



AGE-FRIENDLY MONTGOMERY ADVISORY WORKGROUP

"BUILDING A COMMUNITY FOR A LIFETIME"

VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING

WEDNESDAY, OCT 20, 2021, | 3-5PM

Co-Chairs

Robin Riley, Director, Director, Department of Recreation
Dr. Raymond L. Crowel, Director, Director, Department of Health and Human Services

Guest Speaker

Khalid Afzal, Special Projects Manager
Montgomery County Planning Department

David Anspacher, Multimodal Transportation Planning Supervisor
Countywide Planning & Policy Division, Montgomery County Planning Department

MEETING SUMMARY

Recreations Update – Robin Riley

- The Recreation Department hosted an all-staff meeting on November 2nd
- The Recreation Department is preparing for the FY23 budget.
- Much work has been done to support the Long Branch senior and Caulfield Community Center seniors while these two buildings remain as homeless shelters, probably through February or March 2022.
- We continued to provide bus transportation to the Wheaton and Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Centers.
- Activities have been ongoing at Long Branch, with expectation for full a program of senior activities by February 2022.
- There has been a steady increase in demand for senior activities.

Presentation: Thrive Montgomery 2050 – Khalid Afzal & David Anspacher

The presentation provided an overview of the Thrive 2050 vision for future growth in the County. Its goals involve three pillars that affect all areas of planning and are infused into every chapter: economic growth, community equity, and environmental resilience. One major issue to be addressed involves housing growth that meets the needs of the growing population.

*See attached PowerPoint for details**

Health and Human Services (HHS) Update

Dr. Odile Brunetto, Chief, Aging and Disability Services

- The FY 23 budget proposal has been completed and submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).: HHS had not been asked to reduce its current budget for FY23.
- The County Executive will release the FY23 budget proposal on March 15th 2022. Once confidential details have been released, the information will be shared.
- The call volumes to our Adult Protective Services have resumed to pre-COVID numbers.

Commission on Aging – David Engel, Commissioner

- The COA is preparing to present its budget priorities proposal to the the Health and will be public information.
- FY23 budget priorities:
 - The top budget priority is to expand home and community-based services
 - The second budget priority is to increase funding to market and advertise services available for older adults.
 - The third budget priority is an initiation of a program modeled after a Baltimore-based program, Access Hears, an intervention that offers low-cost hearing aids for older adults.
 - The fourth budget priority is to restore cuts to the escorted transportation program administered by Jewish Council for the Aging and expand financial eligibility.
 - Tied with the fourth priority, the fifth budget priority is to expand funding the housing initiative fund to produce and preserve affordable rental housing including older adults housing projects.

Work Group Reports

Civic and Social Involvement – Kathleen Meaney Stobie

- Senior Planet Montgomery continues ours schedule through the end of this year. In addition, they are offering a 10-week, twice-a-week, iPad course in hybrid teachingmode, as well as classes in Mandarin and Spanish.
- Environmental Protection Group (EPG) subject matter expert (SME) came in to speak to the group on how to save energy.

Housing – Lorraine, Driscoll

- The Housing Work Group continues to work with HHS on rent relief and eviction avoidance.
- Statistics have shown that more than 20,000 households in the county have been paying more than half of their annual income for housing.

- The affordable housing effort is focusing on relieving those severely rent burdened, especially the seniors.
- Lorraine currently is working on an annual report on affordable housing.
- The Housing Committee also is using funding from the Affordable Housing Opportunity Fund to assist those who may lose their affordable housing.
- Most in-person adult daycare programming resumed in October for those interested in person services.
- Outdoor activities are important for combatting social isolation.
- Volunteer Center Director Molly Callaway retired at the end of September. This position is currently vacant.

