

From: [Karen Wackerman](#)
To: [Browne, Betsy](#)
Subject: Fwd: Removal of American Flags on the Green
Date: Thursday, July 2, 2020 3:39:13 PM

Karen Wackerman
RTM Moderator
RTM District 7 Representative
203-984-1673

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Steve Chessare** <sdchessare@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 7:09 PM
Subject: Re: Removal of American Flags on the Green
To: Elizabeth Altobelli <elizaltobellirtm@gmail.com>
Cc: Veronica Monahan <veronicabarrymonahan@gmail.com>, Brenda Kupchick (<firstselectwoman@fairfieldct.org>.) <firstselectwoman@fairfieldct.org>, all RTM members <rtm@fairfieldct.org>

Agreed!

On Jun 30, 2020, at 6:51 PM, Elizabeth Altobelli <elizaltobellirtm@gmail.com> wrote:

Well said!

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 6:51 PM Veronica Monahan <veronicabarrymonahan@gmail.com> wrote:

I am so saddened to hear this news and have already received several inquiries as to why this is being done. I am a staunch supporter of our flag and everything it stands for, and am proud to see it flown - everywhere. Removal of the US flag is demonstrating that we do not stand for our nation and our Constitutional laws.

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 4:27 PM Elizabeth Altobelli <elizaltobellirtm@gmail.com> wrote:

First Selectwoman,

Thank you for your continued passion and insanely diligent work thus far. I am grateful we have you in the lead!

Hoping ... Is that true the American Flag will not be flying ? If so, What is the reasoning for this? I really hope that was faulty information.

Please advise at your earliest convenience.

Thank you Liz Altobelli

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 4:09 PM Rick Grauer <rickgrauer@keenecribs.com> wrote:

Brenda,

Could you please explain why the display of AMERICAN flags isn't being allowed this year?

Rick Grauer

District 9 RTM

203-414-6706

From: Dom DaFonte [mailto:me@domdafonte.com]

Sent: Tuesday, June 30, 2020 3:50 PM

To: rtm@fairfieldct.org; bos@fairfieldct.org; First Selectwoman <firstselectwoman@fairfieldct.org>

Subject: Removal of American Flags on the Green

Hi, I hope you are doing well.

The other day I drove by the green and was so happy to see the American Flag banners wonderfully placed throughout the green. I thought to myself, "I'm so happy I live in a town that decorates in this manner, especially prior to a day like Independence Day, which is just around the corner.

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From: [Karen Wackerman](#)
To: [Browne, Betsy](#)
Subject: Fwd: FW: Removal of American Flags on the Green
Date: Thursday, July 2, 2020 3:32:09 PM

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To: [Browne, Betsy](#)
Subject: Fwd: FW: Removal of American Flags on the Green
Date: Thursday, July 2, 2020 3:35:49 PM

Another one.

Karen Wackerman
RTM Moderator
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Cc: all RTM members <rtm@fairfieldct.org>, Dom DaFonte <IMCEAMAILTO-me+40domdafonte+2Ecom@fwd7.exghost.com>

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Dom

From: [Karen Wackerman](#)
To: [Browne, Betsy](#)
Subject: Fwd: FW: Removal of American Flags on the Green
Date: Thursday, July 2, 2020 3:33:16 PM

I sent this to Elizabeth instead of you!

Karen Wackerman
RTM Moderator
RTM District 7 Representative
203-984-1673

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Karen Wackerman** <karenrtm7@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Jul 2, 2020 at 1:10 PM
Subject: Re: FW: Removal of American Flags on the Green
To: Elizabeth Altobelli <elizaltobellirtm@gmail.com>

Here is another one.

Karen

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From: [Karen Wackerman](#)
To: [Browne, Betsy](#)
Subject: Fwd: Removal of American Flags on the Green
Date: Thursday, July 2, 2020 1:10:05 PM

Betsy -

I'm going to send you a few emails that need to be posted on the RTM website. They were addressed to the entire body, so there could be FOIA issues and it arguably constitutes a discussion among the members. Here is the first one.

Karen
Karen Wackerman
RTM Moderator
RTM District 7 Representative
203-984-1673

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Elizabeth Altobelli** <elizaltobellirtm@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 8:57 PM
Subject: Re: Removal of American Flags on the Green
To: Marisa Ringel <marisaringelrtm@gmail.com>
Cc: Dom DaFonte <me@domdafonte.com>, First Selectwoman <firstselectwoman@fairfieldct.org>, <bos@fairfieldct.org>, <rtm@fairfieldct.org>

I'll be there.

