



Evonne Klein was elected First Selectman in the town of Darien in an upset victory in November 2003, re-elected to a third term in 2007. She not only made history by being the first Democrat to be elected to a third term, but also led the Democratic ticket to hold the majority on the Board of Selectmen for the first time since the incorporation of the Town.

During her tenure as First Selectman, Klein has made town government more open, accessible and responsive to the needs of Darien residents. In an effort to create an open and productive dialogue with the Darien community, she inaugurated First Selectwoman's Night Out, establishing an informal and public forum for Darien residents to bring their issues, concerns and needs to her directly and added a public comment session to Board of Selectmen meetings. During her tenure Darien's local government channel was established and funded. Darien's government channel, TV 79 broadcasts all meetings of the Boards of Selectmen and Finance; Planning and Zoning and Environmental Protection Commissions; and the meetings of the Representative Town Meeting.

In the six years under her leadership, there was a remarkable improvement throughout the Darien community. Immediately upon taking office, Klein tackled the beleaguered Noroton Heights Train Station, extending the hours of operation of the waiting room, making interior and exterior improvements while developing an improvement plan for the station. In 2004, she renegotiated the town's lease with the DOT, enabling Darien to keep \$100,000 previously sent to Hartford in Darien to be used to fund further improvements to the town's two stations. In 2008 the food areas and bathroom facilities were updated at both rail stations. Holding true to her commitment to revitalize downtown Darien, Klein spearheaded the formation of an all-volunteer committee comprised of business owners and residents to take on the challenge of making downtown Darien a destination for shopping and dining. The committee, Darien Revitalization, Inc. privately raised over \$100,000, gained acceptance into the Connecticut Main Street program, and during its tenure has been credited with bringing several new businesses and restaurants into Darien as well as bringing forward new zoning regulations.

Klein has been a strong advocate on behalf of Darien seniors, supporting the five day hot lunch program, launching the town's first senior newsletter, published in conjunction with the Community Fund of Darien and establishing a Senior Center Task Force, to assess and recommend the best course of action with respect to the Darien Seniors Activities Center. In recognition of their commitment to Darien, she also secured tax abatements and medical insurance options for the Town's volunteer first responders.

In response to the unprecedented flooding that occurred in the Town in 2007, Klein formed the Flood Mitigation Committee, still in existence, whose primary responsibility is to make recommendations to the Town bodies on flood mitigation measures. During this period the Town of Darien Flood Mitigation Strategy was developed and approved by local boards, consultants were hired to study and put forward recommendations to address flooding along Darien's five watersheds, the La Forge Road drainage project was complete, obtained a FEMA Grant to purchase a property for flood mitigation, obtained a FEMA grant for property elevation, the Stony Brook Flood Control project was submitted to DEP and received approval during an appeals process.

Since 2005 the Town of Darien has been made great strides in the area of affordable housing. Klein spearheaded the appointment of the Darien Affordable Housing Advisory Commission whose work culminated in a Final Report to the Board of Selectmen. She successfully led the effort to purchase the former Darien Library property at 35 Leroy Avenue which was to be used for affordable housing; the development of a Town of Darien Affordable Housing Plan as well as supported Zoning regulations that would increase the stock of affordable housing in the Town of Darien. It was under Klein's leadership and with her support that the Community Home at Darien was built, a home for mentally and physically challenged adults.

In response to the unprecedented economic crisis, Klein immediately halted all capital projects and formed the Financial Review and Strategy Committee whose primary responsibility was to make recommendations to Town bodies on financial matters. Under Klein's leadership, the Board of Selectmen proposed a zero growth budget for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. The decisions made early on to halt projects saved jobs, maintained town services and filled gaps in the town budget that were left by decreasing revenue.

Darien's beaches, parks and open spaces were a focus of Klein's administration. The Weed Beach Master Plan, which has been approved and funded, is a blueprint for improving the beach and its amenities. She has also overseen the completion of repairs to Holly Pond Dam and Gorham's Pond Dam.

Throughout her tenure Klein has been responsive to the ideas, needs and concerns of Darien residents. To that end she has formed the following:

- The Domestic Violence Task Force

- The Darien Energy Task Force
- The Darien Tree Commission
- Bike/Pedestrian Paths Committee

Klein began her political career in 1990, when her neighborhood was faced with an unsafe and unsightly expansion of a Department of Transportation maintenance facility. To give a voice to the neighbors most directly affected by the project, Klein founded the Darien Association of Concerned Citizens, and fought to secure an emergency access way to improve neighborhood safety, for the installation of sound barriers along I-95, and the removal of graffiti and road debris.

Klein was elected to the Board of Education (BOE) in 1995, and served until being elected to the Board of Selectmen in 2001. On the BOE Klein chaired the Public Information Subcommittee and formed DHS 21, which provided a critical link to community organizations and other town Boards throughout the deliberations of the educational specifications, which guided the design of the new Darien High School. Other assignments on the BOE included serving on the Policy Subcommittee and the Middlesex Middle School Building Committee, which five years ago concluded a \$27 million renovation and expansion to the school both on time and on budget.

From 2003-2009 Klein served the Town of Darien as its First Selectman. She has been a leading and strong advocate of establishing priorities for the town, fiscal responsibility, open communication with the community, purchase of the Library property, preserving Darien's open space and parks, improvement in town maintenance, advancing the issues of concern to seniors and supporting the educational needs of children.

Public Office:

- First Selectman, Town of Darien 2003-2009
 - Vice Chair, South Western Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
 - Co-Vice Chair, Alliance for Sensible Airspace Planning
- Served on the Darien Board of Selectmen; 2001-2003
- Served on the Darien Board of Education; 1995-2001
 - Chair, Public Information Subcommittee
 - Chair, Curriculum Subcommittee
 - Member, Policy Subcommittee
 - Secretary, 1996-1999
 - Middle School Building Committee, 1996-2000

Community Service:

- Founder and Chair of the Fairfield County Chapter of the Million Mom March
- Darien Democratic Town Committee (1991-1995)
- Hindley School Parent Volunteer
- Darien Community Association/Café DCA
- St. John's Mothers Group (fundraising/Senior Luncheon Volunteer)
- Founder of the Darien Association of Concerned Citizens

Personal:

- Born and raised in Fairfield County, Darien resident for the past 21 years
- Graduate, Andrew Warde High School, Fairfield
- Fairfield University; MA Corporate and Political Communications/BA Politics
 - Completed additional coursework in comparative governments, economics and art at Cambridge University, London School of Economics and Oxford University
- Married to Randall Klein, mother of three sons; Jay 24 years and identical twins Michael and Gregory, 21 years. Jay is a third year law student at The University of Connecticut Law School. Michael and Gregory are juniors at Endicott College in MA. All three boys attended Darien Public Schools.