

## **Arden Civic Committee Agenda**

**Wednesday, November 24, 2021**

**7:30 p.m.**

**via Zoom**

**Attendance:** Steve Benigni, Rick Ferrell, Carol Larson, Ed Rohrbach

Absent: Mark Wood

Guest: Ben Gruswitz

### **Call to Order**

### **Approval of October 27, 2021 Minutes**

### **Proposal to Participate in Ardens Transportation Plan (Ben Gruswitz)**

Ben Gruswitz lives in Ardencroft and is a member of the ACRA board. The issue of children's safety while commuting to/from their summer program became a discussion point. They concurred, in general, all ages should be able to navigate the community and the woods easily and safely without having to always drive. Over time, counter to the historical town plan, I- 95 was built along with adjacent developments and schools that the original community planners did not anticipate, which transformed Harvey Rd into a corridor. Since Ben works as a transportation planner for the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, he is interested in creating a plan that looks at the whole system of the three Ardens and the community interconnectivity on how we get from place to place.

He is hoping to obtain representation from committees of the three Ardens, including Civic Committee, and meet in December so they can make a plan to accentuate what we have and build on it to make it safer for the future by identifying and prioritizing different projects as funding becomes available down the road through ARPA or the new Infrastructure Bill; or unknowns that

might crop up in the future. He would like to submit something to Wilmington Area Planning Council agency (WILMAPCO) in hopes that they will partner and facilitate the process so that he has something to present to the January Town Assembly.

Civic Committee believes the planning and the ground work belong to the Community Planning Committee; whereas they see their role as helping to implement the plan because as a committee their main charge is to repair and maintain the paths and interior roadways. Therefore, they believe they should be represented and they recommend that the Safety Committee be involved as well.

Timeline: Public meetings will be scheduled for early December & January. Draft scope to WilMAPCO and develop budget. Elicit the help of Senator Kyle Evans Gay and Representative Larry Lambert for funding. Approval from Town Assembly to go forward to submit scope of plan to WILMAPCO. The goal is to be prepared and have something ready that has been vetted by the community as something that they want that will improve the quality of community life. Rather than piecemeal efforts by funding one project at a time, he suggests to look at the whole and see how it all works together (from I-95 to Marsh Rd along Harvey, and Marini's Produce on Veale Rd to Harvey Rd). The bulk of the plan will be the corridor along Harvey Rd; but the plan can also look at ways people get to the woods, or intersections within the community, like Petit Green, where there have been concerns expressed about bikers traveling fast through the community. In a way, this plan is reclaiming the original town plan in that we are a community that exists to convene.

**Motion:** Rick Ferrell moved that a member of the Civic Committee have a formal representation on the newly formed transportation work group in exploring transportation options and make recommendations to the Town Assembly and upon

approval, help facilitate partnering with WILMPACO. **Motion Approved Unanimously.**

## **Ardens Area Transportation Plan**

### **WORKING GROUP**

Forming a working group will help to kickstart a community effort towards creating a transportation plan for the villages of Arden, Ardentown, and Ardencroft to reduce barriers to safe movement by all modes: foot, bike, wheelchair or other mobility assistance vehicles, transit, and automobiles.

The group will start with 2-4 representatives per village to chart a course forward. It will provide leadership and direction and ensure public participation.

### **THE PLAN**

#### **Statement of Purpose and Process Elements**

1. Set a vision for transportation safety and accessibility within the Ardens and to the surrounding community
2. Foster public participation and inform plan with community feedback
3. Inventory existing conditions and assets upon which to build
4. Highlight best practices—in Delaware and beyond—for traffic calming and infrastructure solutions for all travelers
5. Identify strategies and physical improvements for plan implementation
6. Prioritize projects to assist villages in implementation of improvements that collectively make the greatest impact on quality of life
7. Determine potential partners, resources, and revenue sources to expedite incremental success
8. Enable the Ardens to become a proving ground for infrastructure innovation in the state
9. Support plan with historical context and community ideals that bolster its purpose
10. Explore options for improvements conducive to community character

#### **Scope**

The plan will have special focus on the Harvey and Veale corridors: traffic calming and safe accessibility for non-motorists. Transportation options for pedestrians, cyclists, physically impaired persons, and transit riders will be explored. Accommodating travel needs for community events, fostering health and recreation, and reducing carbon footprints will be included. Efforts to integrate with other community plans and initiatives will be made, such as improvements in keeping with Arden's Stormwater Plan and Ardentown's Paths Plan. A holistic approach integrating a variety of community needs can lead to better solutions and more funding opportunities.

