SEWER ASSISTANCE PILOT
PROGRAM**

It was moved by Alderman Leganski and seconded by Alderman Belczak to approve the motion as presented.

Mayor Marchese spoke of recent storms and numerous homes in Darien that suffered sanitary sewer backup due to lack of overhead sewer systems. . He noted details of DuPage County Overhead Sanitary Sewer Program, writing to DuPage County District 3 representatives for additional assistance, and details of City's Overhead Sewer Assistance Pilot Program.

Administrator Vana stated Darien is the only community DuPage County is adding to their program, and spoke of qualifications for reimbursement. He addressed Council questions.

MOTION NO. M-107-26

**A MOTION APPROVING AN OVERHEAD
SEWER ASSISTANCE PILOT PROGRAM**

Roll Call: Ayes: Belczak, Gustafson, Kenny, Leganski, Schauer,
Stompanato, Sullivan

Nays: None

Absent: None

Results: Ayes 7, Nays 0, Absent 0

MOTION DULY CARRIED

18. **QUESTIONS, COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS – GENERAL**

Aldерwoman Sullivan announced National Night Out would be held on August 4 at Prairieview Elementary School from 5:00 – 8:00 P.M. She spoke of activities: touch-a-truck, games, K9 demo, vendors, blood drive, Darien-Woodridge & Tri-State Fire Departments & Darien Police Department; all are encouraged to attend.

Mayor Marchese announced Darien Fest on August 7 – 9 at Hinsdale South High School featuring carnival rides, entertainment, food tents, and Business Expo. He addressed audience question regarding parking availability.

19. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the City Council, it was moved by Alderman Schauer and seconded by Aldерwoman Sullivan to adjourn the City Council meeting.

VIA VOICE VOTE – MOTION DULY CARRIED

The City Council meeting adjourned at 9:45 P.M.

Mayor

City Clerk

All supporting documentation and report originals of these minutes are on file in the Office of the City Clerk under File Number 08-03-26.
Minutes of 08-03-26 CCM.