

DRAFT

Village of Ardentown
Ardentown, DE 19810

Established 1922
Incorporated 1975

The regular meeting of the Village of Ardentown was convened at 7:30 pm on Monday, November 9, 2020 Alison Wakelin, Town Chair, presiding. A quorum was present.

In Attendance

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Uttam Shambag | 13. Holly Custer | 24. Joseph Painter |
| 2. Anne Lutz (475-6215) | 14. Cheryl Regan (475-0565) | 25. Lee Painter |
| 3. Edmond Bischoff | 15. Sue Cherrin | 26. Lisa Riblett |
| 4. Terri Hansen | 16. Michael Pione | 27. Terry Harvey |
| 5. Cindy Cohen | 17. Pat Lane (981-6572) | 28. Stuart Craig |
| 6. Alison Wakelin | 18. Chris Monson | 29. Mhairi Craig |
| 7. Janet Cosgrove | 19. Beverly Hawkins (610) 420-8564 | 30. Oliver Gutsche |
| 8. Maureen Gordon | 20. Richard Hawkins | 31. Annie Gutsche |
| 9. Steve Cohen | 21. Barbara Monzelewski | 32. Christina Dobrzynski |
| 10. Drew Hansen | 22. Janna Scheflen | 33. Joan Fitzgerald |
| 11. Harry Themal | 23. Joe Grippe | 34. Elaine Schmerling |
| 12. Betty Ann Themal | | 35. Melissa Parsonson |

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes for the September 2020 meeting are approved as written

BYLAWS- Reminder from Alison Wakelin, there is no content change to these Bylaws, we are only voting to approve formatting change. Passed unanimously

TREASURER'S REPORT: Holly Custer reporting:

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Operating Accounts: | \$39,573.93 |
| Municipal Street Aid: | \$23,197.32 |
| Arden Building and Loan: | \$19,965.18 |
| Total Funds Available: | \$82,736.43 |

REGISTRATION COMMITTEE: Cindy Cohen reporting, **Kaeley Ferguson & Tyler Wimberly** moved into 1519 Woodland Road (Terry Harvey & Line Farr's rental) on August 1st. Thank you to Terry Harvey for letting us know at the September town meeting that they had moved in. We got a Welcome packet to them in late September.

Following up on getting the new tenants at the **Peace House** (2316 Orchard Road) a Welcome packet.

MEMORIAL GARDEN: Betty Ann Themal reporting, nothing to report

ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE: Janet Cosgrove reporting, The Assessment Committee had its trustee meeting at the end of Oct 2020 and presented a draft of its annual report. The final report will be posted to the website. The proposed a new way to calculate land rent and gave its reasons why. The new land rent bill would include the collection of leaseholder's individual NCC real estate tax. The new calculation would be phased in over a 3 yr period and would provide the same revenue to fund the trust as now.

Discussion- Steven Cohen- Concern that from a timing perspective, the Trustees have to present their budget in February, there simply isn't enough time to do this for the next budget. We should wait for next year. I have been coming to meetings for decades and there has never been a lot of discussion prior to this. Why now? Janet feels that giving more information to residents and leaseholders will lead to a more open conversation.

Oscar Gutsche- Second what Steve Cohen said.

Terri- we should hear what the Committee has to say

Joe- this is the first year we have had this committee and it is natural that people have questions. This is going to require thought and discussion. At the end, the Trustees have ultimate authority to decide the process.

Janna Schefflen- I missed the part where we are being mindful of the Georgist principle.

Janet-there are strong reasons to change as well as stay. According to the Deed of Trust, we only have the authority to advise, the Trustees have the ultimate authority.

Beverly Hawkins- This will be easier to talk about these things when we can be together and see each other.

Alison took a straw poll, the consensus is that Zoom is not the place to make changes like this

TRUSTEES REPORT: Pat Lane: The trustees have interviewed candidates brought to our attention to fill the position of trustee. They are all good candidates. We had planned on announcing our choice and have a leaseholder's vote prior to Harry's retirement. However, last Wednesday we received a petition signed by leaseholders requesting a meeting to amend the Deed of Trust, limiting the term limit and removal of trustee by majority vote. At this time, we are working on how to set up these two important meetings.

