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fare well in Sochi. — Page 10A



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*"It is not the stars to hold our destiny but in ourselves." — William Shakespeare*

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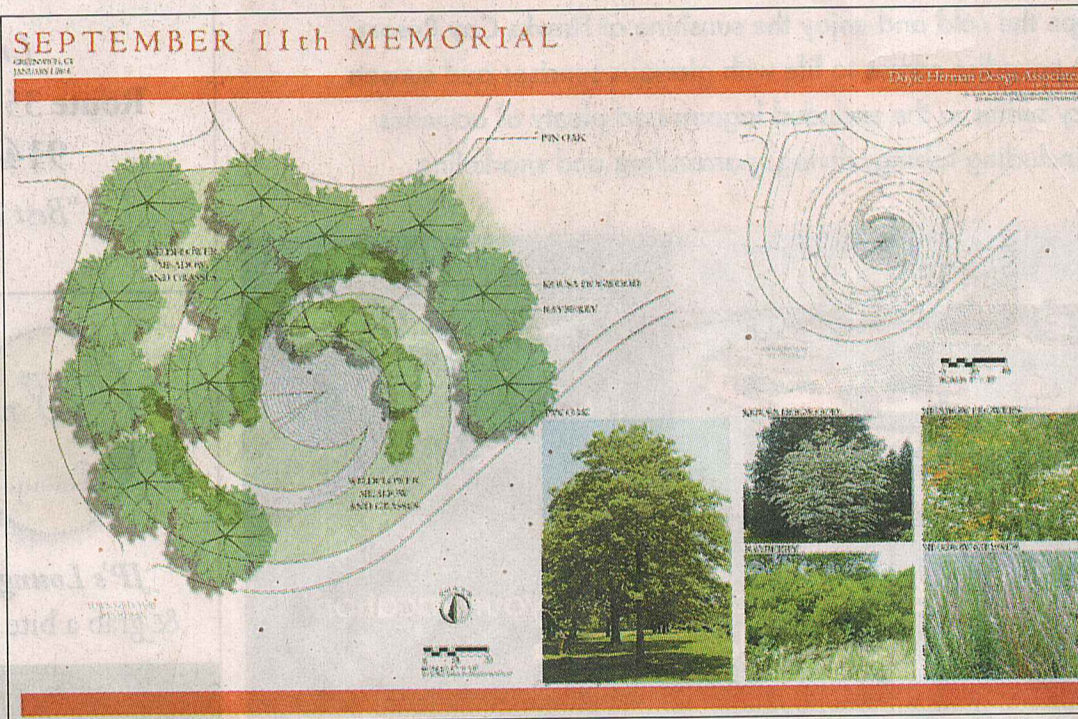
## Sept. 11 memorial gets approval Fund raising in critical stage

by Ken Borsuk  
Editor

With key approvals from town land use agencies now secured, the plan to build a memorial to the local victims of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks is closer than ever to reality. But it still needs one vital component — public support.

Earlier this month, the design, which would see two glass towers to represent the World Trade Center with the American flag carved into the glass and the names of the victims with ties to Greenwich in the stripes, received the go-ahead from the town's Planning and Zoning Commission. That paves the way for the project to be part of the revitalized Cos Cob Park. James Ritman, president of the Greenwich Community Projects Fund, said the intention is to raise the money privately for the memo-

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A rendering from Doyle Herman Design Associates shows just how the planned Sept. 11 memorial in Cos Cob Park would look with the walking path leading up to it.

## Sept. 11

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rial and then give it to the town as a gift.

For that to happen, the project needs public support, and that's where the efforts are focused right now. In an interview with the *Post*, Mr. Ritman, project architect Charles Hilton and Walt Noonan, a project supporter, all said they are looking to Greenwich residents for assistance in making this vision a reality and providing a place for quiet reflection that will be open to any town resident or visitor.

"We have the full ability now to put this memorial in Cos Cob Park," Mr. Ritman said. "Now we just need to raise the money to build it. We've done a lot to get the word out about this. We did a big launch on Sept. 9. We're trying to spread the word through social media. We had ties made up by Vineyard Vines to help us raise money. We sent out a mailer about this

and we've been calling people and businesses in town. This is a grassroots effort."

