

Newton Council on Aging Advisory Board Meeting
January 28, 2014
7:30 p.m.
Newton Senior Center
345 Walnut Street, Newtonville MA 02460

Present (COA and AB Members): Nancy Brown(COA), Holly Gunner (COA), Jo Edith Heffron (AB) , Adele Hoffman(AB), Marian Knapp (COA), Ellen Krasney (AB), Susan Paley (COA), Ernest Picard (AB), Joyce Picard(AB), Carol Rose(COA), Eric Rosenbaum (AB), Carol Ann Shea (COA), Tom Shoemaker (AB), Diane Sostek (COA).

Staff: Jayne Colino

Guests: Naomi Krasner, Chryse Gibson, Donna Murphy

Speaker: Amy Sutherland, Executive Director, Newton Housing Authority

Excused: Audrey Cooper (COA), Nancy Scammon (AB), Howard Haywood (COA)

1. Welcome/Call to Order/Approval of Minutes/Introductions
M. Knapp, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:30. Everyone introduced themselves. Minutes from the November 26, 2013 meeting were approved.
2. Chair's/Director's Report:
 - a. Health and Human Services has re-instated Health Maintenance/Public Health clinics which will be staffed by a nurse educator. Sessions will be available each week at either the Senior Center & the Newton Free Library.
 - b. Health and Human Services and the Department of Senior Services have begun discussions on potential collaborative programming for senior citizens and youth utilizing the senior center.
 - c. The COA Executive committee approved a \$1000.00 contribution to the Newton Housing Authority for programs and services.
 - d. J. Picard presented a draft Position Statement on housing. She stressed the importance of using data to impart general and basic concepts. She will present the next draft at the March meeting. The draft could be used as a template for other Position Papers on Transportation, Community Engagement, and other COA/AB Strategic Goals.
 - e. The Mayor held a 1 ½ day retreat with Newton City Department heads, and Barry Bluestone and Stephanie Pollack from Boston University's Dukakis Center, to begin envisioning and planning for to be Newton as a Livable and Sustainable model city for the 21st century. Jayne was invited to be one of the opening speakers to present an overview of the changing demographics of aging in Newton. It was exciting to hear all departments talking about the impact these changes are have and will have in the future.
3. Presentation: Amy Sutherland, Interim Director, Newton Housing Authority
Ms. Sutherland described an increase in people who are aging in Newton who want to connect to services and have housing needs. People are looking for safety and the ability to remain where

they currently live. If those things aren't possible they are looking for a good place to move.

The NHA exists to help people with housing needs. NHA is funded by the state and the federal government. It was once run by the city of Newton for a brief period, but has been run by the federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for a long time. The largest part of NHA housing stock consists of 500 single bedroom apartments in various parts of the city, and 441 housing (section 8) vouchers which can be used anywhere in the eastern part of the state, not just Newton. The Department of Mental Health and Developmental Services works with NHA to enable people with various disabilities to be part of the community. There are waiting lists with the largest category being housing for families with children. Rental is 30% of income which needs to be under \$43,500.00 for a single person. There is a difference between low income housing and affordable housing; NHA is low income subsidized housing. NHA has eight housing sites around the city, including Newtonville Ave. (formally Community Living in Newton), and Pelham Street which is for shared living. All sites include a community room with a kitchen.

NHA looks for collaboration opportunities. They distribute left-overs from farmer's markets, provide various human services, have speakers, movies, and run trips and parties. Parogram staff from Newton Community Development Foundation, Molly Sass (Newton Senior Center), and Nancy Scammon (Newton Parks and Recreation) collaborate on programming. They want to increase social services for their residents.

NHA is different from Newton Community Development Foundation which was started by local clergy who wanted to create well-run housing for as reasonable price as possible.

NHA has an operating budget of \$5 million which covers upkeep, management, salaries, maintenance, and includes a capital budget. Thirty units are wheelchair accessible. In Auburndale there are 12 units both condos and stand-alone homes. Some of the housing has been built from acquired schools and churches. There are two 10-unit buildings in Waban.

Challenge for NHA include: People don't move out, there's an increase in elderly who are looking for housing, there is an increase in non-elderly disabled and NHA currently is unable to meet all the needs. There is especially an increased need for mental health services. The national sequestration has been problematic; 80,000 families were cut nationally.

Comments and Questions: How to develop neighborhood groups that support each other?; How can support be facilitated at the neighborhood level?; Seniors are net generators of revenue but pay taxes and use little revenue. Seniors are a good deal for a community.

4. Working Group Reports

Mobility and Transportation

The Senior Charlie Card sign-up will be held at the NSC on Friday, February 7, 2014. We will conduct a survey to determine senior transportation needs. Help is needed to implement the survey. J. Colino reported on Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) transportation equity program where she had the opportunity to talk about NDSS' transportation services as a municipal model and talk about COA's in general and their shared and varied roles.

Housing

J. Picard passed out a draft Position Statement (see notes above). She said that Jeff Engler who is developing the project at Court Street is interested in speaking to the COA/AB to explain a developers' point of view.

Awareness/Engagement

D. Sostek, M. Knapp, and M. Sass have been doing presentations about the NSC and NDSS at housing sites as “community ambassadors.” They have been to Nonantum Village Place, Casselman House, and Weeks House. They are observing that people who manage senior groups don’t necessarily know what services and activities are available, and residents often don’t know what is available at the SC. Residents not from Newton often have no idea what Newton offers in general.

5. Springwell Report

Proposed FY15 state Elder Affair budget is initially reflecting a funding increase, we are early in the process but this is encouraging. Springwell has hired a new director of development. Springwell is currently reassessing their home delivered meal program.

6. Membership-

Judy Fischbach and Shirley Farnham resigned for personal reasons. Dena Salzberg whose term has expired submitted a letter of resignation. We currently have several vacancies on the COA/AB. Reenie Murphy, has been charged with helping boards and commissions realize their goals. She will be responsible for communicating opportunities for the need for potential members and be involved with interviewing candidates.

Chryse Gibson's candidacy is moving forward and there are others in the "pipeline".

7. Legislative Report – none available

8. Old/New Business:

Rob Garrity, Director of Sustainability, will join our March 26, 2014 meeting to talk about his role.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m. by Marian Knapp.

Minutes Submitted by Carol Rose

Next COA Executive Committee meeting: Thursday, February 13, 2014 - 3:45 p.m.

Next COA/AB Meeting: Tuesday, February 25 @ 7:30 p.m.