Harry Thernal: As I announced at the September town meeting, I have been thinking about retiring for some time and some time ago picked my 90th birthday, which is next month. It has been an honor to serve for these 25-plus years. I told Joan and Pat that I will continue to be a trustee until a successor is confirmed and that I will remain a resource even after that. Some very good Ardentown leaseholders were interviewed for this important and privileged role. Since a group of leaseholders is requesting a meeting to amend our Deed of Trust, we cannot move forward with the selection of a new trustee at this time. Under these circumstances I will not and cannot retire.

Joan Fitzgerald: We met with the Assessment committee and they presented their proposal. At this point it seems like it is not supported by our responsibility to the Deed of Trust, so we feel it needs some modification to bring it in line with our Georgist roots. We expect to have further discussions with the Assessment Committee.

Janet- When this candidate is chosen, will they be presented to the Town?

Steve Cohen- For our annual meeting at our church, we used Zoom. It is possible to do this via Zoom

Alison- why I am not pushing to make this go faster is because of the petition that was circulated about amending the deed of trust. That issue has to be resolved before we can vote on a new Trustee

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE: A new exhibit opened last month in the Community room, a small one in addition to the main one. The small exhibit is themed "Equality in the Ardens" focusing on Ardencroft. Open by appointment. Considering an oral history project on Zoom, if you would like to be involved, call the Museum. Don't forget that 2022 is the 100th Anniversary of Ardentown, so if you have ideas, let us know.

PLANNING COMMITTEE: Nothing to report. Alison would like to see this committee reconstituted and reimagined

BUZZ COMMITTEE: nothing to report

PUBLIC WORKS:

Roads: Chris Monson has installed the one way signs on upper East Mall. Can't say everyone will abide by them, but they are there.

The gutter on Sconset Rd by Valley Rd was replaced and now it does not impede any water running down the length.

Rich Cropper should be addressing/repairing the erosion problem at the end of East Mall and Sconset Rds within the next two weeks.

The snow contract for 2020/2021 has been finalized.

Pathways: Thanks to Nick Liberman for clearing a large trunk from a dead tree that fell over the path at the entrance to the Glen from Candlelight parking lot. Be careful, the dead tree is still on the right side of the path, we are watching it. Thanks to Chris for working on the Sunnyside paths.

Leaves: – Elaine Schmerling submitted to the Oct. Page that we are no longer taking leaves at the compost area, and had alternatives listed (including composting/mulching yourselves, and our weekly yard waste collection!) I hope that we can eliminate another bin soon, and possibly plant another tree there next spring (I am thinking bald cypress or white cedar – let me know your thoughts.) Have paw paws to spread too.

Town Planting: – Thanks to Lisa Riblett, who donated and planted three young pussy willows between a rock and a redbud, on the streamside of the playground along Orchard.

Restoration: Elaine Schmerling continues clearing the worst invasives everywhere she can, trying to reduce seed set for next year: cleared various bad actors at the old Bickhart leasehold w/Janna Schefflen; with helper, pulled stilt grass all along the lower path and to the creek, both in Ardentown woods & Sunnyside; mile-a-minute in Sunnyside and in the inside of our tree-planting area (trying to make headway on the sides) and just identified a new invasive, Devil's Walking stick, in the good part of Sunnyside, removing tomorrow (it also is along the RR tracks). We professionally treated to kill all the remaining six tree of heaven trees below Brae, and the large suckering patches behind John's and Hope's. We have removed most of the small bee bee trees below Harvey Rd., tried girdling the large one and a few others there but they are not dying easily. Elaine spoke with the state botanist, and agreed on a plan for next year: to trap-treat the remaining bee-bee trees that are alive next year in April, and then cut them down before they flower in July: to maximize the numbers of lanternflies (SLF's) that they kill. The bee bee trees appear to be on town land.