#### **Potential Partners and Opportunities**

While the plan will need volunteers and champions from the community, agencies such as Wilmapco and DelDOT can aid in plan development and advise on what's possible. Wilmapco creates

transportation studies and plans in collaboration with communities and may be adding projects to their FY2023 (July 2022-June2023) work program and, if so, will vote on new projects in January of 2022. If interested, the community working group should sketch out a project scope. Wilmapco aided Ardentown in their Paths Plan development a few years back and now keeps a line item in their work program for coordination with the town and relevant agencies on plan implementation.

Wilmapco's Walkable Community Workshops (<http://www.wilmapco.org/walkable/>) "are interactive events that bring together residents, elected officials, advocates, public agency staff, public health practitioners, educators, planners and engineers to focus attention on making your community safer and easier to walk in." These could offer some initial training and advice on options for improvements we may wish to pursue.

Two potential pots of funding for projects, in addition to standard sources are the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds each village will be receiving, as well as an injection of funding for infrastructure, if the US Congress passes the current infrastructure bill (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act).

Additionally, the fact that we are municipalities may open up more opportunities for us to act independently or access different funding than other areas of the county.

Finally, our state legislators and other elected officials will be key in securing funding and support for the plan and implementing it. So far State Rep. Larry Lambert and State Senator Kyle Evans Gay have been very receptive and responsive to issues of safety on the Harvey and Veale corridors and are very interested in seeking solutions.

## CONTACT

If you're interested in getting involved, contact:

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## Categories

- Administrative
  - Budget Update

The year-to-date budget (Gross Revenue less projected expenses) is projected to have a net \$25,000 funds available for projects. Even though the budget amount includes \$7,300 for snow removal cost for this upcoming winter, the truth is, no one can project the winter weather conditions, nevertheless the cost associated with it. A heavy snowy winter can potentially use up most of the \$25,000 if not all. That said,

Steve wants his group to understand that June 30 Fiscal Year End will come around quickly, and wants Rick to be ready to prioritize road work and be ready to spend the funds for much needed road repairs.

Some minor adjustments to the projected net funds of \$25,000 as follows:

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- Street signs: A few more need to be installed. A few hundred dollars.
- Dog waste containers: The original projection was \$6,000. Presume it is the same but have not received any invoices as of yet.
- If club path bamboo is repaired or barriers installed, then the cost needs to be included in this year's expenditures.
- Tree service to-date very light. Carol has a bill in the amount of \$1,000 that needs to be added.
- The fence at the Memorial Gardens has not been removed yet. Carol will talk to Dave Gerbec.
- Village Green removal of branches on the Elm tree and the White Pine tree has nothing in this year's budget. Ash tree treatment cost \$1,000.

- Landscape aeration was the biggest part of what has been spent, which is \$2,500.
  - Ron quoted \$500 to clear out the Field Theater area.
  - IT services will add a little more expense for an hour to go over Civic permit calendar training.
- Roads / Paths
  - Orleans & Harvey DelDot Update
 

There were plans drawn up to upgrade the walks at Orleans and Harvey Rd. Del Dot might be able to update the crosswalk at Harvey Road at Orleans with some kind of a pad for people coming off of the bus and ADA compliant. DelDot is planning on a smaller version of what was talked about in previous meeting. In conjunction with that, there were plans drawn up to extend the sidewalk that goes from the Club Path to the Milky Way Path. (Note: The DelDOT representatives did not include this extension in their revised plan because the Harvey Road crossing at Milky Way Path did not fit their ADA planning/funding criteria.)
- Trash Tech
  - Leaf Collection Day
 

In negotiations with Trash Tech, they said they would give the communities 3 leaf collection days in October, November and December. In Arden the leaf collections day is scheduled for December 4<sup>th</sup>. But they are not doing anything different from our regular yard waste collections. They are not having the leaves raked out into the street like some communities and then vacuumed up into their truck. Steve is not

seeing the added benefit but it is planned for Saturday, Dec 4<sup>th</sup>. He is not sure if the community is aware of leaf day. Steve will ask Jeffrey to send out an email blast and put something in Ardenistas and next door.