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 8:48 PM Marisa Ringel <marisaringelrtm@gmail.com> wrote:
Pro flag rally at gazebo 12 noon on the 4th of July. If the Who's in Whoville can still celebrate after the 4th of July, I mean Christmas, gets stolen from them, then so can we.

Bring your flags, for those of you that still love and believe in our country, The United States of America. For the rest of you, have a happy day off.

Marisa Ringel

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020, 3:50 PM Dom DaFonte <me@domdafonte.com> wrote:
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Subject: Fwd: FW: Removal of American Flags on the Green
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Date: Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 6:51 PM
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Dom

From: [Karen Wackerman](#)
To: [Browne, Betsy](#)
Subject: Fwd: Tree of hope
Date: Friday, July 3, 2020 4:04:14 PM

Betsy -

Please add this email to the others in the RTM records. Thanks.

Karen

Karen Wackerman
RTM Moderator
RTM District 7 Representative
203-984-1673

Begin forwarded message:

From: Rick Grauer <rickgrauer@keenecribs.com>
Date: June 30, 2020 at 7:52:57 PM EDT
To: Heather von Brauchitsch <hvonbrauch@gmail.com>, "rtmd9@fairfieldct.org" <rtmd9@fairfieldct.org>
Cc: "Alex Durrell (R)" <alex_durrell@hotmail.com>, Amy O'Shea <mymoshea@icloud.com>, "Christine Messina (R)" <christinemessina54@gmail.com>, Crissy Kelly <crissykelly@mac.com>, "Elizabeth Altobelli (R)" <elizaltobellirtm@gmail.com>, Frank Petise <frank.petise@gmail.com>, "Hank Ference (R)" <hankrtm8@gmail.com>, "Janine Alianiello (R)" <jmalianiello@gmail.com>, "Jeff Steele (R)" <jrsteele@optonline.net>, Karen McCormack <mccormackrtm2@gmail.com>, "Marisa Ringel (R)" <marisarinelrtm@gmail.com>, Michael Mahoney <mikemahoney4fairfield@gmail.com>, Pamela Iacono <pamelaiacono4fairfield@gmail.com>, "Peter Tallman (R)" <tallmanrtm8@gmail.com>, Rick Grauer <rickgrauer@keenecribs.com>, me@domdafonte.com], Veronica Monahan <veronicabarrymonahan@gmail.com>, William Perugini dist 10 RTM <wjp10rtm@snet.net>
Subject: RE: Tree of hope

Heather,

Thank you for taking the time to write your email. I wish more town residents would take the time to express their thoughts and feelings. While we operate under a democratic republic government we should never change our historic celebrations because it offends one of the town's residents and elected officials.

We elected a conservative republican first selectwoman and now she has caved into the wishes of a single liberal democratic. I think it is about time that conservative's stand up for our country and our history. History can't be changed

we can only change the future.

I honestly believe that our selectwomen has now offended the majority that elected her by listening to the lone liberal democrat voice that felt offended. Shame on Dru Georgiadis for not respecting the country's independence day!

While she is entitled to her opinions perhaps she believes the country known as America would have been better off as a colony of England and paying taxes to that country instead of the independent free country that was created.

Shame on our selectwoman for listening to her and offending Fairfield's loyal Americans. There should be a series of letters to our selectwoman and letters to the editor shaming her for ordering the taking down of this nonsectarian recognition of our independence celebration.

Dru if you have thoughts on a better way forward you have an elected position where you can present your thoughts. I however question your right to rain on the rest of the town for celebrating our independence from England and the good minded Americans who gave their lives and pledged their soles and fortunes for a free country that gives you the right to your thoughts.

Conservatives it is time to be heard.

Rick Grauer

-----Original Message-----

From: Heather von Brauchitsch [mailto:hvonbrauch@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, June 30, 2020 6:59 PM

To: rtmd9@fairfieldct.org

Subject: Tree of hope

Dru - Just voicing my sadness over the intended removal of the "Tree of Hope" on the green in downtown Fairfield. It saddens me that at this difficult time in our nations history and in a town that exemplifies small town America and patriotism you would support this removal. Al of Als Angels has literally acted as an angel himself setting this up and maintaining it over the weeks of the Pandemic, he has my thanks and support.

I hope you will reconsider.

Thank you Heather von Brauchitsch

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Karen Wackerman](#)
To: [Browne, Betsy](#)
Subject: Fwd: Emails to the entire RTM
Date: Wednesday, July 8, 2020 11:26:24 AM

Here is another email to add to the rest.

Karen Wackerman
RTM Moderator
RTM District 7 Representative
203-984-1673

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Karen Wackerman** <karenrtm7@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 10:04 PM
Subject: Re: Emails to the entire RTM
To: Marisa Ringel <marisaringelrtm@gmail.com>

I would hope that once people know what actually happened they would not keep supporting the false "optics." Integrity matters.

