

# Arden Civic Committee Meeting – 6 April 2005

Present: Lou Bean, Steve Blades, David Gerbec, Deborah Kenney, Sue Rothrock, Ann Schmittinger, and Danny Schweers, Secretary. Guests: Lizzie Broadbent and Steven Threefoot.

Sue Rothrock called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. Deborah and Ann nominated Sue for chair. Lou moved that committee accept her candidacy unanimously, which it did.

**TREES THREATENING BROADBENTS.** Lizzie Broadbent told how, 18 months ago, a large beech tree fell on their house, making it uninhabitable. She and Walter were both at home at the time and could easily have been injured or killed. They moved out for ten months. Two months after they moved back, another tree fell, destroying a fuel tank. Lizzie asked the committee to please re-examine the two trees across the ravine where the bank is eroding. Lizzie says she would like to see these two trees taken down before they fall and is willing to replace them with ten other, smaller trees. "Please do something to make my husband and I safe," she said. "Two people's safety is more important than two trees."

Sue said the committee can't go against established policy of Town Assembly. Sue reads motion approved at recent Town Assembly:

**Civic Committee and Forest Subcommittee should look into ways to deal with the trees adjacent to the Broadbent's property to keep them from falling into the Broadbent's home, either by stabilizing them or cutting them down, a recommendation to be made at the June Town Meeting.**

Lizzie: We have numerous letters from arborists recommending that the trees come down.

Discussion ensues as to Civic Committee's responsibility to bring a recommendation to the Town Assembly, whether an unwanted precedent will be set, whether safety can ever be guaranteed, the wisdom of living in the woods, the possibility of topping the trees, what is distinctive about these two trees whose roots are being eroded -- are they different from other trees in the forest? Who will pay for this? Sue has one bid for \$1,500 to take down the two trees. Two poplars next to them may have to come down as well, since poplars are weaker trees. Since urban foresters have already given their opinion, perhaps we could hire Ardentown's arborist, Bartlett, to suggest solutions. Perhaps the erosion around the trees could be stopped.

Committee agreed to look at trees in person as a first step toward making a recommendation. Some committee members want to go down when it is raining, to see flow of water in ravine and possible erosion. Saturday, April 16, 1:00 p.m. is date set for entire committee to look at trees.

**FOREST SUB-COMMITTEE:** At the last meeting of the Town Assembly, a resolution was passed to create a Forest Sub-Committee of the Civic Committee with three members to maintain and preserve the woodlands and forests of Arden until such time that the Town Assembly creates a standing committee to perform such duties. Steven Threefoot noted that five people are interested in forming the Forest Subcommittee: Lou Bean, Mary Marconi, Jeffrey Politis, Shelley Robyn, and Sally Sharp. Steven wants to invite them along to see the trees on Saturday, April 16, at 1:00 p.m. Sue encourages people to e-mail her at [ardencivic@theardens.com](mailto:ardencivic@theardens.com) rather than call her.

Sue read the following initial outline of Forest Subcommittee's duties and responsibilities.

1. Implement Arden's Forest Stewardship Policy to protect the forests as natural areas.
2. Maintain a notebook of regular duties and a calendar including tasks needed to fulfill the Forest Stewardship Policy.
3. Stay current on best practices in urban forestry and identify resources for professional guidance and funding.
4. Determine tree felling, removal or pruning required in the forest.
5. Identify and coordinate the removal of plant species detrimental to the health of the forest.
6. Coordinate stream watch on Perkin's Run and Naaman's Creek.
7. Survey and mark forest boundaries and determine where fencing or planting is needed to prevent encroachment from neighboring communities and leaseholders.
8. Notify neighbors and leaseholders of existing encroachment conditions and pursue remediation.
9. Improve and stabilize paths.
10. Strive to minimize creek bank erosion.
11. Compare biodiversity progress with documented forest surveys.

Eventually, the hope is that this sub-committee will become an independent standing committee with elected members.

**SPECIAL TRASH PICK-UP POSTCARD.** Committee looked at proof of a postcard created by Danny about to be mailed to all Arden residents.

**YEWS.** Sue remarked what an amazing turn-around at Town Meeting, that the Town Assembly voted to cut them down. Telford took them down that week. Sue is working with Elizabeth Varley to choose plants to put in their place.

**MEADOW LANE SEWER DETERIORATION.** No news about repair on manholes in front of Heidi Hoegger's house.

DOROTHY HOUES' DRAINAGE. Sue met with DelDOT to see what can be done to prevent Marsh Road water dumping onto the Houes' leasehold. The house was once the dance hall of Arden. There is also a seasonal spring that surfaces in the middle of the leasehold when it rains, but that problem was taken care of recently.

TRASH CAN CORRAL: to go in front of handicapped parking. Eliot Levin was working on it. David Gerbec will take over supervision of this project now that Jacqi Tanzer is no longer on Committee.

MOWING: Committee discussed keeping Osborne as mower since his price continues the same. Agreed.

RAIN GARDEN at corner of Arden Green near access to Renzetti's: Is not large enough to hold runoff. Sue suggests enlarging it; encourages others to look at it.

DOGGIE GROUP AND FRISBEE GROUP: Both groups wants to add soil to Green; they will pay for it.

ROAD BEHIND FIELD THEATRE: Mary and Lou have added gravel. Mary will spread gravel if town will buy it. This is a town road. Agreed.

SUBURBAN STREET AID: We will ask again, even though we did not get it last year.

STORMWATER RUNOFF REPORT: Sue sent it out this month.

ROADS WALK: Committee makes a yearly check for potholes, cracks, decay, bad sight lines, poor drainage, foliage overhanging, etc. Each member is assigned their own territory to inspect, this year including footpaths. Sue passed out maps, noting that money is available for path maintenance.

BLUE BARRELS: David Gerbec, what is fate of the DelDOT blue sand barrels? Sue: They will go away.

TREES: Sue reported that various trees have been trimmed or removed because they are dead or diseased. Question of tree on St. Martin's and Miller's Road with huge limb over road, rising from tree's base, rising until it almost touches transformer. Healthy limb, on Isaacs leasehold. What to do? Conectiv's policy is not to get involved. Deb suggests taking down the limb, since it is over Town property. Problem is that we do not take down healthy limbs.

Recommendation is to trim it back after contacting the Isaacs. David: what happens to cut wood? Sue: it is left for people to take. What is not taken, we remove. Exception is poplar and pine, which no one wants, so we remove it immediately. Poplar on St. Martin's cost \$1400 to cut down and remove. (People who need stumps ground should contact Deb Kenney, who is a terror with a chainsaw.)

ACCOUNTING: Danny requests that Civic Committee do a better job describing contracts, so people know what they are getting for their money.

NEXT MEETING: Sue notes that the committee does not meet in August or December. Next meeting is Wednesday, May 4, 7:30 p.m. Sue notes that committee members can resign, and will be resigned if they miss three meetings.

MEETING WAS ADJOURNED at 9:18 p.m.

Faithfully submitted,  
Danny Schweers, Secretary