

Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting
September 6, 2022
7:30 p.m. at the Buzz Ware Village Center and Zoom

Attendance: Sachin Puranik, Jeffrey Politis, Skip Bailey, Elizabeth Varley, Simon Hamermesh, Larry Walker, Carol Larson, Bev Clendening, Steve Benigni, Betty O'Regan, Deborah Ricard, Jennifer Borders, Helen Ohlson

Advisory Chair, Sachin Puranik, convened meeting at 7:36 p.m. and the June 2022 Advisory Minutes approved as presented

The Sept 26 and Oct 3 Town Assembly agenda for postcard mailing was approved as follows:

September 26, 2022 Agenda - Motion to suspend regular September 26 agenda items and vote to resume at the next town meeting Oct 3.

October 3 Agenda

Visitors- WILMAPCO Input about various projects plus Regional Transportation Plan

Advisory Committee Report

- o Motion to sign Comcast agreement
- o Nominations for Board of Assessors submit nominations to Advisory@arden.delaware.gov.

Budget – Motion to Approve 2023- 2024 Budget referendum

Civic - Motion town support resolution for ORPT grant.

Septembers 26, Agenda.

Jeff will prepare a motion to suspend the September 26 Town Assembly and resume on October 3rd and it will be seconded by Advisory Chair, Sachin Puranik. No quorum is required. The secretary will reserve Oct 3 Gild Hall and if not available reserve at BWVC.

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October 3rd Agenda (Agenda for next town meeting):

Call to Order

Approval of Minutes

New Residents - Leah Walker, David Eubanks Note: Any other new residents, please send to Secretary@Arden.Delaware.gov

Recognition of the Departed

- Karen Susan Hufnagel Ames. Her family says she left behind so many things she loved: her family, friends, her job at North branch Library in Wilmington, her co-workers, her garden and her home.
- “Pete “Goldberg. He and his wife Everly raised their three children in Arden. The lifestyle and spirit of Arden was consistent with their artistic values and strong belief in community life.
- Jeanine Altoe was 98 who lived in Ardentown. She was a wonderful neighbor and friend.

Visitors

- WILMAPCO Seeking resident input for various projects.
- Eagle Scout GAGA pit presentation
- Jeff has not heard from our state rep, senator nor has he heard from any candidates for November if they are going to stop by. He will limit their time.

Communications from the Town Chair – Jeffrey Politis

- **Motion** to sign Comcast Franchise agreement due by November.
Background: The agreement gives permission for Comcast to have access to rights-of- way to deliver cable to the community. They are obligated to have a franchise agreement with the Municipality. The contract was for 15 years and this one is for 10 years.

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The Village cannot deny them access but they can charge 5% franchise fee which is the most you can charge by law. Any cable you are paying for 5% goes to the Village because of the Comcast Franchise Agreement. Also, the agreement provides free internet access to BWVC, Gild Hall and the Arden Craft shop Museum. The Franchise fee is applied to offset land rent which goes into the operating budget. Currently the Village does not get any franchise fees for anything but cable services which is the law. However, people are accessing internet and phone on the same cable line and the Village does not collect on that part of the service. They are using all the same rights-of-ways to provide that service. There might be some legislation in the near future that will allow a franchise fee across the entire package they deliver. This is why Jeff would like the term of the lease to be reduced to five years so they are not locked into a long-term contract should legislation change within a few years. By the time of the town meeting Jeff will have more information that will be reflected in the motion. Arden Chair cannot present a motion, so the Advisory Chair will present it.

Trustees' Report – Carl Falco

- Elizabeth Varley reports that they will be paying property taxes rebates to seniors.

Treasurer – Skip Bailey

- Will report on parting ways with current Auditor and looking for a replacement.
- Jeff spoke to Fidelity bank about obtaining a written corporate resolution that would address ownership transfers with elections not with the people. What this means is, if the two officers were both in an accident and neither survived, the Village money in the Fidelity bank account will be in limbo because it is tied to the person (Jeff & Skip) rather than to their positions (Arden Chair & Treasurer).

Advisory Committee Report – Sachin Puranik

- Nominations for Board of Assessors submit nominations to Advisory@arden.delaware.gov. List of nominees -Deborah Richard “Got it”. She has started contacting people to volunteer and her list to date: Vicky Scott, Bob Erenburg, Simon Hamermesh and herself. Contact her or Sachin if you are interested in volunteering.

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Board of Assessors – Deborah Ricard

- Jeff will make a statement that no alternative assessment has been provided and therefore, the assessment made in June will stand.

Committee Reports

Archives – Lisa Mullinax

Audit- Cookie Ohlson

Budget – Deborah Ricard Budget

- There will be a Motion to Approve 2023-2024 Budget for referendum which includes \$219,000 AARPA funds with footnote detailing limitations.