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 9:17 PM Marisa Ringel <marisaringelrtm@gmail.com> wrote:

As you know optics rule the day and the vote. And the optics for Dru are atrocious especially this week.

Very insensitive.

M

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020, 9:13 PM Karen Wackerman <karenrtm7@gmail.com> wrote:

Marisa, thinking that violating FOIA and possibly causing the town to be publicly embarrassed and fined does not punish anyone but the town. I was copied on the emails about this. I really wish people would ask about things before they draw conclusions. This had NOTHING to do with patriotism or the American flag. There were questions about who authorized the banners (which were NOT American flags) and the tree. I am glad the questions were raised because if anyone can just put up banners or other things in our parks without permission, or (as in this case) with only Anthony Calabrese's verbal ok, it will be a mess. No one in my party has any objection to the American flag or patriotism or our country. This just demonstrates how Facebook and rumors can create a "crisis" that doesn't exist.

Karen

Karen Wackerman
RTM Moderator
RTM District 7 Representative
203-984-1673

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 9:05 PM Marisa Ringel <marisaringelrtm@gmail.com> wrote:
It's civil disobedience against the members of your party and their rouge supporters ripping down our USA flag decorations on The 4th of July.

Grrrrrr.

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020, 8:59 PM Karen Wackerman <karenrtm7@gmail.com> wrote:
PLEASE stop sending emails to the entire RTM. It is a violation of the Freedom of Information Act and the Town could be sued by the FOIA commission for violations.

Karen Wackerman
RTM Moderator
RTM District 7 Representative
203-984-1673

--

Karen Wackerman
Moderator
Fairfield Representative Town Meeting
RTM Representative, District 7

From: [Karen Wackerman](#)
To: [Browne, Betsy](#)
Subject: Fwd: FW: Removal of American Flags on the Green
Date: Wednesday, July 8, 2020 11:27:59 AM

Another one.

Karen Wackerman
RTM Moderator
RTM District 7 Representative
203-984-1673

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Karen Wackerman** <karenrtm7@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 7:23 PM
Subject: Re: FW: Removal of American Flags on the Green
To: Veronica Monahan <veronicabarrymonahan@gmail.com>
Cc: Brenda Kupchick (firstselectwoman@fairfieldct.org.)
<firstselectwoman@fairfieldct.org>, Elizabeth Altobelli <elizaltobellirtm@gmail.com>

It's not about the holiday or what was in the banners. If anyone can put whatever they want in the park, it will get out of hand. This has nothing to do with anyone's patriotism.

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 7:15 PM Veronica Monahan <veronicabarrymonahan@gmail.com> wrote:

Thank you, Madam Moderator. Kindly explain what exactly the issue is with publicly displaying Stars and Stripes in any form - downtown or anywhere - prior to our national holiday?

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 7:06 PM Karen Wackerman <karenrtm7@gmail.com> wrote:
Veronica, they were not American flags. They were large banners with Stars and Stripes but not flags. Misinformation is circulating about this.

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 6:51 PM Veronica Monahan <veronicabarrymonahan@gmail.com> wrote:

I am so saddened to hear this news and have already received several inquiries as to why this is being done. I am a staunch supporter of our flag and everything it stands for, and am proud to see it flown - everywhere. Removal of the US flag is demonstrating that we do not stand for our nation and our Constitutional laws.

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 4:27 PM Elizabeth Altobelli <elizaltobellirtm@gmail.com> wrote:

First Selectwoman,

Thank you for your continued passion and insanely diligent work thus far. I am grateful we have you in the lead!

Hoping ... Is that true the American Flag will not be flying ? If so, What is the

reasoning for this? I really hope that was faulty information.

Please advise at your earliest convenience.

Thank you Liz Altobelli

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 4:09 PM Rick Grauer <rickgrauer@keenecribs.com> wrote:

Brenda,

Could you please explain why the display of AMERICAN flags isn't being allowed this year?

Rick Grauer

District 9 RTM

203-414-6706

From: Dom DaFonte [mailto:me@domdafonte.com]

Sent: Tuesday, June 30, 2020 3:50 PM

To: rtm@fairfieldct.org; bos@fairfieldct.org; First Selectwoman
<firstselectwoman@fairfieldct.org>

Subject: Removal of American Flags on the Green

Hi, I hope you are doing well.

The other day I drove by the green and was so happy to see the American Flag banners wonderfully placed throughout the green. I thought to myself, "I'm so happy I live in a town that decorates in this manner, especially prior to a day like Independence Day, which is just around the corner.

