

Village of Ardentown

Ardentown, Del. 19810

Established 1922

Incorporated 1975

The regular meeting of the Village of Ardentown was convened at 7:30pm on Monday, Sept 9, 2013. Enno Krebbers, Chair, presiding. A quorum was present.

In Attendance:

MEETING: Regular meeting called to order at 7:30 pm by Enno Krebbers, Town Chair

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the May 2013 meeting were approved, as written with no correction

REGISTRATION COMMITTEE: Betty Ann Thernal reporting: Four new residents
Cassandra and Peter Slattery- 1511 Woodland Road (May 23, 2013)
Maishea and Todd Meegan- 2311 Hilltop Road (July 2013)
Mary Zimmerman- 1508 The Mall (August 1, 2013)

TREASURER'S REPORT: Barbara Mondelewski reporting

Operating Accounts:	32,114.85
Municipal Street Aid:	9,398.03
Arden Building and Loan:	26,041.03
Total Funds Available:	67,553.91

AUDIT REPORT: Holly Custer reporting. The books for the Town were examined and found to be accurate with no discrepancies. There were a couple of donation checks that had gone uncashed and that will be followed up on. The Trustees books were also examined and found to be in good order.

PLANNING COMMITTEE: will have Drew write this

MEMORIAL GARDEN: Rusty Hoegger reporting, Just replaced the oldest section of fencing that dated to the 1990s when the garden was established. Edmund Bishoff cleared lots of vine and growth that was pulling over the fencing.

PUBLIC WORKS:

Roads – Joan Warburton-Phibbs:

Road repairs have begun on numerous potholes. The seven speed bumps have been repainted and look great.

Signs – Sue Mearkle / Cheryl Regan:

The new bulletin board cover has been replaced. An attempt will be made to see if the old one can be restored. A no parking/stopping/standing sign was replaced for the one spray-painted on the Henry George green. Twelve signs are ready to be installed, more should be ordered soon.

Snow/sand – Paul Romagano:

Nothing to report at this time.

Ardentown Natural Lands Steward – Elaine Schmerling:

Misc/Street Trees

I have applied for a Tree Management grant, to cut down seven (7) dead elms 1) on Ardentown land just before Phalan leasehold on bottom of Brae Rd , 2) on Henry George Green, and 3) to safely cut and remove the largest chunk of the largest invasive wisteria vine I have ever seen(6" + in diameter), off a tree on the path, threatening an ash tree over Sue Cherrin's garage. \$2,640.

Thanks to Allan Kleban, he pruned the redbuds on the Petit Green, they look so much better and are not covering the grass below! (Anyone else want to prune trees in front of your houses?)

The weed-whackers are at it again...after I returned from my August vacation I noticed many nicks along trees (I hadn't been around to pull all the grasses growing up the stem – even of those that had been mulched) . Also 2 had nicks completely around, and are dead: 1) the Washington Hawthorn Pat Lane had planted in the middle section on The Mall, and 2) the 3-year old dogwood by Alison Byer's house, that I had nursed since a baby and had mulched very well, and had unfortunately just taken off the fencing too...moral of the story, will have to leave fencing up, but I need more helpers (or, can we emphasize to ALL the cutters – just DON'T CUT the grasses close to the tree trunks??? I or hopefully others in the neighborhood – maybe volunteers can do just a few in front of their houses – can go and pull before or even after they cut the GRASS –not trees???)

Invasive Removal Grant:

Almost finished with this! Went out w/Greg this morning, next Monday is our last time! Cleared area in front of and to left of the Candlelight, have planted with some native plants that should take off the next year or two (visible area). Have some additional black-eyed Susan's from the Arden Fair and a few others, to add in as well. Have cleared a nice section in Sunnyside (not so visible area) – have cleared most of the multi-flora rose and keeping a section between the rocks in check from other vines, honeysuckle & oriental bittersweet are especially bad.

As a requirement for this fire prevention grant (we are saving trees from dying and creating a fire hazard in Sunnyside), we now have a 15-page Community Wildfire Protection Plan for the three Ardens. Can see me to review it, or I can email to you...signed by me and Carol for "The Ardens" so I don't know how official it really is...its goal is to "provide the Ardens with an action plan to decrease hazardous fuels in areas where there is a high wildland-urban interface, and to minimize loss of property and life in the event of a wildfire"...We agree to "work cooperatively in the inventory, monitoring, controlling and preventing spread of... invasive species throughout the Ardens."

Americorps:

We were pleasantly surprised when Americorps called us at the last minute – they had a new FEMA group in training, they asked if we'd sponsor a group for a day or two! We had one group we sponsored for outdoor work...got one hour only in continuing to cut vines from the VISIBLE trees along Harvey Rd just after you get off the highway. Nick Liberman came with his powersaw, we did get a lot of the ones we missed, look for the dead ivy once the leaves fall! (Also cleared a path for the Arden Fair, had indoor rainy day Arden Fair work, and another crew saved the Arden Fair set-up crew on Friday!)

Gardening Sub-Committee:

The beautyberry plants and Redbuds that were planted at Loreley Rd. and Via Italia are looking great.

Pathwork: Drew Hansen to report.

Composting/Candlelight Theatre:

Hal did get the majority of stuff dumped in front of compost bins, moved into them. Anticipates him turning them soon, and I will label them, in time for fall leaf season. I have been tarping the worst of the weeds in the bins, it does kill those growing on top of compost. I bought 4 more tarps but one is buried in compost and I don't have enough for all bins (and I have to weekly go out and dump any pooling water on them).

