

Arden Civic Committee Meeting – 11 November 2004

with Sue Rothrock's corrections in blue

Present: Lou Bean, David Gerbec, Deborah Kenney, Sue Rothrock, Jacqi Tanzer, Ann Schmittinger, Elizabeth Varley and Danny Schweers, Secretary. Also present were Bev Barnett and Elizabeth Varley. Sue Rothrock called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

SEA OATS: Elizabeth Varley recognizes that where sea oats are growing on Sherwood Green is a problem, but the plan was approved by the Town Assembly. Now that Civic is managing the area, please let the Town Assembly know before landscape is altered. Personally, she thinks the sea oats are great, though they are growing faster than other plants for the time being. Eventually the shrubs will dominate but, until then, the sea oats are a good filler. Bev Barnett recognizes that Civic Committee acts as stewards and caretakers but wants Civic Committee to remember all the work that went into planning this landscape. If there are problems with the plan, please bring these problems back to the planners. Some young trees, as big as 2" in diameter (red maple), have been cut down. Sue says that this was not done under Civic Committee supervision. We don't know who did it. Our intent, Jacqi says, is simply to trim back the sea oats, which were impeding growth of other plants. We have no intent to remove them at this time. The only removal would be done around the base of trees and shrubs to promote their growth. This action took place after two years of various complaints. Bev says we wanted more habitat, more biodiversity. She also pointed out that there are more parts to the plan than plantings and would like to see them addressed. About plantings, the plan called for a meadow, not a lawn or a forest. This was a September, 2000 vote of the Town Assembly. She suggest that there is a native aster, perkedome, which could take the place of the sea oats. Elizabeth suggests blue stem as an alternative. Since this is a U.S. Fish and Wildlife demonstration project, those involved in the planning should be kept up to date of changes.

Discussion followed the departure of Bev and Elizabeth. Jacqi noted that sea oats were not removed, only cut back. She vouchsafed for Damon's judgement, that he would not cut down a young tree without first asking. Sue noted that three pin oaks were originally planted and then taken out because they suffered gall. Deborah wondered when other parts of the plan would be implemented. Sue noted that picnic tables are planned after trees grow; another bed is planned after work on BWVC is further along. Putting in a bed is not as much of a problem as maintaining it. Several requests for volunteers have been put in the *Arden Page* without response. Sue says plan called for \$3,000 a year in maintenance, money we do not have.

FENCING: Bev e-mailed possible grant sources to Ann. Sue noted that some grants require Village commitments such as volunteer time. For example, one grant we ignored had onerous requirements in return for their help planting trees.

FOREST SIGNS: Sue showed a metal sign that says "PROTECT AND PRESERVE OUR FORESTS" and then list rules such as "carry in/carry out". We got a dozen of these and another dozen for the commons. Extra signs are kept at the Spring House. A wooden sign, required by the State of Delaware in return for their grant, is being worked on with Steven Threefoot. "Village Sign Crafters" will do work for \$340 + \$35 shipping. This is a great price for a 20x50-inch sign, to be erected at entrance to Sherwood Forest off of Marsh Road. Lou offers to erect sign; David and Deborah offer to help.

YEWS ON VILLAGE GREEN: Yews will be cut down in winter.

CRAFT SHOP MUSEUM: No reply from Wayne Smith's office for the Bond Bill for street improvements. The work would raise the curbstones around the Craft Shop and then resurface the road to direct water away from that corner which becomes thick with ice in the winter and a deep puddle in the rain.

HOES PROPERTY: Deborah reports no reply from Downing after repeated calls. Also want other work done before winter sets in. They cannot do hot mix work below 40 degrees.

LEAF REMOVAL: Committee looks over new flyer that Sue produced and makes editing suggestions. Sue has heard that Village in past has billed people whose leaves it cleaned up. Peg Aumack at one time wanted Civic Committee members to pull the grass out between curb stones.

NEW ITEMS

TREES NEAR BROADBENT PROPERTY: The Broadbents want an urban forester to look at some possibly dangerous trees and then make an appropriate proposal to the Civic Committee. Two beech trees across culvert may need to be cabled or topped or deadwooded. There may have been a precedent for taking down threatening trees near Buckingham Greene in 1990s, when a tree deemed dangerous was taken down. Although an urban forester had previously said these beeches were fine, Deborah suggests another visit.

INDIAN CIRCLE TREE: Sue notes that concrete patch has been torn out again. Patching it again doesn't seem to be an option. Sue suggests taking it down, that we propose this at the next meeting of the Town Assembly.

BWVC TRASH CORRAL. Jacqi says Eliot Levin will build trash can corral for front of BWVC. This wooden corral will hold the handicapped parking sign and a commons usage sign.

NEXT MEETING: January 5, 2005.

Meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m. with condolences to Jacqi Tanzer on her husband's loss in his run for Delaware Legislature and praise for his willingness to offer voters a choice.

Respectfully submitted,
Danny N. Schweers, Secretary