

Village of Ardentown

Established 1922
Incorporated 1975

Ardentown, Del. 19810

The regular meeting of the Village of Ardentown was convened at 7:30 pm on **Monday, May 11, 2009**. Alison Byer, Chair, presiding. **A quorum was present.**

Attendance

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Alison Byer | 16. Gil Johnston |
| 2. Joan Fitzgerald | 17. Sheila Johnston |
| 3. Bob Miller | 18. Hetty Francke |
| 4. Steven Cohen | 19. Hans Francke |
| 5. Bob DeNigris | 20. Betty Ann Themal |
| 6. Jean Smolens | 21. Barbara Modzelewski |
| 7. Sharon Kleban | 22. Harry Themal |
| 8. Enno Krebbers | 23. Carol Lovett |
| 9. Hardy Hoegger | 24. Barbara Conway |
| 10. Rusty Hoegger | 25. Maura Lynch |
| 11. Ginny Gotides | 26. Oliver Gutsche |
| 12. Cheryl Regan | 27. Maureen Gordon |
| 13. Pat Lane | 28. Janet Cogrove |
| 14. Dotty Verne | 29. Joy Mulholland |
| 15. Sandra Landerl | 30. Pat Phillips |

Guest: Mike Curtis, Arden

MEETING: Regular meeting called to order Alison Byer, Town Chair.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the February, 2009 meeting approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Barbara Mondzelewski, reporting

Operating Accounts:	\$23,481.30
Municipal Street Aid:	2,526.75
Arden Building & Loan:	<u>23,912.71</u>
Total Funds Available:	\$49,920.76

IS HENRY GEORGE RELEVANT TODAY?

A special presentation by Bob DeNigris was enjoyed by all. To learn more, the Georgist Guild meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 in the Buzz Ware Village Center

REGISTRATION COMMITTEE: Janet Cosgrove reporting
Nothing to report

MEMORIAL GARDEN: Rusty Hoegger reporting

We came through the winter well and the flowers are in bloom. Hal Goodwin replaced the fence rails that could not be fixed.

PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE: Elaine Schmerling reporting
Nothing to report.

BUZZ WARE VILLAGE CENTER: Beverley Fleming, Building Manager
No report

COMMUNITY PLANNING REPORT: Steve Cohen reporting
Harrison Stigler and Jason Kleban have almost completed their internship.
We are looking for two more interns, any resident of Ardentown 18 years or under are encouraged to participate.

PUBLIC WORKS AND SAFETY REPORT: Pat Lane reporting
Paths/Trees/Compost Area - Elaine Schmerling:

Tree Planting

Tree planting – trees are looking good with these nice rains. Most trees look healthy, with the exception of one black gum on the Petit Green – go check out the Carolina Silverbells which just started blooming! Had a great spring-flowering of the dogwoods (including most new ones), and redbuds at playground area. No new tree planting grant this year, it's Harry Thernal's turn to apply for Tree Management Grant.

EARTHDAY CLEANUP

Cub scouts picked up several bags of trash & garlic mustard, and moved down to the creek & up to Arden woods - found less trash this year than last year (every year it looks better!)

GARLIC MUSTARD ALERT

If anyone is able to help pull this highly invasive weed, please consider filling up a yard waste bag (or two or three!) It is having a banner year, and every flower head will make 100's of more seeds (and don't pull and leave in the woods, the flowers will turn to seed even when uprooted). It fills in huge areas (check out the sides of the path and streambank entering the woods from the compost areas), out competing our lovely native plants like Mayapple and wild geranium, which are in bloom now in our woods! IF you like the taste, you can eat the leaves of the garlic mustard plant in salad, etc. Enjoy! It's free!

Compost - New temporary laminated signs were put up; Hetty spearheaded the cleanup there. We are still experiencing problems with illegal dumping of sticks and other debris in the compost area. Hal cleaned up the leaves and debris in front of the bins and borrowed a bobcat to turn the leaves in the bins.

