

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

Minutes Of Meeting Held On Wednesday March 17, 2016

Present: Ray Seigfried, Dan McNeil and Ron Meick

Member Absent: Cynthia Dewick, Larry Strange and Sally Sharp

Sub-Committee Present: None

Meeting called to order by Ray Seigfried as the Committee Chairman at 7:04 PM

The minutes of the meetings for November 2015, December 2015 and January 2016 were reviewed, discussed and approved by those committee members in attendance.

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 (5) Memorial Garden / Community Garden Sub-Committees

Guest Appearance: John Cartier, County Representative

F.E.M.A. Resolution

Ray reported that the Village of Arden has finally been officially approved for participation in the F.E.M.A. program after a four year process. This will be announced in the upcoming Village Assembly and in the next Arden Page.

Village of Arden Vacant Housing Ordinance

The leaseholder of 2115 Marsh Road (f/k/a Arden Sub Shop) invited an inspection by Ray during the month of January 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 with a residential apartment.

Over the past several months, C.P.C. members have been in disagreement on how to proceed with this request. Additional information was required on whether the residential apartment is in effect classified as a legal Alternate Dwelling Unit (A.D.U.).

Ray researched the records of the Village and County and determined that no such classification has ever been applied to the residential apartment within this leasehold. Ray further reported that the ownership indicated that the commercial unit containing the gallery was currently being expanded to include the space previously used as the residential apartment. Consequently, the C.P.C. in attendance agreed with the leaseholder and no further action was deemed necessary.

House Bill 192 - Firearms in Public Facilities

Over the past several months, Ray has expressed an interest in formulating a firearms policy, specifically within Gild Hall and the Buzz Ware Community Center. Ray recently met with the Arden Club which passed a motion in favor of prohibiting firearms during open meetings at its Gild Hall.

Delaware State Law currently permits the local jurisdiction to establish an ordinance precluding the possession of a firearm during an official open meeting. It is also the responsibility of the local jurisdiction to post sufficient notification and signage of this ordinance, and to pay for the presence of the County Police at these open meeting. The number of police officers typically required is based on the number of entrances. John Cartier mentioned that these ordinances are actively being tested by gun owners.

A prospective ordinance is technically possible, however, the burden and cost of administration and security may preclude its feasibility. Ray will prepare a presentation for the upcoming Village Assembly in June 2016.

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

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Ray subsequently made contact with the Institute For Public Policy 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.

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. Ray's announcement was followed by a notice in the Arden Page seeking input from village residents. Ray reports that Carol Larson of the Forrest Committee was the only person to respond to the Arden Page notification.

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 was no update on the Community Garden. The Memorial Garden reports that Ruth Bean has decided to retire and that Ray will make an announcement at the upcoming Village Assembly.

The meeting was adjourned by Ray Seigfried as Committee Chairman at 7:50 PM

Meeting minutes compiled and prepared by Dan McNeil.