

Nov 2011
minutes

Village of Ardentown
Ardentown, Del. 19810

Established 1922
Incorporated 1975

NOTICE

ARDENTOWN TOWN MEETING The New Candlelight Dinner Theatre

**Monday, February 13, 2012
7:30 pm**

AGENDA (partial)

1. Trustees Budget/Land Rent Rate – rising taxes are impacting the land rent rate
2. Budget: Annual Budget Report, with special attention to roads issues
3. Elections: Memorial Gardens – 2 members; 2 year term
Archives - 2 members; 2 year term
4. Committee Reports

A quorum is needed at the town meeting, please come!
Light Refreshments

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The regular meeting of the Village of Ardentown was convened at 7:30 pm on Monday, November 14, 2011. Enno Krebbers, Chair, presiding. **A quorum was present.**

Attendance

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Terri Hansen | 16. Barbara Conway |
| 2. Joan Fitzgerald | 17. June Kleban |
| 3. Enno Krebbers | 18. Maura Lynch |
| 4. Cheryl Regan | 19. Sue Mearkle |
| 5. Barbara Mondzelewski | 20. Ann Balogh |
| 6. Steve Cohen | 21. Alison Byer |
| 7. Rusty Hoegger | 22. Oliver Gutsche |
| 8. Hardy Hoegger | 23. Annie Gutsche |
| 9. Bob Lockerman | 24. Shari Phalan |
| 10. Betty Ann Themal | 25. Elaine Schmerling |
| 11. Harry Themal | 26. Maureen Gordon |
| 12. Joy Mulholland | |
| 13. Pat Lane | Bryon Short, Guest |
| 14. Edmond Bishoff | |
| 15. Dotty Verne | |

MEETING: Regular meeting called to order by Enno Krebbers, Town Chair.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the September 12, 2011 meeting were approved with one change.

The minutes of the February 14, 2011 and The Resolution to Adapt the NCC All Hazard Mitigation Plan were also approved.

REGISTRATION COMMITTEE: Enno Krebbers reporting for Janet Cosgrove
No changes to report.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Barbara Mondzelewski

Operating Accounts:	\$25,334.98
Municipal Street Aid:	19,074.92
Arden Building & Loan:	<u>25,307.46</u>
Total Funds Available:	\$69,717.36

MEMORIAL GARDEN: Rusty Hoegger

Section of the fence on the east side was down due to a rotted post. Hal Goodwin and crew replaced the post.

BUZZ WARE VILLAGE CENTER: Terri Hansen reporting for Beverley Fleming
Buzz is doing very well with rentals for special events. Please check our online calendar on TheArdens.com for all classes, workshops, availability and community meetings.

Once again, we will be having our popular New Year's Day Brunch. This will be reservation only, with limited seating. Cost this year will be \$15/person before December 15th and all others \$20/person. Reservations required. Please come and support the Buzz for this fund raising event.

COMMUNITY PLANNING REPORT: Alison Byer. Nothing to report.

PUBLIC WORKS AND SAFETY REPORT: Cheryl Regan

Enno Krebbers accepted the resignation of Barbara Conway and thanked her for her services and hard work. Cheryl Regan will serve as Chair.

Paths/trees/compost area – Special report submitted by Elaine Schmerling and Barbara Conway:
Problems:

There are two sections to the compost area; 1) the demonstration site, and, 2) the community use area. The primary problems seem to be common to both sections:

1. **Lack of maintenance** - the grass, weeds and invasive vines over run both sections.
2. **Lack of use** - The demonstration site has not been used in three years. It has served a purpose but those who want to learn about composting have already visited it. Hal uses the main bins for leaves from many Ardentown customers, as do several residents.
3. **Unauthorized/inappropriate dumping** - large piles of branches and yard debris are dumped in the area that adds to the mess.
4. **Lack of funds for upkeep.**
5. **Lack of volunteers** - the original *ad hoc* committee and volunteers have moved on.
6. **Accessibility** - some residents complained about the area being locked/hard to access.

