

Community Planning Committee
Minutes, 17 February 2010

Present: Ron Meick, Danny Schweers, Ray Seigfried, and Sally Sharpe. Also in attendance for most of the meeting were Trustee Connee McKinney and former Centennial Queen Sadie Somerville.

Ray Seigfried, chair, called this meeting to order at one feather past the mockingbird (7:11 p.m.) in Room 2 of the Buzz Ware Village Center.

Minutes Approved

The committee approved the minutes of the January 2010 meeting.
Memorial Garden Sign

Ron Meick reported that Denis O'Regan will be making the sign.
Instant Ticketing

It was noted that a News Journal article appeared recently reporting that a New Castle County resident is suing the county over its implementation of so-called Instant Ticketing, an issue we first addressed nearly a year ago, with issues similar to those reported, that tickets are issued without specifying an offense, and that there are problems appealing tickets.

Vacant Domiciles

A long discussion centered around the issue of vacant domiciles and what, if anything, the Village and the Trustees can do to discourage them. One domicile has been vacant for nearly 20 years, another has been vacant for 3 or 4, and neither owner shows any desire to see the dwellings occupied. Other domiciles are also vacant, empty of life. Possible actions discussed were:

Institute vacant domicile fees such as Wilmington's, fees that increase the longer the domicile remains empty, starting at \$500/year and increasing to \$5,000/year.

If the dwellings or leaseholds are in violation of County Code, pursue ways to get those codes enforced, perhaps even getting the dwellings condemned.

Revoke the leases on those properties.

Revise future lease agreements to minimize vacancies.

Petition the owners of vacant domiciles to do better.

These and other possibilities will be discussed at public hearings on Wednesday, April 21 and Wednesday, May 19. Both meetings will be at 7:30 p.m. at the Buzz Ware Village Center.

Additional Domicile Units

Two leaseholders have asked the Trustees for permission to add additional domicile units. Last year the village, working with New Castle County,

legalized existing extra units, but put off to another time the issue of allowing new units.

Website

Larry Strange, working with Warren Rosencranz, has built a new website for the Buzz Ware Village Center. Denis O'Regan reports feedback on the Safety Committee's reporting feature, about archers hunting in the woods. Also, links to the Arden Library can now be found on every page of this website. Finally, Mike Opelka wants to set up an Arden Twitter account.

Next Meeting, Adjournment

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, March 17, 7:00 p.m. at The Buzz. Tonight we adjourned at two feathers past the house wren (8:22 p.m.).

Respectively submitted,

Danny Schweers, Committee Secretary