Paths - Hal spread wood chips along the path through the woods from the Compost Site to the foot of East Mall. He also removed the bridge from behind the Johnston property as it was no longer safe. The necessary repairs were made to the bridge that leads to the East Mall.

Roads – Drew Hansen:

It appears the only road repair needed at this time is a pot hole at the intersection of Millers Rd and The Mall. In order to prevent damage to the corners of the greens we propose to contact local contractors for excess small boulders/rocks for placement in those areas. Over the week-end someone tried to make the turn at the East Mall and The Mall too fast and destroyed the street sign and turfed the Pat Phillips yard. Fortunately Hal had the necessary materials to replace the sign, but we need to prevent such incidents in the future. Once again the reflectors at the speed bumps have all been broken and some of the stakes missing. We will be correcting this in the fall prior to possibly bad weather.

Signs – Cheryl Regan:

A few of the road signs are painted, and there's more to do. There are three main posts that need repositioning: Via Italia and Swiss; Sconset and the Mall; at the top of Brae road from under the dogwood. Also, we need to have a replacement sign at the composting site. The original one we had has shed most of the paint. Since the sign seemed to last a few years without vandalism, Cheryl is going to price an aluminum sign. We are looking at placing no parking signs outside the Theater, on The Mall and 3 on Sconset.

Snow/Sand – David Byer:

Sand Barrels:

The sand barrels have been removed. It may be a good idea to have a survey of how any leaseholders actually use them and/or need them and if so how to keep the water out so the sand doesn't freeze. Perhaps I can make one up and ask Joan to mail it out with a future mailing of minutes.

Snow Removal: Jim Burslem charged us

\$2,220 Jan/Feb snow removal and salting.
\$1,245 March " " " "
\$ 500 Retainer
\$3,965 Total

Sunnyside Tract – Barbara Conway

Two nature walks and one Earth Day Cleanup were held through the Sunnyside Tract since the last town meeting.

Nature Walk, Feb 15, 2009 at 9 am - 3 attendees; Sunnyside was in good condition except for the area where the trash and other debris was left by a "camper"; the camp appeared to be abandoned as no more trash or activity was observed since our last visit; Elaine Schmerling identified two large American Hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*) trees that she thought were possible candidates for champion trees; we picked up some trash and removed some invasive plants; we also made a plan to measure the champion tree candidates on the March 2009 nature walk.

Nature Walk, Mar 15, 2009 at 10 am - 2 attendees; Elaine Schmerling provided me with a booklet from the State of Delaware, "Big Trees of Delaware, 3rd Edition" that described the current champion trees in the state, how to measure candidate trees without electronic technology, and where to send the measurements of said trees; I made a measurement tool as described in the brochure and on the walk we measured the largest of the American Hornbeam trees; the tree appears to be the second or third largest in the state, with a significant height

advantage of at least 17 ft. over the first and second place trees; Sunnyside was in good condition but for the abandoned camp.

Earth Day Cleanup, April 18, 2009 at 9 am - 8 attendees - special thanks to Shira Butt and friends, Steve Cohen, Maura Lynch and Bob DeNigris; together we completely cleaned up the abandoned camp by removing 6 - 15 lb bags of trash, a very heavy, large piece of wet shag carpet, a very heavy 12 ft long steel pipe, and a large, heavy tire; Sunnyside was gorgeous with mayapple and blooming trout lillies covering the terrain; special thanks to the Butt-Schmerling family who provided and operated a handheld GPS for us to identify the "exact location", as required by the state, of our candidate champion tree; special thanks to Elaine Schemling for coordinating our cleanup with the Christina River Basin cleanup; they provided us with gloves, bags, trash pickup, and free lunch; the measurements and exact location of our candidate champion tree have been mailed to the state.

Other - Harry Thernal suggested we may be eligible for stimulus money and Americorp help to remove invasives from The Sunnyside Tract; Bryon Short and Kathy Cloutier's offices have been contacted requesting this help.

