A Special Meeting of the Town Assembly of the Village of Arden was held on May 28, 1981, Chairman William Press, Jr., presiding.

In attendance were:

Mamie Woolery  Bill Press  Tim McCarthy
Virginia Mann  Susan Warner  Bernard Brachman
James Mann  David Warner  Jean K. Brachman
Fred Downs  Jim Brooks  Miriam Berd
Margaret Downs  Aaron Hamburger  Irvin Berd
Betty Knott  Frank Heymann  Wendy Messick
Alfred Bratten  Irene R. Heymann  Aileen Luginbuhl
Carolyn Liberman  Lee Starr  Michael Foley
Russ McKinney  Frank Starr  Ralph Luker
Sarah Hamburger  Rae Gerstine  Marcia Jones
Cy Liberman  Amy Potter Cook  Bunni Hurlong
Bernadette Barrish  Alex Sykulski  Lynn Smith
Arlene Davis  Robert Hilliard  Mary Kumme
Warren Davis  Sarah Moore  Edmond Hurlong
John Hewlett  Joan W. Colgan  Ruth Shaw
Helen Vinson  Thomas Colgan  Eugene Shaw
Mary Burslem  Arlene Bindloss  Michael Brewer
Mary Morley  Bill Bindloss  Rowena Austin
Loretta Gallagher  Nancy Badner  Ruth Holcomb
Andrew Gallagher  Jim Badner  Don Holcomb
Alan Burslem  Leon Tanzer  Jim Larsen
Eliz. Varley Walker  Vicki Rudinoff  Mary Williamson
John Berk  Charles Rudinoff  Kay Horton
Vera N. Berk  Agnes Harris  Wayne Knotts
Cosette Morley  Karen Thomas  Kathleen Vachris
William Morley  James Thomas  Joe Patterson
Ethel G. Monfort  William Bailey  Pat Patterson
Harold Monfort  Sally Thurston  Linda Jobson
Houston Roberts  Bill Theis  Anne Berlin
Conce L. McKinney  Ruth Estes  Jim Semenick
Kathryn Petersen  June Kleban  Carolyn Asher
Mary Andrews  Charles McKeen  Mark Altschuler
Eleanor Tschopp  Albert Marks  Beverly Barnett
Bart Passanante  John Austin  Frank Akutowicz
Molca Budin  Bunnie Brand  Sandra Hurlong
Meg Little  John Landis  Marjorie VanGulick
Frances Trench  Nancy Hijar  Norman VanGulick
Lily Herzog  Andrew Foote  Burley Melton
Frank Herzog  Michael Curtis  Christie Brown
Alton Dahl  James Gulley  Tony Colgan
Marie Maguire  Bernard Kleban  Larry Walker
Bertha Brooks  Mason Morgan  Paul Thompson
Patricia Press  Vicki McCarthy  Debbie Theis

Agenda: Petition was received from 25 residents of Arden stating:
"Agenda: discussion and action possibly overturning the Montessori agreement approved at the April 20, 1981, Special Town Assembly which authorized the construction of 2 additional modular buildings (each 26' by 57') on the Sherwood Green."

Petition and Resolution approved by the April 20, 1981, meeting were read.
Why was the petition submitted? The notice for the April 20 Special Town Assembly was unclear, it did not indicate the serious nature of the proposed addition to the Buzz Ware Village Center, it did not mention that the addition will be a free standing structure. More full and open discussion of the resolution is needed.

Can Arden legally reconsider the resolution? The Advisory Committee met and considered the petition. The Act to Reincorporate the Village of Arden clearly states that 25 residents may request a Special Town Assembly for any stated purpose. Our attorney, Joseph Rosenthal, was consulted and agreed the reconsideration is legal, no contract has been signed with Montessori.

Moved and Seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Motion defeated.

Moved and Seconded: Move to rescind the resolution passed by the April 20, 1981 Special Town Assembly.

Discussion:

Arguments for the motion:

1. A ten year lease is too long a commitment for Arden to make.

2. Arden should not build on common land. We have a primary duty to preserve our open space and to protect the beauty of Arden.

3. We have opposed zoning variances in the past and should continue to do so.

4. Montessori has been a good tenant, their lease has 2 more years still to run. We must not allow WMA to blackmail us by threatening to leave if the resolution is not passed. Other tenants can be found.

5. The modular units are planned without plumbing, this is not appropriate for small children. Similar units, used by Holy Rosary and St. Pauls are not used daily for children.

6. The traffic and parking problems will be increased by heavier use of the facility.

7. Insurance for the building should be a concern. What is Arden's liability?

8. We need creative programming so the building can be used for Arden children.

9. The $15,000 maintenance cost is not real. If the building is not in daily use the cost would be less. The building could be closed until a better use is planned.

10. Though the additions are described as temporary, temporary plans have a way of becoming permanent.

11. We do not want Arden's facility used primarily by outsiders, but preserved for our own and our children's use.
12. We believe Arden residents will be willing to pay the necessary tax increase in order to avoid the blight of a trailer park and the increased traffic problem.

13. No one objects to Montessori as a tenant, but there has never been a serious search made by the Buzz Ware Village Center Committee to find another suitable tenant.

Arguments against the motion:

1. The building maintenance will cost the town $15,000 yearly. Will such a line item on the budget pass a referendum? Realistically, 2/3 of the residents will have to vote yes. What will we do if it does not pass?

2. The increased space will be valuable to Arden as well as Montessori, one room will be left empty of furniture making it easier for us to hold meetings there.

3. WMA is not blackmailing Arden by threatening to leave the building, they have a realistic need for more space.

4. WMA has proved a good tenant. The present arrangement allows town use for evening meetings, daytime use of the stage area, and summer use of the entire building.

5. No one has proposed a better use of the building in the last 8 years.

6. We would all prefer open greens to buildings, but we can accept the proposal because it is not a permanent arrangement. 10 years is not a long commitment.

7. We cannot afford to use the building without a tenant.

8. Rescinding the resolution would seriously damage Arden's credibility. We made a verbal commitment by majority vote following discussion at two town meetings. If we now rescind that, Arden's word is not to be counted on. It would be an unethical move.

9. Montessori is a good school. Arden should support it by funding scholarships so more Arden children could attend.

10. Objection raised by talk of "outsiders" coming into town and using our facility. Most of us were outsiders at one time. The flow of people and ideas in and out of town is healthy.

11. Arden's slogan is "You are welcome hither". Most Arden facilities are currently underutilized by residents.

12. The school and Sherwood Green are more beautiful when used by children. Montessori is not a violation of space but an enhancement.

13. The first Arden school and the current building were built on common land.
Wendell O'Neill, President of Wilmington Montessori Association, offered to describe their plans. Drawings and scale models were available for study. WMA is open to suggestions from the town and is flexible about the placement of the buildings.

Vote: 53 For, 70 Against, 1 Abstaining. Motion defeated. The resolution of the April 20, 1981 Special Town Assembly remains in effect.

Meeting adjourned.

Sarah S. Hamburger, Secretary