Recommendations of the subcommittee reported to the town meeting:

The major recommendation was to remove the demonstration site portion of the area, and maintain the compost bins for now. The materials can be reused by Hetty Francke at a new such site being built at the Delaware School for the Deaf.

If the compost bins are kept, the area still has issues listed below and attendees thought that we should revisit this issue annually.

Issues that need to be addressed with *suggestions from meeting attendees:*

1. **LOCK/Inaccessibility:** *replace keyed lock with a combination lock. We can we can share the combination with residents and their contractors. Better publicize the proper use of the bins through theardens.com. Elaine will after piles are turned and its ready for leaves.*
2. **Weeds and invasive vines.** *Volunteers are needed for this. Hal Goodwin was asked to and did turn the piles. The lawncare service will be asked to cut and trim the area as they should.*
3. **There is still dumping.** *Suggestion: get motion detector lights on side of Candelight (with surveillance camera to deter or catch problems)*
4. **The area is soaking wet from a large amount of runoff coming into the area.** *Suggestion: plant more shrubs and trees around the site. Need volunteers to help plant, transplant and weeding.*
5. **There is concern that if the bins are removed, the area will return to the awful looking area it was before the compost projects were installed. It had been an even worse junky area, with piles of wood, sticks, and even more weeds including phragmites. The town, volunteers, lawn company and Hal can all work harder to keep the area in decent shape.**

Addendum – (submitted by Elaine Schmerling): Laminated signs have been placed on the bins. Bins #1,2,3 and 6 are ready to accept leaves, with #2 reserved for Hal Goodwin's use. #5 is compost for taking. #4 is in the process of composting. **LEAVES ONLY** - although brush has been short-dumped in the area (and at the corner where we usually walk around).

Note the whole area in front of the bins has had years of composting and is very rich if anyone needs some they are welcome to take it, if they can then smooth down the site. But - **BEWARE OF WEED SEEDS ESPECIALLY IN THIS COMPOST!**

Gil Johnson and Elaine Schmerling planted "freebie" baby itea and clethra shrubs around the right side of the main bin #1. We would like plants to fill in and so reduce the weeds.

A baby dogwood was also planted and baby spicebushes were moved to start filling in the blank area to the right of the path as one enters the woods. It was suggested we could put cardboard covered with leaves around the new plantings to suppress weeds.

Roads – Joan Wharburton-Phibbs: There is nothing new to report since the last road report.

Signs – Cheryl Regan, Paul Romagano: I ordered 20 more of the wooden town signs. Once these are painted and the reflective bead applied, they will be installed weather permitting. 8 signs are already completed. This should complete the replacement of all the wooden signs. There are some leaning poles and posts that can hopefully be straightened prior to the ground freezing.

Snow/sand – David Byers: This year's snow contract with Jim Burslem has been signed and Barbara Mondzelewski sent him a retainer for \$500. He will automatically begin plowing when the snow reaches 2 inches. Anything below 2 inches must be by request from the committee chair (Cheryl?) or me. There is sometimes a difference of opinion as to what constitutes 2 inches, so we'll all have to do our best as far that goes.

We have ordered 12 sand barrels from DELDOT and they will be placed in the usual spots. When they arrive, I'll shove them on their sides, unless someone can come up with lids or another solution to keep them from filling with water/snow and freezing. My suggestion would be that anyone anticipating using sand, despite La Nina's warm winter predictions, should gather some sand up in a container before the next snow storm (which will probably already have arrived by the time the barrels appear).

Town watch – Holly Custer: Nothing to report.

Planting/Ivy Plan - Elaine Schmerling Gil Johnson & I planted 3 *Itea virginica* (VA sweet spire) shrubs on the other side of the rock at the bottom the E. Mall green...eventually they will absorb SOME of the water runoff. Iteas are very hardy and will fill in that blank area.

The state Dept. of Forestry wants to give us \$5000 for invasives control. I have a MOA for Enno to sign if the town meeting agrees. We would have to match it equally, I have proposed volunteer hours. Plan as presented to Planning Committee for spending the money:

1) \$3000 for Hal & crew to saw mainly Norway maples, and also some large vines too large for us to cut (I still have some stump-treatment glyphosate -roundup concentrate-left) 2) \$2,000 for Greg Gagliano, Redtail Restoration, to help control worst part in Sunnyside in old-forest area, on main path (see below) and \$500 for visible site to the left of Candlelight.

