

February Minutes of Community Planning Committee
Meeting 2/17/21

Members present: Jennifer Borders, Ron Meick, Grace Ressler, Mark Wood.

Guests present: Debbie Ricard

Meeting called to order at 7:04pm

The Minutes from January 2021 meeting were presented and approved.

Discussion of the draft revision of Ordinance 15 -prepared by John Scheflen:
Jennifer received input from Jeff Politis and made notes on the document and each subject of the Ordinance was reviewed and discussed by the committee in light of current concerns and past determinations or interpretations. Draft Revision will be attached with Minutes on Town Website. A summary written by John Scheflen follows:

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS TO ORDINANCE 15

Background

- Ordinance 15 adopted January 2012
- Purpose is to encourage occupancy and rehabilitation of dwellings and to protect public health safety and welfare
- Requires registration of dwellings and payment of escalating annual registration fees on dwellings in the Village of Arden vacant for one year or more
- Modeled on vacant dwelling ordinance of the City of Wilmington

Reasons for revisions

- Initially, to clarify portions of Ordinance 15 based on experience in administering it
- Review led to a decision to do a comprehensive rewrite of Ordinance 15
- But no change to the basic scope of the ordinance. Still provides for registration and payment of registration fees for dwellings vacant for one year or more

Changes being considered

- Clarify the definitions of “occupied” and “vacant” to avoid ambiguity
- Change the treatment of accessory dwelling units (“ADUs”) for leaseholds with multiple ADUs
- Require registration of a dwelling when vacant for 120 days rather than one year to assist the Village to monitor vacant dwellings and alert the owner to the possible assessment of registration fees if the vacancy continues for a year or more (no change to the escalating fee amounts)
- Revise the process for determining whether a dwelling is vacant and provide clearer and additional examples of relevant evidence.
- Change the Village committee responsible for administering the ordinance from Community Planning to Registration (Registration gathers the data on vacancy)

- Provide more liberality for granting waivers of registration fees in appropriate circumstances, e.g., renovations, sales) and clarify the process for granting waivers
- Clarify the process for appeal of a determination that a dwelling is vacant and substitute the Advisory Committee for the Village Assembly to hear and decide the appeal

Debbie Ricard noted that the Meet the Candidates is slated for Saturday, March 13, 1:00 PM. Debbie presented the plans for the event included snacks to be picked up outside the Buzz on the day before. Snacks will have a drawing ticket for a door prize and the Meet the Candidates Zoom link. Debbie presented a flyer and an article for the March Page.

Policy Guidance Statement discussion was postponed.

Next meeting: Wednesday, March 17, 2021, 7 PM
Join Zoom Meeting-Meeting ID: 882 5928 4139

Password: 979154

Dial in – 1 312 626 6799

Upon motion and second - The meeting ended at 8:20PM.

Respectfully submitted:
Grace Ressler, Secretary