BWVC Co Chair Betty O'Regan

Civic- Steve Benigni

- Civic donated old street sign to BWVC and they raised \$1,000 selling the old street signs.
- Applied for a DNREC Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Trails Program (ORPT) grant for Arden Club House path to remove bamboo (half paid by neighbor and matching grant). The grant will also be to repave path and vegetation alongside to help with storm water reduction. One of the requirements is a signed resolution from the town that they support this project but the problem is that the resolution is due along with grant application by October 2, one day prior to town assembly. Total cost of project is \$13, 134 and the grant amount is one half of that \$6,567. Jeff warns to be very cautious about accepting this grant money by making sure the committee understands the requirements. He points out once you accept the money you are responsible for anything that is not covered under grant and might not be budgeted for and you probably cannot go back and ask for more. In the meantime, Civic can provide DNREC a copy of the June town assembly minutes detailing the town's support for this project in the meantime and letting them know a motion will be presented at

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the October town meeting for a resolution of support and will be forwarded to them ASAP.

Community Planning – Jennifer Borders

- If a committee has been awarded an ARPA grant from the town, then Community Planning is requesting that each committee report on the status of their grant at each town meeting, starting with October 3rd town meeting. The report should include: identify contractors, financial updates (funds spent to date) and updated timeline relative to approved schedule. Is there a shift or change in your time line? Jennifer will send out a follow up email to all committees on this matter.
- WILMAPCO is preparing a regional report and they would like all three Ardens to fill out survey by going to WILMAPCO.org/Arden.
- The committee would like to reinstate the Advisory Committee Annual Retreat and requests the first retreat agenda item be to propose discussion about what does Arden look like in 20 years? Jeff, Sachin & Jennifer will try to put something together and select a date. Since Community Planning members have been planning the retreat, all members will attend along with chairs of each committee, and officers.
- Jeff points out another annual event that fell to the way side was after they held elections for Officers & Committee member, they would hold a luncheon or cocktails to thank all the volunteers.

Forest- Co Chair Carol Larson & Bev Clendening

Playground – Mark Wood

- GaGa Pit
Civic and Playground Committees have already approved the GaGa Pit. The Advisory Committee would like for Eagle Scout to make an informational presentation explaining to the Village what she is trying to accomplish, why she is doing it, how it can benefit the community, and provide specifications, specifically: location, permanent or temporary installation, etc. It would be two town meeting process: Informational presentation in October and in January Concept vote.
- Disposal of old jungle gym is the decision of the committee.

Registration- Cecilia Vore

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- Elizabeth Varley
Budget referendum - Since the Town Assembly has been pushed back a week,

the registration committee is “really” tight on time line. It is written in the Charter that that everybody has to have the ballots in hand for 30 days and they have to finish within 45 days of the town meeting. Starts ticking Oct 3, they are already late. Elizabeth stressed that the Registration Committee has to have the Budget referendum completed no later than 8 am Tuesday morning. Deborah Ricard, Chari of Budget, assured her that they will meet that deadline.

- Safety- Simon Hamermesh
The question is do we want to allow DelDot to work within our jurisdiction? The curve that wraps around Orleans Rd from Harvey Rd. has several chevron signs that DelDot wants to relocate to across the street and space them differently. They asked Safety Committee for permission to make these improvements and Safety gave their approval. Background DelDot controls the road and anything off the road is Village of Arden rights-of-way. Over the years it has been a back-and-forth about the issue of jurisdiction. This time they recognized that they need some kind of approval and by them reaching out they are recognizing that it is Arden’s space. They will do the work and they will pay for it. Jeff recommends to write a letter of approval for this project only by detailing the specific work that both parties agreed to.

Governance Task Force Report – Ray Seigfried

Old Business

- Schroeder Trust update on creating steward and create a process to spend.

New Business

- Refreshments will be provided by the Audit Committee

Good and Welfare

Adjourn

Old Advisory Committee business

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New Advisory Committee business

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- Jeff -Real estate transfer tax is usually 4% split equally between seller and buyer. Incorporated communities like the three Arden's split: 2% state, 1% county and municipality 1%. Some time in the past the three Arden voted on not taking the 1% transfer tax. That 1% forgone revenue can be significant considering the increase in housing market over the years. For example, in the last year the combined value of homes that sold in the Ardens amounted to six million dollars and 1% of that amount would generate sixty thousand dollars among the three Ardens and about \$30,000 would go to Arden. It is easy to reinstate. Jeff recommends add this discussion to the Advisory Annual Retreat agenda. To put it into context to what does Arden look like in the future? Arden been stable in that the discretionary spending has not changed much in the last twenty years but the outside pressures has caused our taxes to go up over the years more than internal pressures and that will continue. One thing to consider when thinking about what Arden look like in the future would be to have an affordable place to live and any potentials income is something to consider.

Comments and Questions

Adjourn 9:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Resko

Village Secretary