Grounds around it: Hal has been weed-whacking the area once a month – the MINIMUM it needs. The baby trees seedlings that I had planted between the compost area and the path, are doing very well. The river birches are 4' tall. They should help with the run-off in a few years! Now have some snakeroot too and a few shrubs, and some blue lobelia (I have more to add). Letting plants get established. Invasive JAPANESE STILT GRASS – if pulled before it seeds – is a good mulch, dries like straw. (Show sample).

Also time to cut/stump treat invasive wisteria “virgin's bower” – not the native nor the ornamental one at all. Prolific seeder, expect this for many years. (Sample).

Misc/Street Trees:

A request was made to Amy Pollock to see if the utility pole that was replaced on Swiss/Harvey could possibly be moved back to its original position. A few complaints have been received noting it is harder to pull out from Swiss to Harvey. An alternative plan has been discussed. Doing a visual line of the utility poles from Millers to Swiss, trim back everything in front of the poles. This should allow for more visibility.

PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE: The swings at the Candlelight playground are in terrible condition. Projected cost to repair them and replace the chains will be around \$500.

TRUSTEES REPORT: Harry Themal reporting: Ivy Gables update- As they have gotten into renovation they have found many things that needed replacing. Windows, fire suppression system, and HVAC have all been replaced. The old main house has also been renovated and all is looking wonderful. There is a hope for an October opening.

BUZZ COMMITTEE: Peddlars, Potions and Practitioners was another great success. We are waiting for the final numbers, but all the vendor spaces were rented, with a waiting list. Attendance by Fair goers was brisk and steady, so we anticipate a good result from the door charge. All funds raised go to the Buzz Ware Restoration Fund.

TOWN CHAIR REPORT: Mosquitoes: Key bullet points from summary of DNREC report

1. Initial focus on Asian Tiger Mosquito (ATM), but soon expanded to other species.
 - a. Removal of habitat is currently the only method available in Delaware
 - b. It is not hard if conscientiously done.
 - c. Every small container is a potential site
2. Two inspections performed 2-3 weeks apart. Only one resident refused access, overall very pleasing to DNREC
 - a. Good news – they got to speak with residents at 67 homes. This was considered key – showing people is more effective than leaving them text (or having chairpeople talk).
3. Traps not great for ATM, so “landing counts” done. Want a job?
4. Some data:
 - a. At 33 homes the ATM population fell (as it happens 33% of homes that had sources)
 - b. At 20 it rose
 - c. 43 had no ATM
 - d. At the rest it stayed level (no improvement)
 - e. 34 leaseholds showed clear evidence of cleaning up (removal of containers) so far. 21 were clear to begin with.
5. To keep up this momentum, it is recommended that serious publicity campaigns be carried out at the start of and during mosquito season (spring/summer)

6. Note that the species that is the major vector for West Nile disease in our area has habits very similar to ATM, so these measures will reduce our chances of West Nile.
7. Trap collections showed a major floodwater species issue, which appears to be coming from low areas in public lands. Several options open for next year to control that.
8. DNREC was very grateful for our cooperation – they hope the learning will help us reduce our mosquito problems in the future.
9. Repeat conclusions:
 - a. 33% of the leaseholds that have breeding habitat improved with relatively simple actions. That means 67% did NOT, so there is work to be done.
 - b. Much of this is EASY: turn over or remove buckets, pots, saucers, trash cans, tarps.
 - c. Some is harder – Clogged gutters and drainpipes from downspouts. Suggestion: do NOT use corrugated drainpipes, but rather pvc or aluminum (straight) material. Or cut slits so things drain well. In their experience corrugated drainpipes are contaminated 50% of the time (1 of 2).

DISCUSSION: Elaine Schmerling- She brought photos of the black flexi drain from her house that was buried to take water away from the house. She found that it does not drain effectively unless they are at a 45 degree angle. She covered the end of the pipes with pantyhose and fastened with rubber bands. This allows the water to pass through and traps any mosquitoes.

DEPT of TRANSPORTATION: NEED THE FIGURE and report.

ELECTIONS:

Budget Committee: Barbara Mondzelewski and Hans Francke re-elected unanimously

Betty Ann Thernal is resigning and we are looking for a volunteer. No volunteers from the floor so a campaign will be launched to recruit a replacement. Thank you to Betty Ann for your service and dedication

Public Works: We have an opening that needs to be filled. Anyone interested should be in contact with Enno

NEW BUSINESS

Betty Ann Thernal: At the Registration Committee a suggestion was made to have a social prior to the meeting as a way to get to know each other and welcome new residents. The feeling from the floor was that it was a good idea and we should try it for the November meeting.

Hans Francke: Arden Craft Shop Museum has been active. This Summer they hosted a visit with the ACRA kids and a display of the Shakespeare Guild Costumes and materials. Upcoming exhibition will feature Arden Fair T-shirts.

Holly Custer: There was a car break in on Sconset Road.

??????- Stoplight at Sconset and Harvey Road. The trip for the light is set back from Harvey Road and you have to sit on them to get the light to change. Maybe a sign there to let motorists know would be helpful?

Jen Curley- Bus stop at Sconset Road- There is a bus stop for elementary students at this corner. It is not safe and Jen Curley is filing a complaint with BSD Transportation

Hardy Hoegger- There are many signs on Harvey Road that are covered with vegetation.

Enno Krebbers- There are openings for Town Officers that are coming in the next 12 months. Enno encourages anyone that may have an interest to approach a Town Official to get information.

June Kleban- Would like to know if there is a way to get committee member lists and meeting notes before they come out in the Town mailer? Enno Krebbers informed the meeting that copies of these are available on request.

Shari Phalan- Expressed gratitude at Enno's health
Meeting Adjourned at 8:25

Respectfully Submitted

Terri Hansen