

**Discussion by the Registration Committee  
Oct 2, 2014 & Nov 4, 2014**

The Registration Committee was asked by the September Town Meeting to consider allowing 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in Arden elections. The Committee discussed this at two meetings and our recommendation is against it for several reasons:

- 1) We don't see a group of teenagers initiating this themselves.
- 2) Each time we increase the number of eligible voters, we also increase the number of votes needed to pass a budget referendum. That is as it should be, and the Registration Committee considers getting out the vote to be a responsibility rather than a burden. However, we think the budget election is unlikely to draw a lot of participation from young voters and lowering the voting age will make it more difficult to pass a budget.
- 3) The committee feels there other ways of involving young people in Village life, many of which are already effective. In addition to the many activities of ACRA and the Arden Club, younger residents take part in the woods cleanup, the Memorial Garden cleanup, and activities at the Buzz Ware Village Center. In the past, high school students have assisted the Registration Committee with vote counts. In the future, we will regularly recruit teens to help with elections. We encourage all committees to involve young people in the work of their committees whenever possible.
- 4) Changing the voting age to 16 would require the approval of the Town Meeting, probably in the form of an ordinance. The Act to Reincorporate would then need to be amended. This was done previously, when the voting age was changed from 21 to 18. Anyone wanting to pursue this change should consult the minutes of Town Meeting and follow the same procedure that was used before.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cecilia Vore