Some may not understand why, but as a Veteran, the flag brings me immense pride and memories of my service to this country. The American flag is the flag that I faced when I took the oath of enlistment. During Memorial Day Parades, I carried the American Flag as a Flag Bearer for my Company. For those lost in combat, the American flag is handed to their loved ones to help them remember.

Today I was saddened to learn that the owner of Saugatuck Sweets, who placed these flag banners across the green was asked to remove them by the town. I'd like to ask, what's the reason for removal? They don't seem to be in anyone's way and they really help make the green look great, especially prior to celebrating our Independence.

Does the town plan to place their own American Flag throughout the green? If the town doesn't have better decorations for our green that are as aligned with independence day, I'd like to kindly ask that you let Saugatuck Sweets leave their flag banners in the green.

Thanks,

Dom

--

Karen Wackerman
Moderator
Fairfield Representative Town Meeting
RTM Representative, District 7

--

Karen Wackerman
Moderator
Fairfield Representative Town Meeting
RTM Representative, District 7

From: [Karen Wackerman](#)
To: [Browne, Betsy](#)
Subject: Fwd: FW: Removal of American Flags on the Green
Date: Wednesday, July 8, 2020 11:29:09 AM

Karen Wackerman
RTM Moderator
RTM District 7 Representative
203-984-1673

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Karen Wackerman** <karenrtm7@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 4:39 PM
Subject: Re: FW: Removal of American Flags on the Green
To: Elizabeth Altobelli <elizaltobellirtm@gmail.com>
Cc: Rick Grauer <rickgrauer@keenecribs.com>, Brenda Kupchick
(firstselectwoman@fairfieldct.org.) <firstselectwoman@fairfieldct.org>, Dom DaFonte
<IMCEAMAILTO-me+40domdafonte+2Ecom@fwd7.exghost.com>, Pam Iacono
<pamelaiacono4fairfield@gmail.com>, Jill Vergara <jillvergara@gmail.com>

Thank you for your kind words, Elizabeth!

Saugatuck Sweets had installed some very large stars-and-stripes banners -- not American flags - in Sherman Green. From what I understand, they were informally approved by Anthony Calabrese but perhaps did not go through the proper approval process. As you would expect, there are rules about what decorations can be placed in town parks - without those rules, anyone could put anything there. The banners were very large and some residents complained about them. They are being removed. But again, they were not American flags.

I do need to remind you that RTM members should not email all other RTM members because it could be a FOIA violation.

Best -

Karen

Karen Wackerman
RTM Moderator
RTM District 7 Representative
203-984-1673

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 4:27 PM Elizabeth Altobelli <elizaltobellirtm@gmail.com> wrote:
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Rick Grauer

District 9 RTM

203-414-6706

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Sent: Tuesday, June 30, 2020 3:50 PM

To: rtm@fairfieldct.org; bos@fairfieldct.org; First Selectwoman
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Some may not understand why, but as a Veteran, the flag brings me immense pride and memories of my service to this country. The American flag is the flag that I faced when I took the oath of enlistment. During Memorial Day Parades, I carried the American Flag as a Flag Bearer for my Company. For those lost in combat, the American flag is handed

to their loved ones to help them remember.

Today I was saddened to learn that the owner of Saugatuck Sweets, who placed these flag banners across the green was asked to remove them by the town. I'd like to ask, what's the reason for removal? They don't seem to be in anyone's way and they really help make the green look great, especially prior to celebrating our Independence.

Does the town plan to place their own American Flag throughout the green? If the town doesn't have better decorations for our green that are as aligned with independence day, I'd like to kindly ask that you let Saugatuck Sweets leave their flag banners in the green.

Thanks,

Dom

From: [Karen Wackerman](#)
To: [Browne, Betsy](#)
Subject: Fwd: FW: Removal of American Flags on the Green
Date: Wednesday, July 8, 2020 11:30:09 AM

Karen Wackerman
RTM Moderator
RTM District 7 Representative
203-984-1673

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Karen Wackerman** <karenrtm7@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 4:21 PM
Subject: Re: FW: Removal of American Flags on the Green
To: Rick Grauer <rickgrauer@keenecribs.com>

Rick -

You didn't reply all to the RTM, right? We have to be careful not to do that for Freedom of Information Act reasons.

The decorations were not actually American flags. They were large banners with stars and stripes but not the actual flag. They were permitted by Anthony Calabrese personally, I believe, but not be the Parks and Rec Commission as they were supposed to be. The agreement with Anthony was to have them removed by July 1, I believe.

Karen

Karen Wackerman
RTM Moderator
RTM District 7 Representative
203-984-1673

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 4:09 PM Rick Grauer <rickgrauer@keenecribs.com> wrote:

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