SLE: They have moved in mass from the rail area especially to maple trees and Japanese Styrax/snowbell trees. We are trying to evaluate if the chemical treatment on styrax trees is killing them, or if we put it on too early (late July or August) to better plan for next year. Edmond Bischoff experimented and found that the stiff aluminum screening stays flared out from the tree and holds out better, with much less maintenance, than the flimsier fiberglass screening we made the first big town traps with. More traps have been put up and they continue to catch more and more, especially in certain hot-spot areas, like all around the Candlelight and compost area. Last year they continued laying eggs thru early December - so any that you trap now still mean fewer eggs and nymphs for next year (many lay way high up in the trees out of reach). Contact Elaine Schmerling for help trapping a tree; she put newer much easier directions on the signboard and our social media sites. Basically staple gun aluminum screening all the way around the tree, to trap them as they walk up. Traps have to be taken down after a hard freeze in December. Please contact Elaine Schmerling if you would like to help take them down, and if you can store a few for next year.

Elaine Schmerling will be talking w/the Gardeners Guild over zoom on November 16, we can evaluate these efforts and discuss plans for next year with our Gardeners Guild SLF Task Force. Thanks to Jeana Carey for spearheading the ArdenClub /Gardeners Guild participation.

TOWN CHAIR- Alison Wakeling reporting, Waste Management pilot program, so far only three people have reached out, and two had their issue resolved.

Every five years, the State has to update the Hazard Mitigation plan. It is time to vote to approve the updated plan for 2020. Moved from the floor, seconded, passed.

Stormwater- Janet, do we have a copy of the Ivy Gables stormwater report. Alison will pursue this

CHANGING THE DEED OF TRUST LISTENING SESSIONS- Terry Harvey reporting, Two meetings were held by interested residents (9/30 and 10/4/2020) to discuss a proposal to have term limits for trustees. The meetings also discussed closely-related topics. Among the people who chose to attend, there was wide support for some kind of provision that would allow leaseholders to remove a trustee. Right now, no such provision exists. Support for term limits was more divided, with those in favor suggesting they would bring new ideas and limit power. Those opposed suggested that term limits would reduce trustee organizational memory and make it harder to find trustees.

Also discussed was the idea of electing trustees from a set of candidates, and the ideal length of a term, if there were term limits.

All attendees agreed that modifying the deed of trust should only be done very carefully. The last modifications, in the 1990s, took two years to craft.

Once in the past there was an election of trustees, when there were two trustee positions open at the same time and multiple candidates. Terry Harvey led this effort. The full report can be seen at

Janet- would like to see the meeting notes, with attendance list, times. Alison- these were listening sessions, informal, an informational

Joe Grippe- the one minute time limit was really more suited for sound bites over in depth discussion. Thank you for holding them.

For full report, go to: <https://ardentown.delaware.gov/files/2021/01/Deed-of-Trust-Listening-Sessions.pdf>

NEW BUSINESS:

Special Town Meeting, September 10, 2018- minutes were never approved. Point of order, we voted last meeting that we would vote on this. Terry Harvey moves to table that motion. Majority approved tabling. Joe vote no Janet abstain Christiana- my report was not captured and that is fine with her. She was reading from hastily scratched notes and she's fine with the notes being incomplete. She'd like to see things captured for the historical record. As an official historical record she feels that notes should be voted on. If people have inaccuracies, they should be amended.

Steve Cohen- Minutes do not have to capture every word and who said. As long as the essence of the meeting is captured, that is fine.

ELECTIONS:

Town Chair- reelected unanimously

Treasurer- Holly Custer reelected unanimously

Community Planning- Janet has resigned and that leaves two vacancies. Anyone interested in reinvigorating this committee should contact Alison.

NEW BUSINESS:

Meeting adjourned at 9:23 pm

Respectfully Submitted By

Terri Hansen, Secretary of Ardentown