For match, I am starting a new program, asking people to trim ivy off trees on their leaseholds, and in areas near them (flyer going for Dec Page). If people report it to me (report form on back) this can count as match. If 50 residents spend an hour each trimming ivy off of 2 trees, that is over \$1,000 match and 100 trees cleared! Also, we are re-starting weed-n-walk, first re-clearing past areas cleared (this week, 9-11 most days). My time alone on weed-n-walk, supervising the paid crews, and writing in the Page and on website will be significant match.

Elaine's motion to implement the above was passed by the town meeting.

Sunnyside – Elaine Schmerling Sunnyside has 3 major areas: 1) the old-growth area, over 75 years old, a mature oak forest, 2) forest 45-75 years old, and 3) the new area less than 45 years old. The top you see from Harvey Rd, and down the highway. The last area has the worst of the invasives. We had thought this area was "hopeless" and too vast to work on. However, I surveyed the area, and the majority of this area is covered in ivy with other invasives, and now over 100 trees either are or are soon to be covered over the top with ivy (and many with mature, seeding ivy). We are about to be stewards of a dead forest if we do nothing. The 2nd area is largely becoming mostly invasives. We always thought the first area was the one worthy of our efforts, to just keep the few invasives out of it. Sadly, the recent storms and exponentially growing invasives seeding and spreading in from the other areas threaten this area worse than ever now. We had always walked in from Croppers (across the RR tracks and down), and to a "middle" path. Just a short way down this path is blocked now by multiflora rose, and Japanese

honeysuckle. The only passable way now is right down by the stream. The rose had been a small patch 2 years ago we had talked about taking care of, and now it has grown beyond my capabilities.

I propose the following: 1) Hire Hal to cut the small trees over the path down into Sunnyside, with the \$200 budgeted. 2) Hire Redtail Restoration and Hal with grant funding, as noted above, to help tackle the worst invasives. 3) Re-start Weed-n-Walk, and help pull back invasives from the old forest area with the large mature trees (especially when I am supervising Hal & Greg and Earth day cleanup). 4) Work on requests for volunteer programs (AmeriCorps and other from Allison) to help cut ivy off the trees, to save them in April. Elaine will report at next town meeting further details about these programs.

SPECIAL GUEST: Byron Short, State Representative

Byron answered questions about the State budget, jobs, and road funding.

The voting districts are going to be redefined again; The Ardens will remain in District 7.

The new Claymont Public Library is expected to be completed spring of 2013.

Donations are tax deductible.

TOWN CHAIR REPORT: Enno Krebbers

Enno announced the new position of Chief Information Officer. The Town needs to update current record keeping into a secured computerized list. Terri Hansen has accepted this newly appointed position. She has been working on updating the list of residents for the Registration Committee. She is also collecting email address. Please send your information to Terri at Ardently@verizon.net.

TRUSTEE'S REPORT: Harry Thernal

Since the flooding of 2300 Marsh Road, the Trustees have been working with New Castle County, State, and FEMA officials. The structure will be torn down and the land will be dedicated to open space. We are still working to amend the Act of Incorporation to add Sunnyside and the terms of the elected Town officers.

ELECTIONS:

The three town officers were reelected:

Town Chair: Enno Krebbers

Town Secretary: Joan Fitzgerald

Town Treasurer: Barbara Mondzelewski

Community Planning Committee: Elected for a 2 year term were: Alison Byer, Holly Custer, Joan Fitzgerald


ELECTIONS – February Archives (2); Memorial Gardens (2)

OLD BUSINESS: Just a reminder: donations to the Paths (and Memorial Gardens) are tax deductible. Make checks payable to the Village of Ardentown.

NEW BUSINESS: None

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Joan Fitzgerald
Secretary

Joan Fitzgerald
Ardentown Secretary
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Ardentown, DE 19810