

A special meeting of the Town Assembly of the Village of Arden was held on April 20, 1981, Chairman William Press, Jr., presiding.

In attendance were:

Patricia Press	Molca Budin	Conee McKinney
William Press	Fran Trench	Joan Ware Colgan
Jim Brooks	Rae Gerstine	Thomas Colgan
Sarah Hamburger	Mary Morley	Aaron Hamburger
Virginia Shaw	Marge Roberts	Jack Bovard
Cy Liberman	William Morley	Carolyn Liberman
William Bindloss	Mary Burslem	Sarah Moore
Dora Johnson	Hugh Roberts	Rowena Austin
Harold Monfort	William Bailey	Helen Vinson
David Warner	Jean Brachman	Barbara Fenske
Susan Warner	Bernard Brachman	Larry Walker
Yvonne King	Ruth Estes	Bill Theis
Diane Kershaw	Alton Dahl	Naomi Clark
Elizabeth V. Walker	June Kleban	Mike Curtis
Jim Badner	Gail Rinehart	Agnes Harris
Nancy Badner	Irene Heymann	Matthew O'Connor
Nancy Anne Berlin	Frank Heymann	
Ethel Monfort	James Gulley	

Agenda: Discussion and action on the recommendations of the Buzz Ware Village Center and Community Planning Committees concerning the Wilmington Montessori Association's proposal for an addition to the Buzz Ware Village Center. The original proposal, presented at the March 23rd Town Assembly, was referred to the above committees for review and recommendation prior to town action at a special Town Assembly.

Presentation of current agreement between Wilmington Montessori Association (WMA) and the Village of Arden by Elizabeth Varley Walker, Chairperson of the Buzz Ware Village Center Committee. The current contract is a 5 year agreement. The school has use of the building in the daytime, during the school year, the town has priority use in the evening. WMA takes care of utilities and building maintenance and currently pays a fee of \$6300 per year which covers custodial care and a reserve for major building repairs. The contract has 2 more years to run, new contract negotiations are scheduled this fall. The contract covers only the building, Sherwood Green is maintained by the Village. The agreement has worked well for the past 8 years despite the inconvenience to both parties of moving school furniture for meetings.

Montessori report presented by Marie Dugan, Jean Lush, Arlene and Bill Bindloss. The school enrollment, currently 97 children, is growing, a maximum enrollment of 150 is planned. Two more classrooms are needed, one to be left empty of furniture and used for a gym and meeting room. Two proposals presented. 1) The preferred plan is for a free standing building, 26 X 50 feet, located between Sunset Rd. and the basketball court, with the option to add a building of equal size next to it in future. Advantages - less costly, no encroachment of the basketball court, no hidden spaces for group gatherings, easily removed if the lease is terminated. Disadvantage - would need a zoning variance because the building would not be 25 feet from a right-of-way (Sunset Rd.)

2) The second plan is for a free standing building, 26 x 50 feet located next to the school on the blacktop adjacent to the mural. The option to add a second building remains the same, but the location of the second building is uncertain. Disadvantages - the need to go through the blacktop to build and to extend the blacktop to complete the basketball court, need to add doors in the main building for fire exits, need to join the roofs of the buildings to avoid creating an alleyway for group gatherings. The oil tank may need to be relocated. This plan would involve more difficulty in moving and restoring the environment to its original condition should the lease be terminated. A more costly plan.

Joint Committee Report (Buzz Ware Village Center and Community Planning Committees) presented by Cy Liberman. The committee considered and rejected selling the building to WMA. The committee also rejected adding a permanent addition to the BWVC which would require a 25 year commitment by the village. The committee recommends that WMA be permitted to erect a free-standing, modular structure with the design to be approved by the Joint Committee. Resolution presented:

The Arden Town Assembly hereby authorized its chairman to sign a new cooperation agreement with the Wilmington Montessori Association, supplementing the existing agreement to include the following points:

1. The term of the agreement will be 10 years from the time of signing.
2. The Association may terminate the agreement by giving notice two years in advance.
3. The Association may erect one temporary free standing modular classroom building, as presented by WMA to the Town Assembly on April 20, 1981, on land of the Village of Arden, adjacent to the Buzz Ware Village Center, within limits prescribed by New Castle County zoning laws, and at a location and within a design approved by a majority of members of the Buzz Ware Village Center Committee and the Arden Community Planning Committee.
4. The Association may erect a second such temporary classroom upon approval of the specific location and design by the Town Assembly of Arden.
5. The Association may remove either or both of its temporary classroom structures at any time on 30 days notice, but the Association will restore the site to its former condition.
6. The Buzz Ware Village Center and one or two temporary classroom structures will be used by the Association as a school for no more than 150 children.

Discussion raised several questions:

Will the increased enrollment create more of a traffic problem than now exists? The committee should work with WMA to create the best possible traffic pattern.

Why does the Town Assembly need to approve the second building and the Joint Committee approve the first building design? Because the second building placement is more uncertain. Approval of this resolution would approve both buildings, the first in reality, the second in principle.

Would the zoning variance required by plan #1 be compatible with Arden land use? Cy checked with our attorney, Joseph Rosenthal, and there is no legal problem.

Would building on our parkland create a precedent? Cy felt we consider each case individually. The original school was built on parkland.

Moved by Cy Liberman, seconded by Elizabeth Walker, that the resolution be adopted.

Arguments pro-resolution:

WMA has proved itself a concerned tenant, willing to cooperate with the town.

No one has come up with a practical plan for village use of the building in 8 years. We do not need the space constantly and cannot afford it (it would cost approximately \$12,000 yearly to maintain). We do use the building extensively for evening meetings, special events, and the ACRA summer program. The addition would provide the town with a meeting room with no need for furniture moving.

10% of the WMA enrollment comes from the 3 Ardens, it is a community asset.

Arguments con-resolution:

Proposal #1 screens the basketball court from the view of the houses bordering Sunset Rd., creating a hidden area. Residents on that side of Sherwood Green would lose their parkland view. Will their tax assessment factor be cut?

The addition enlarges the building creating more of a burden for the town and delays any decision for town use of the Center. We are committing future Town Assemblies to a long-term lease.

Building on parkland and a zoning variance are precedent setting actions and may create future problems. Arden needs to preserve its open areas.

The Village should create a plan for our own use of the building.

Resolution item #2 is inequitable, WMA can terminate the agreement with 2 years notice, but Arden cannot. Hugh Roberts moved an amendment giving both parties the termination right, but no second was received.

Vote: 30 yes, 21 no, 1 abstention. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned.

Sarah Hamburger

Sarah Hamburger, secretary