Some wonderful and unusual birds have been heard singing from Sunnyside over the past two weeks. An Eastern Towhee and a Wood Thrush, both of whom are ground feeding birds. Wood Thrush populations have decreased dramatically over the past few years, so it is wonderful to have them nesting in Sunnyside. The other night at dusk, a Whip-poor-will was singing. It may have been migrating through, but it was wonderful to hear. Wild birds are decreasing rapidly throughout the world. The Ardens should be proud of the much needed habitat that we provide for the birds.

Town Watch – Holly Custer:

The problem of unauthorized parking is occurring still occurring on the various Greens and streets. As previously stated, Ardentown Ordinance 91-1, dated February 9, 2004 in accordance with Delaware House Bill No. 172 passed July 25, 2003 states:

Section 1, "There shall be no parking on the roads or greens of Ardentown."

Section 2, "Every leaseholder in Ardentown shall provide space on the leasehold and off the roads or greens of Ardentown to accommodate every vehicle regularly using the leasehold."

Section 5, "Violation of Section 1 shall be punishable by a fine of \$10 for each offense."

Section 6, "Violation of Section 2 shall be punishable by a fine of \$100 for each complaint."

Discussion followed the report on the continual parking problems. It was suggested to put a note on the cars parked illegally with a copy of the ordinance. Additional parking is available at the Candlelight Theatre.

TRUSTEES' REPORT: Bob DeNigris, Barbara Mondzelewski, Harry Thernal
The contract with Waste Managements expires in September. We will be getting bids from five trash companies.

TOWN CHAIR REPORT: Alison Byer reporting
Membership to the Delaware League of Local Government will be due the end of May. The cost is \$500, the Town did not budget this expense. We will keep on hold for now. There continues to be a problem at the composting site. We need an overseer and will talk about it more at our September meeting.

ELECTIONS :

Public Works and Safety Committee: Elected for a 2 year term

Holly Custer, Drew Hansen, Cheryl Regan, David Byer

Playground Committee: Elected for a 2 year term

Annie Gutsche, Pat Hannigan, Elaine Schmerling, *Chair*

Audit Committee: Elected for a 1 year term

Hans Francke, Holly Custer, Enno Krebbers, *Chair*

OLD BUSINESS:

Wilmington Garden Day: Hetty Francke reporting

Thank you and those Ardentown Residents who supported Wilmington Garden Day, 2009.

You and others committed to the clearing and preparing of the Ardentown Compost Site and surroundings.

Residents pulled weeds, including vines from old stone wall, removed twigs and branches and even polished the signs of the Compost

Demonstration Site....

Within the last week before Garden Day, the path in the Glenn received fresh wood chips, which

Wilmington Garden Day guests used on May 2nd. New temporary laminated signs were posted by the Public Works Committee to replace the faded yellow sign.

Thanks to staff of the Candlelight Theater who among other, gave electricity to blow leaves, etc from part of the parking lot.

The last item on the list was clearing the area from underneath the big blue contractor container, which disappeared Friday, May 1.

On May 2nd we set up a portable gazebo for people to be stationed for half the day to answer compost related questions.

Peter Lindtner, recently retired Head Gardener from Hagley Museum and Gardens and Monica Jones, who took my compost class stopped people, showed a worm box and explained compost units. Two others, a DNREC staff member with two boy scouts and Arden's resident Willard Glenn were promoting composting during the afternoon shift.

Handouts, "Start Composting Today" brochures were made available by DNREC.

The number of visitors was about a hundred. Weather may have interfered a bit.

WDEL was stationed at the New Candlelight Theater parking lot and did their broadcasting till midday on May 2nd. The Chair of Wilmington Garden Day promoted the fundraiser and Hetty Francke spoke about composting for 8 minutes each.

In June of 2009, two groups are scheduled to visit the Ardentown Compost Site for education purposes. One of those groups asked to volunteer and contribute to assist in the upkeep of the Compost Site.

Thanks again for making a difference. Celebrating Earth Day Every Day!


NEW BUSINESS:

The ACRA House and Garden tour is next Sunday.

Remember donations to the Paths are tax deductible.

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Joan Fitzgerald

Secretary

