

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

Minutes Of Meeting Held On Wednesday February 17, 2016

Present: Ray Seigfried, Dan McNeil and Cynthia Dewick via telephone

Member Absent: Ron Meick, Larry Strange and Sally Sharp

Sub-Committee Present: None

Meeting called to order by Ray Seigfried as the Committee Chairman at 7:03 PM

The minutes of the meetings for November 2015, December 2015 and January 2016 still need to be reviewed, discussed and approved by those committee members in attendance. As such, electronic copies will be distributed for the purpose of discussing and approving as the first order of the March 2016 meeting.

The topics addressed in this meeting include: (1) FEMA Resolution; (2) Vacant Housing Ordinance; (3) Firearms in Public Facilities; (4) Comprehensive Land Use Plan / Village Transformation Project; and (7) Memorial Garden / Community Garden Sub-Committees

Guest Appearance: Bill Theis, Pat Tomin of Arden Clubs, and Jeff Politis, Village Chairman on Village Transformation Project

F.E.M.A. Resolution

Ray has been diligently working over the past two years 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. The application was approved by both New Castle County and the State of Delaware, and on May 29, 2015 was officially submitted for approval to F.E.M.A. The application was soon returned with F.E.M.A. requesting updated mapping information. The updated information was subsequently provided and our updated application is now reported to be under review by F.E.M.A. according to county officials. Ray will continue to follow up and move toward final approval and enrollment in the program.

Village of Arden Vacant Housing Ordinance

The C.P.C. has moved forward in its administration of this ordinance subsequent to an official acknowledgement in December 2015 of its legality from New Castle County.

Ray indicated that the leaseholder of 2115 Marsh Road (f/k/a Arden Sub Shop) invited an inspection of the only legally defined commercial land use in the Village of Arden. The leaseholder strongly believes that the Vacant Housing Ordinance is not applicable to a commercial property. C.P.C. members are in disagreement on how to proceed with this request. Additional information is required on whether the residential apartment is classified as a legal Alternate Dwelling Unit (A.D.U.) and if so, should the residential unit should be taxed at a residential tax rate. It was decided to table this request pending further analysis and discussion.

House Bill 192 - Firearms in Public Facilities

Ray indicated an interest in the October 2015 meeting of pursuing the creation of a Village Ordinance prohibiting firearms in public facilities. A Village Ordinance is legally permissible under Delaware State Law. Ray subsequently reviewed the law in greater detail and the C.P.C. concluded that any local action would be futile since the State law shifts enforcement to the local municipalities.

Ray, nonetheless, has expressed an interest in formulating a prospective firearms policy, perhaps through the three Arden's and the Arden Club. Both Bill Theis and Pat Tomin brought to Ray's attention that the State of Delaware is an "open carry" state in which a firearm is legally permissible if holstered and visible. A prospective ordinance is technically possible, however, the burden and cost of administration and security may preclude its feasibility. Ray will continue to research further before deciding if an open forum is worthwhile with the three Arden's and the Arden Club.

Comprehensive Land Use Plan & Village Transformation Project

Discussion on the stewardship of open public space and creation of a land use plan was identified in the September 2015 C.P.C. meeting as worthy of future discussion and potential action through the C.P.C. It was suggested that a

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Village Approved Master Land Use Plan created with professional assistance could address these questions/concerns in a comprehensive format.

Ray subsequently made contact with the Public Policy Planning Group at the University of Delaware. Multiple conversations with faculty members has lead Ray to believe that the P.P.P.G. may be very helpful in formulating and executing plans for both land use and special transformative projects.

Ray indicated that a scope of work and fee will be negotiated in the coming months and will specifically address Arden's Greens and Forest. Ray also mentioned that the monies accruing from the Vacant Housing Ordinance can be used in paying for these consulting services.

Jeff Politis as Village Chairman has indicated in past C.P.C. meetings a strong interest in actively investing available funds in projects benefiting the Village. Ray made a very general statement on this prospective project at the January 2015 Village Assembly and was followed by a notice in the Arden Page seeking input from village residents. Ray envisions holding an "open forum" with Village residents sometime in April 2016.

Both Jeff and Ray feel that the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Transformation Project reflect a dynamic synergy which potentially can be very beneficial to the Village Of Arden. It was decided to begin both programs now since six to nine months may be required to develop a framework of an action plan.

Memorial Garden / Community Garden Sub-Committee

There were no updates on the Memorial Garden or by the Community Garden.

The meeting was adjourned by Ray Seigfried as Committee Chairman at 8:18 PM

Meeting minutes compiled and prepared by Dan McNeil.