- Service Issues  
Steve has not received any complaints since the last time the group met.
- Projects / Grants
  - Storm Water Management Plan
  - RASCL Summit (12/7 – 12/8)  
Steve is registered to attend the Delaware 2021 Resilient and Sustainable Communities League Annual Summit. Each year, RASCL hosts an annual Summit for nonprofits, local governments, state agencies, private consultants and community groups. This year the theme is “Go for the Green: Funding and Designing Resilient Infrastructure”: and discussions will focus on funding programs available to communities, how collaboration and networks build momentum, green infrastructure projects that are improving local community resilience and sustainability.
  - Bamboo Encroachment - Carol thinks this might be a candidate for grant money.
- Permits / Reservations
  - Steve, Liz and Rob (IT person) are supposed to get together for training on accessing and updating on line Civic permit calendar. Liz suggests to schedule meeting following Cecilia’s meeting on Dec 9 at 12 noon. She will send email to Steven and Rob to see if this date and time works for Rob since it works for Steve and Liz.
- Maintenance Projects

- Trash Can Enclosures

Pet waste cans.

That project is ready to go, according to Steve. Steve and Harold identified the spot where the new waste enclosure should be relocated from Woodland to Inn Lane due to the slanted ground. They need to obtain 32-gal trash containers that fit into the enclosure. Steve will contact Trash Tech to see if they will donate free containers; if not, then maybe at a reduced rate. If Trash Tech will not offer a reduced rate, then they might have to source them from some other vendor.

- Field Theater

Field Theater was evaluated by Ed Rohbach and he sees no major repair projects. He recommends a coat of paint in the spring on the benches, columns and electrical kiosk box. A section of fence (where the posts were rotted: it's the wing area called the tormentor on the right-hand side as you are looking into the theater) needs to be replaced or the posts have to be replaced. Next year's budget.

- Tree Work

- Holding off on the Walnut tree removal at Field Theater (\$500) unless decide to only cut two branches (\$150).
- Tree at Memorial has been cut down by Shawn and Carol believes the Memorial Garden Committee paid for the removal. Carol will confirm.

- Greens

- Aeration



The cost for double aeration was \$1,850 and Steve thought this was a lot of money. The high cost could be because of the machinery's large size and it's a large area being aerated. Carol suggests looking around for a better price because she believes aeration is important. She said Joe Grip in Ardetown has a tractor and he purchased an aeration attachment. Carol suggests that he might be willing to aerate at a better price. Right now, Steve would consider once a year aeration unless there are obvious improvements. In addition to aeration, Carol would like to over seed as well. The group will monitor it and evaluate yearly and decide on how many treatments are needed.

- BWVC Requests:

- Yard Waste curbside

- Betty, Chair of BWVC, said someone is filling up their yard waste trash cans and they would like Civic Committee find someone to take their yard waste cans to curb. Upon investigation, it turns out that it was community gardens filling up the yard waste cans.

- Betty said the Jeremy believes this is not part of his job description. However, when Dave Claney did that job, he took out all the cans. Carol Larson will inform them of the group's consensus that it would not be a prudent decision for Civic to hire someone to take out their yard waste cans. It is not Civics' responsibility, it's Garden community responsibilities. Since the garden community is under Community Planning, they can talk to them.

- Just for the record, when Civic does a big clean up, Civic takes the cans out to the curb themselves.

- Electric BWVC Path

Betty is requesting to install electric wiring along the BWVC main entrance walkway and says a shallow ditch along the path needs to be dug.

Discussion:

If they dig a trench, they need to restore the lawn to its current condition after completing the installation. Civic has the right to inspect the final project. If the lighting they install is fragile, then would that require constant fixing by Civic? Ed recommends to provide a sample of the lighting they want to install.

Civic is amenable to installing lighting, but Civic needs specifications before they approve.

- Betty request fire pits for this Sunday's Winter Market on the Green. Her email details that the ground would be protected with plywood and welder's tarp. Civic requires that as long as fire pits are raised above the ground and it is protected, they have no problem with approving request. The group approved fire pits for this event. Carol will offer her fire pit that has legs.

- Seasonal Contracts

- Snow Removal and Salting

Rick is now favoring the more expensive snow melt after further research. He recommends the snow melt that contains Magnesium Chloride (\$50/bag) because it has pet and environmental advantages that

Calcium Chloride does not offer. The Magnesium Chloride products cost more but you use less, so it is very effective.

Lava melt (\$46/bag) has some corrosion inhibitors that are good for concrete surfaces, which is good for roadways and it is a fast deicer. It's a good product when you just want the ice to go away. This one did not have the Magnesium acetate base but it was a derived calcium chloride product with some additives that inhibit corrosion on roadways. It did not touch into the environmental areas as much as Rick originally thought it would.

Rock Salt (\$40/bag)

The group favors the more environmental product and the price is not that much more. Note: they salt only the spots that are a problem and they have a policy to be selective where they salt.

- Miscellaneous.

## **Other Old Business**

## **New Business**

## **Adjourn**

Respectfully submitted,  
Elizabeth Resko,  
Village Secretary