

Community Planning Committee (C.P.C.) - Village Of Arden

Minutes Of Meeting Held On Wednesday January 21, 2015

Present: Ray Seigfried, Cynthia Dewick, Larry Strange, Ron Meick and Dan McNeil

Absent: Sally Sharp

Meeting called to order by Ray Seigfried as Committee Chairman at 7:08 PM

The topics addressed in this meeting include: (1) F.E.M.A. Resolution; (2) Vacant Housing Ordinance; and (3) Village of Arden Community Garden in an Open Forum

Guest Appearance For Open Forum: Toby Ridings & Alex Rudzinski representing Community Garden, Steve Threefoot, Chairman of the Buzz Ware Community Center Committee and Ed Rohrbach, Chairman of the Civic Committee

### **F.E.M.A. Resolution**

Ray has been diligently working over the past year with John Cartier (Arden's County Representative) and Dave Carpenter (County's FEMA Specialist) on the Village's official induction into the F.E.M.A. program. Ray reports that the application has been approved by the State of Delaware and is now under consideration by the United States Government.

The Village of Arden, as discussed in the minutes of November 2014, is officially operating under the County's Land Use Ordinances. This has been acknowledged with the State and that the Village will immediately notify the State if it withdraws from this governance.

The United States Government is now requesting that it be given 30 day advance notice if the Village decides to officially withdraw from county land use governance. The United States Government further stipulates that its FEMA coverage can be withdrawn if the alternative land use governance is deemed inadequate.

Ray indicated that the original FEMA motion to the Village Assembly needs to be updated to reflect this procedural change. This motion will be made in the upcoming Village Assembly.

### **Village of Arden Vacant Housing Ordinance**

Ray indicated that the preliminary list of homes vacant in excess of one year will be finalized in February 2015. Once the list is finalized, the liens will be officially recorded with the Recorder of Deeds of New Castle County, Delaware.

Ray indicated that in order to avoid being classified as a tax, the C.P.C. must spend the collected fines in a manner consistent with the ordinance. Several ideas identified include expanding the Village's insurance coverage, payment of filing fees with the Recorder of Deeds, and the hiring of professionals for regular building inspections of derelict housing with outstanding claims.

The meeting was adjourned by Ray Seigfried as Committee Chairman at approximately 7:20 PM. Ray then called to order the special open forum on the Community Garden.

### **Community Garden**

The Community Garden Club, as discussed in previous minutes, is very interested in its official recognition by the Village of Arden and designation as a sub-committee of an existing committee. This request follows a motion made at the Village Assembly of January 2009 to more closely examine the organization with the intention of officially recognizing it. There has, however, been no action on this motion until C.Y. 2014.

During C.Y. 2014, Toby Ridings and Alex Rudzinski appeared at (3+/-) C.P.C. meetings with the intention of finally achieving recognition. Background and financial information were regularly provided.

Ray discussed this topic with the Advisory Committee in June 2014, however, no action was taken at the September 2014 Village Assembly. In the October 2014 meeting, Ray indicated that the chairman's of the Buzz Ware Center and Civic Committee would be invited to a future Community Planning Committee meeting in order to discuss expediting the group's official recognition.

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The invitation was offered and accepted by Steve Threefoot and Ed Rohrbach for the C.P.C.'s meeting in January 2015.

Toby and Alex provided a brief history of the club and expressed a strong interest in finally getting recognition from the Village Assembly. Detailed financials were also provided and reviewed.

It was the general consensus that the path to recognition will occur quickly if the club does not put undue demands on the Village. The idea of dedicating this designated area as permanent and for exclusive use for any period in excess of one year will likely incur community opposition. It is community land and any effort to institutionalize for exclusive use will likely lead to defeat. As such, the club is advised to seek annual recognition which typically occurs very easily once the initial motion is passed in the Village Assembly. Also, as a sub-committee within a larger committee, the larger committee will represent its interest in the Village Assembly.

The (3) committee chairs discussed the pros and cons of which committee was most appropriate for the Community Garden. It was subsequently decided that the Community Planning Committee represents the best fit. Consequently, Ray indicated that a motion would be prepared for consideration in the upcoming March 2015 Village Assembly.

The open forum was adjourned by Ray Seigfried as Committee Chairman at 8:40 PM

Meeting minutes compiled and prepared by Dan McNeil.