Communications and Outreach – Stuart Rosenthal

- Commission on Aging member Jean Dinwiddie has agreed to co-chair this work group.
- Monthly Age-Friendly ads in the Beacon continue. Upcoming ads will cover the following:
 - November 2021: Fire Safety
 - December 2021: Food Insecurity
 - January 2022: Department of Communication and the Age Friendly program
 - Rest of 2022 pages are open for committee for discussion

Elder Abuse Prevention – Kelly McGann

There were four recent successful prosecutions of financial abuse:

- A successful prosecution and \$15,000 in restitution against a caregiver who stole cash, credit cards, and checks from her elderly client with Parkinson’s Disease.
- Successful prosecution of a carpenter contractor who stole an elderly couple’s jewelry resulting in two pieces of recovered jewelry, a conviction of felony theft for the carpenter, and \$4,000 in restitutions.
- A conviction and restitution against a person who intercepted and altered a check for an elderly person and deposited for himself for a larger amount of money. A guilty plea and restoration of money taken by a housekeeper who stole an elderly’s check and altered it for a higher amount.

Employment – Mara Mayor

- The group is considering holding meetings with a few business leaders to get their views on hiring 50+ workers and to hear about related employment issues.
- The group also is discussing the potential for involving and educating our local politicians about the value of 50+ employment.

Health and Wellness – Sarah Swarr

- H&W’s last meeting was on September 21, and the theme was around fall prevention. Two presenters spoke about fall prevention activities and safety tips.
- The Recreation Department offered many fall prevention activities at senior centers.

- Patrice shared the Governor's proclamation about fall prevention week. Unfortunately, activities for Active Aging Week were canceled due to weather.

Home and Community Based Services – Lylie Fisher

- Meetings have taken place with Maryland Department of Health leadership to look at challenges for older adults, persons with disabilities, and veterans in obtaining in-home care. Except for those who can afford to bring in help from agencies, the care burden often falls on a family caregiver.
- There is a critical shortage of available workforce around the county.
- Home and Community-Based Services has been collaboration with Montgomery County Public Schools, Montgomery College, and employer groups to identify where the gaps in the training employment pipelines are and how to address them.
- November was National Care Giver Month.
- Please contact Lylie if interested in appearing for a 15-minute interview on her video series, Engage @ HOME.

Senior Public Safety – Tracy Rezvani, Jim McClelland, Jim Resnick

- There were several presentations for seniors during October, which was Emergency Preparedness Month.
- Presentations have continued to be virtual rather than In-person. November is Cyber Awareness Month with a focus on raising awareness about consumers fraud against older adults.
- Several successful virtual trainings and education events took place during Fire Prevention Week October 3-9. .
- There were several fires this month, but fortunately, no one was hurt and the arsonists were caught.
- The Fire Department is implementing new data tools to identify locations where older residents and people with disabilities reside.

Transportation and Mobility – Sam Oji and Shawn Brennan

- In November, the Department of Transportation (DOT) rolled out in November a design guide to better assist residents with visual disabilities.
- Currently, Ride On remains free through the end of December. The Council is considering free Ride On for everyone. The County Executive is recommending cutting bus fare by half from \$2 to \$1 and monthly passes by half. The Council will vote on this option on January 28, 2022.
- Mask requirements are still in effect on Ride On buses; the driver has masks available for riders who need them.

- The DOT implemented the largest change on October 10th since the start of the pandemic, modifying 64 of 82 routes with time and schedule changes. Ride On service is almost back to full capacity.
- The rapid transit Flash Service reached its first anniversary on Oct 1st.

AARP- Marcial Pruzan and Betty Ring

- George Washington University is sponsoring another regional event with Age-Friendly programs from D.C., Alexandria, Arlington, Hyattsville, and Montgomery County. The program, a , a social innovation challenge that will bring together experts and students to develop innovative ideas to help the population as it ages. aged population.
- Councilmember Katz will hold a senior forum on November 3rd with a focus on Aging in Place. Marcia Pruzan and Pazit Aviv will present on the Age-Friendly Montgomery Program and the Village concept.

Closing: The meeting was adjourned at 05:02 PM

Upcoming Meetings:

- January 20, 2022, AFMAG Meeting
- March 24, 2022, Work Group Co-Leader Meeting
- April 21, 2022, AFMAG Meeting
- June 23, 2022, Work Group Co-Leader Meeting
- July 21, 2022, AFMAG Meeting
- September 22, 2022 Work Group Co-Leader Meeting
- October 2, 2022, AFMAG Meeting
- December 16, 2022 Work Group Co-Leader Meeting