

**AGING IN COMMUNITY COMMITTEE
OF THE
COMMISSION ON AGING**

Date: October 11, 2022
9:30am-11:30 am

“Montgomery County Updates

- New Draft Pedestrian Safety Master Plan - Overview and Feedback
 - Senior Nutrition Program”

In Attendance: Mary Sweeney (co-chair, AIC), Barbara Selter, Marsha Weber, Betsy Carrier, Eddie Rivas, Laurie Probst.

Staff: Pazit Aviv, MC AAA

Guests: Marcia Pruzan, Age-Friendly Montgomery; Stephanie Moore, HOC

Opening Remarks from the Co-Chairs: Mary welcomed everyone and thanked Eli Glazier and Carol Craig for presenting at today’s meeting and doing so at short notice since our Housing topic had to be postponed to the November meeting. Mary reviewed the agenda with the meeting’s featured topics on “Pedestrian Safety and the Senior Nutrition Program Updates”.

Approval of the Minutes: The minutes of the September 13, 2022 meeting were approved.

PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS:

New Draft Pedestrian Safety Master Plan: (The presentation is attached.)

Mary introduced Eli Glazier from the Montgomery County Planning Department. He reviewed the County’s “Pedestrian Master Plan.” Highlights of the presentation included the following information. This is the County’s first Pedestrian Master Plan, and intended to make walking and rolling safer, more comfortable, more convenient and more accessible for pedestrians of all ages and abilities in all parts of the county. The plan is designed to enable all trips within a short distance to be realistic pedestrian trips. It was prepared in response to the expected increase in an older population and the concomitant desire for more walkable spaces that are more accessible to more people. We have seen this approach in certain neighborhoods where streets have been blocked off from car traffic and dedicated to pedestrian walking, dining and such. In order to increase usability, streets would be “Shared Streets” where everything would be placed going in the same direction, including the floating bus stops and the bicycle lanes.

The Department of Planning has developed Pedestrian Audit Toolkits to encourage citizens to help with the process of identifying the areas that need attention. There is a map which codes a Pedestrian Level of Comfort with walking, red indicating low level of comfort, blue indicating a high level of comfort. This coding is derived from survey data for bicycling for the entire country. No data was collected about lighting and the presenter admitted that less is known about pedestrians than is known about drivers. The Pedestrian Master Plan is all about inclusivity,

walking and rolling. The goal is to make all roadways (except limited access) walkable. There are several initiatives planned, including some that involve analysis, some involve the regulatory process, and some are very concrete such as recommendations (such as traffic signal timing, better crosswalks, traffic calming, and use of more visible materials selections). Mr. Galzier encouraged the CoA to advocate for additional funding to improve pedestrian safety and urged the Commissioners to get involved by signing up for the “e-Newsletter at www.Montgomeryplanning.org/walkinghere. COA can help by advocating for increased funding, especially for improving sidewalks.

Senior Nutrition Program Updates:

- Carol reported that COVID had a big impact on participation in the program. Many older adults came up with other ways to get food. She said they need to feel comfortable coming back to in-person settings.
- 2 locations previously providing meals closed (Elizabeth House and Waverly House) and one is in jeopardy of closing (Forestville Towers).
- Kosher meal programs have not bounced back. They only have one site serving one day a week.
- They are working hard on menu improvement and offering more vegetarian options, Mediterranean style meals, more fresh fruits and vegetables and a larger variety of condiments. They are also hoping to increase the quality of the food, which will require more funding.
- They are trying to entice more people to the program by doing things such as giving out free pedometers, having surprise observation days (National Ice Cream Day, Donut Day, etc.) and incorporating entertainment with the meal (school children performing). They would also like to provide occasional “treat” meals provided by area restaurants, particularly those of various ethnic cuisines. There is currently a \$10,000 limit for this.
- They are currently using grant money for the program and are concerned about how they will be able to continue to sustain it.
- The CoA could best help them by getting the word out about the program to increase participation, especially in HOC buildings.
- It was suggested that the CoA have the Senior Nutrition program cater a meal so we can try the food. Possibly the holiday luncheon in Dec. Carol said they would be happy to do so. Barbara will bring this up at the next EC meeting.

UPCOMING MEETING: The next AIC meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 8, 2022 at 9:30 am. The focus of the meeting will be on Affordable Housing in Montgomery County - status and action.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 10:54 am