Mr. Ritman estimates that close to \$220,000 has been raised at this point; the goal is \$550,000. The construction of the memorial is expected to cost \$450,000 but more money is needed so the town can accept it as a gift, confident that work can be completed within the budget that's been established.

"We've had people giving us \$2 when they saw us at Vineyard Vines or when we set up a table at the Greenwich Polo Club," Mr. Ritman said. "We've had people sending in checks for \$5. Every bit counts. This is a big town and we can get the word out through social media like Facebook. The more people we can get to know about this and get behind it, the better. Every little bit helps. We're hoping we can get some large donors within the community to help put this together for us."

Fund raising is ongoing, but a time schedule is in play. None of this is being put together through tax dollars from Greenwich residents, but

in order for it to be a gift to the town from the organizers, it has to be formally accepted by the Representative Town Meeting (RTM). The goal is to go before that body in June before it breaks for the summer. That means having money raised for the construction by June 1.

Since 32 people who either lived in town or had a close connection to Greenwich were killed in the attacks, the memorial is a deeply personal project to many. Mr. Noonan lost a son in the attacks, and he is passionate about seeing the project go forward.

"One of the hurdles we've faced is that this represents kind of a reminder of an incident that a lot of people would like to forget," Mr. Noonan said. "Time has elapsed here, and I think a lot of people would like to distance themselves from that terrible day. It left a mark on all of us. But I look at it a little differently after losing a son. This is something future generations need to see. It represents how fragile freedom and life can be and how, in a period of two hours, so many people can be touched by a tragic event. As

a family member, I don't need a memorial because I think about my son every single day, but I think this would be a benefit to future generations that didn't live through this and have it touch them."

When the Cos Cob Park location was revealed late last summer it received much acclaim, and the project organizers are more sure than ever they've found the right spot. A new feature in the design brought in by landscape architects Doyle Herman Design Associates is a radiating spiral pattern that provides two paths, one leading from a parking lot and another from the walking path, to the memorial.

"The site couldn't be better," Mr. Ritman said. "It's at the highest elevation point of the park and it's away from everything else. We have walking trails that will lead right to it and it will be a really nice, dedicated area for that overlooks Cos Cob Harbor and Long Island Sound. It took us awhile to find the site because it has to be a proper place for reflection. It has to be serene. You can't have a lot of highway noise. You don't want to have people skateboarding. It

has to be appropriate, and we really couldn't have asked for a better spot than this."

Mr. Hilton said that adding the spiral will allow people arriving at the memorial, which will be on a hilltop in the park, "to discover it as they approach it, as opposed to just walking up to it." Because the memorial will be on a gentle slope, it will be handicapped-accessible. The accessibility is key to all the organizers, as they say it will be open to anyone and you won't need a beach pass or a boat to get to it.

"This is there for everybody to go there for whatever purposes," Mr. Ritman said. "Both the design and the site has unanimous support from every family member. To get 100% buy-in on anything is almost impossible, and to get everybody to come and see this design and say, 'This is it' is pretty unique and amazing in of itself."

Because there is easy access to the site from Interstate 95 and the nearby Cos Cob train station, the organizers hope that it will not just be a spot for Greenwich residents to come reflect but for anyone

traveling through town who wants to see the memorial.

"This isn't just about the 32 people from Greenwich and their families," Mr. Ritman said. "There's something special in the design Chuck put together. There could be a friend of one of these folks who will want to come to town and see it. Or it can be someone with no connection with someone from Greenwich who takes a train or drives out to see it. It could be a really special place people want to find to pay their respects and remember that sad and tragic day."

Work on the park is expected to be completed in the fall and Mr. Hilton said the aim is to have the foundation in by then. He said the only question is whether the glass will be installed and everything dedicated in November or in the spring when there will be better weather.

More information, including how to donate, is available online at [Sept11memorialgreenwich.org](http://Sept11memorialgreenwich.org) and by searching "Sept. 11 Greenwich" on Google.

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