

**College Park Seniors Committee  
Virtual Meeting  
April 7 2021  
7:00 PM**

**Final Minutes**

**Seniors Committee Members:**

		<u><b>PRESENT</b></u>	<u><b>ABSENT</b></u>
1.	Woei-Nan Bair	X	
2.	Ann Bolduc		X
3.	Pedro Manuel Guevara-Cordova		X
4.	Adele Ellis	X	
5.	Carol Gray	X	
6.	Mary Anne Hakes	X	
7.	Bonnie McClellan	X	
8.	Darlene Nowlin	X	
9.	Arelis Perez	X	
10.	Robert Thurston	X	

**Also present:**

Kiaisha Barber, Director of Youth and Family Services; Bridgette Johnson, Economic Development Manager; John Payne, Neighbors Helping Neighbors College Park; Joi Woods, Contract Secretary

**I. Call to Order**

Mary Anne Hakes called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. Bonnie McClellan noted that Ann Bolduc would not be in attendance.

**II. Guest speaker- Bridgette Johnson, Economic Development Manager**

The committee briefly discussed:

- Providing focus on local businesses, the residential community, attracting new businesses, residents, and visitors
- Development plans for the remainder of the calendar year
- Creating a visitor and tourist plans to stimulate local economic growth
- Efforts to revive the Business Awards Program – *Annual Economic Development Week* in association with the Maryland Economic Development Association (MEDA-MD)
- Initiatives to secure programs that support a solid infrastructure for local business
- Exploration of Capital Funding opportunities
- Business Beat – Quarterly business publication featuring small businesses openings, closings, programs, and support services
- Future partnership with the College Park Arts Exchange

- Mary Anne Hakes briefly noted some of the goals and ideas discussed among the committee to establish College Park as an ideal community for retirement, aging in place and interest in establishing senior discounts among local businesses
- Bonnie McClellan shared statistics from 2011-2019 noting a decline in the senior population of 65 and older
- Bonnie McClellan shared details about Route 1 Communities Cares' efforts to survey restaurants in operation. The survey identifies the current support needs of Route 1 to remain open and maintain operations. Bonnie McClellan will share data collected with Bridgette Johnson and encouraged partnership.
- Arelis Perez noted a need to prioritize the senior community with a focus on aging in place, affordable housing for seniors, and Multi-Cultural and Generational Diversity. Bridgette Johnson noted the intentional inclusion of Senior Residents in developing goals for the Office of Economic Development.
- Robert Thurston provided a brief overview of the AARP Livability initiatives and will provide Bridgette Johnson with information about the initiative and its current status.
- Woei-Nan Bair noted feedback about the lack of affordable housing for senior residents that hinders College Park from becoming an affordable and ideal retirement community for seniors to age in place. Bair also shared ideas about cross-generational housing among Student and Senior Residents to help mitigate some of the affordable housing barriers. Bridgette Johnson noted affordable housing as priority for the Office of Economic Development.
- Bonnie McClellan inquired about the relation between The Office of Community Development and the Office of Economic Development. Bridgette Johnson noted the association of the Office of Economic Development with the Department of planning along with the interrelated interests, goals, and efforts among the two departments.

### **III. Neighbors Helping Neighbors College Park (NHN-CP)**

John Payne provided an update about the NHN board and progress in reestablishing volunteer efforts. Noted points included:

- Board Members meet on the fourth Thursday of each month
- The Board voted to request that funding be allocated for FY 2022 in the amount of \$11,500. Kiaisha Barber noted that the budget had been drafted at the time of submission of the request. \$5000 has been allocated based upon historical trend with consideration of future funding requests from Mayor and Council as needed. Barber will forward the request to the Finance Department for processing.
- John Payne requested training through Village Rides for new volunteers who are able to give rides.
- John Payne noted that he provided Mayor Wojahn with information about NHN to share with residents during the Mayor's Weekly Message.
- Bonnie McClellan will share details announcing the availability of rides through Explorations on Aging list serve. John Payne will forward the information.
- Insurance liability concerns for volunteers and the exploration of waivers

- Arelis Perez distributed 200 brochures to residents in Spellman House, brochures will also be distributed to Attick Towers on 4/8/21

#### **IV. Approval of Agenda- April 7, 2021**

**Bonnie McClellan motioned to approve the agenda. Arelis Perez seconded the motion. All were in favor, none opposed. The motion passed.**

#### **V. Approval of March 3, 2021 Minutes**

**Carol Gray motioned to approve the minutes from February 3, 2021 with correction. Arelis Perez seconded the motion. All were in favor, none opposed. The motion passed.**

#### **VI. COVID-19 update: vaccinations & related information provided to residents**

The committee discussed concerns about the dissemination of information on COVID-19 vaccines from the county.

Noted suggestions & ideas include:

- Directing residents to nearby sites, opportunity to partner with Beltsville Pharmacy to assistance residence in sign up and transportation to receive vaccines
- Youth and Family Services continues to dedicate drivers to expand transportation services to and from vaccination appointments.

#### **VII. Seniors Program office space**

Kiaisha Barber provided an update about efforts to secure necessary permits and have the space outfitted renovations

#### **VIII. Senior Directory**

Carol Gray solicited feedback from committee members about what type of information members would like to see in the directory. Gray will also share the table of contents from the county's existing Senior Directory.

The committee briefly discussed:

- Considerations to establish a City Directory/Guide
- AARP Livability resources
- Including direct contact numbers to live representatives to connect residents without internet access to services and information
- Highlighting discounted services provided to seniors within the city
- Home retrofitting services
  - Robert Thurston suggested establishing easily accessible support for urgent, unforeseen, and time sensitive service needs that are commonly experienced by senior residents.
  - Woei-Nan Bair expressed interest in identifying discounted retrofitted services to contribute to the directory/guide
- Arelis Perez suggested developing a list of categories from *Nextdoor* and partnering with City Civic Associations to identify contractors willing to offer retrofitting services at discounted rates.

## **IX. AARP Livability Committee update**

Robert Thurston provided an update on behalf of the AARP Livability workgroup, noted points included:

- June timeframe for grant funds distribution through Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning
- Contingent face to face kick-off event is tentatively scheduled for 8/15/2021 in lieu of a virtual event. Robert Thurston has shared the update with Gabi Wurtzel, the City Event Planner to garner logistical support for the in- person kick-off event.
- The next meeting is scheduled tentatively for 4/26/21 @ 1:00 pm.
- The current top priorities include:
  - Completing the AARP Livable Communities application
  - Planning and logistics for the in- person kick-off event
  - Identifying core stakeholders
- Arelis Perez provided an update about the *CP Affordable Housing Coalition* a non-profit organization established by Michelle Johnson, College Park Housing Director. Arelis Perez will share the information with committee members to distribute.
- Attick Tower was awarded a grant for \$2,000,000 to fund renovations and facility improvements. Attick Tower as also awarded the Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) Grant for \$230,000 to secure an onsite coordinator.

## **X. Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 5, 2021, 7:00-9:00 p.m.**

The committee briefly discussed inviting city staff to attend a Seniors Committee meeting:

- May 2021 - Eric Olson, CP-CUP will be the guest speaker to discuss *2030 Vision*

## **XI. Adjournment**

**Arelis Perez motioned to adjourn the meeting. Carol Gray seconded the motion. All were in favor, none opposed. The motion passed.**

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 p.m.**