

COMMISSION ON AGING  
MEETING SUMMARY MINUTES  
February 22, 2018

<b>Members Present</b>	<b>Members Absent</b>
Richard Jourdenais	Amoke Alakoye
Sue Guenther	Neal Brown
Alan Kaplan	Noelle Heyman
Syed Yusuf	Karen Maricheau
Jerry Morenoff	Mary Petrizzo
Monica Schaeffer	Revathi Vikram
Isabelle Schoenfeld	Rashid Makhdoom
Barbara Brubeck	Judith Peres
Hillery Tumba	Jack Sprague
Mort Faller	
Ryan Wilson	<b>Liaisons</b>
Stephanie Edelstein	Austin Heyman, OCP Senior Fellow
Phyllis Rand	Leslie Marks, DHCA Senior Fellow
Nanine Meiklejohn	Stephanie Moore, Housing Opportunities Commission
	Denise Isreal, Department of Transportation
	James Campbell, Commission on Veterans Affairs
	<b>Alumni Members</b>
	Charles Kauffman
	<b>Guests</b>
	Clarence Snuggs, Director Department of Housing and Community Affairs
	Seda Gelevian
	Christopher Burt, Representative for Delegate Pamela Queen
	Andrea Hancock
	Mayra Bayonet, North Potomac Senior Center
	Stacy Sigler, Montgomery County Senior Programs
	Arlee Wallace, African American Health Program
	<b>Staff</b>
	Odile Brunetto, Dept. of Health & Human Services
	Tremayne Jones, Dept. of Health & Human Services

Call to order—Chair, Isabelle Schoenfeld called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

**Welcome and Introductions**—Isabelle welcomed all attendees, staff and guests. Isabelle introduced guest speaker Clarence Snuggs, Director, Department of Housing and Community Affairs. Mr. Snuggs previously served in State government, as Deputy Secretary at the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.

Mr. Snuggs discussed the Montgomery County Capital Improvement Program (CIP). All development, improvement, and maintenance is governed by the *Capital Improvement Program (CIP)*, prepared every two years to cover a six-year cycle. The CIP funds investments in facilities and infrastructure, including new or renovation projects costing over \$25,000 with a useful life greater than 15 years. It also funds smaller planned life cycle asset replacement (PLAR) projects that increase the life of assets.

Other points made during the discussion:

- There is no single solution to the issue of affordable housing. County tries to pull together resources from various places – private, non-profit, public, faith communities.
- Developers are integral to the process. County wants responsible partners who will contribute to the quality of life here. Most development money comes from the private sector; county is the “but for” – but for County contribution, a project would not be affordable.
- County needs more housing for residents at all income levels through preservation and production.
- One area of great need is common ownership communities (condominiums, coops), some of which are in great need of improvement, and not all of which are well managed.
- Mr. Snuggs encouraged the COA to increase its advocacy efforts during hearings on proposed projects.
- In his opinion, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program has been the most productive federal housing program. Montgomery County has not fared well in the competitive bidding process, because of our housing construction costs. County is looking into the set-aside that COA has discussed previously. LIHTC is a tax program, not a HUD program.

NOTE POST-COA MEETING: The most recent CIP was approved by the Montgomery County Council on March 26, 2016. County Council is currently discussing the proposed FY19-FY24 budget. Additional information on County Executive Ike Leggett 's recommended FY19

Capital Budget and six-year FY19-24 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is available at the following links:

- [Press Release](#)
- [Highlights from the County Executive's 12 Years of Building \(pdf\)](#)
- [2019 Recommended Capital Budget](#)

**Approval of minutes** – January meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

**Budget and Finance Advisor Report**–Treasurer Syed Yusuf reported that the COA account balance is \$5,662.00.

**Updates:** Dr. Odile Brunetto, Director, Area Agency on Aging, updated Commissioners and guests on the following:

(A) Governor's Proposed FY19 Budget:

- MDH/OHCQ adding 9 new positions plus a proposed 7-year staffing plan until 2024 to increase staff by 8 or 9 positions every year.
- DHS/Adult Services - 2.4% decrease over FY18.
- MDA Nursing Home Diversion additional \$2.5 million dollars
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(B) FY18 MDOA Budget included an increase in allocation to DHHS.

- Senior Care by \$126,930, from \$1,037,188 to \$1,164,118. Waitlist is 141.
- Group Housing Subsidy Program grant funding almost doubled (currently serving 15) our waitlist is 42.

(C) AAA Staff Activities

- Pazit Aviv, Villages Coordinator, was a guest on NPR.
- Lylie Fisher, Caregiver Coordinator is developing a Caregiver Coalition. The Caregiver Support Program's Caregiver's eNewsletter continues to provide monthly announcements of caregiver supports and resources:  
<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/MDMONTGOMERY/bulletins/1deeb0f>
- Dementia Friendly Business Kick Off was held on February 15<sup>th</sup> in partnership with Bright Focus Foundation and several Chamber of Commerce.
- Noelle, Revathi, and Richard interviewed 23 applicants for the six COA vacancies.

## Committee Reports

**Ageing in Place/Community and Planning (AIP/C&P)**- Dick Jourdenais reported on the AIP/C&P February meeting. Discussion: Planning Department's RKG Rental Housing Study findings and the Housing Initiative Fund (HIF). Guest speakers were Linda McMillian, County Council Senior Legislative Analyst and Tim Goetzinger, Chief, Division of Finance and Administration, DHAC. The DC Housing Initiative Fund (HIF) is funded at \$100 million as a percent of budget. Montgomery County budget is much smaller. Council is concerned about whether or not they could spend \$100 million. The committee asked what could be done to provide rental assistance to a greater number of seniors, Tim and Linda described new HIF projects that are underway—Bonifant project, Montgomery County Housing Partnerships buy downs (purchase and rehab older buildings for rehab/sale), housing for 65+ and homeless persons considered also including Germantown project, Mt. Jezreel Church, Elizabeth Square, 6 new senior deals committed, five currently in feasible review. Tim and Linda also shared information about Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs). MPDU's are guaranteed affordable for 99 years; 15% MPDU's in new/proposed projects in Free and Reduced Needs areas of the county; alternative payments: increase high end condo fees; need to develop a strong alternative payment as opposed to MPDUs. Dick reported that the Committee's two focus areas are Affordable Housing and "Multigenerational cities/intergenerational community building."

**Health Planning, Services & Community Supports (HPSCS)**-Alan reported on the HPSCS February meeting. Discussions: Early Onset Dementia Programs with guest speakers Patty Hagan, JCA (Kensington Club) and Pam Mills, Ingleside, Memory Support. Both guests are serving what the COA supports as Senior Plus programs. The goal is to keep early stage Dementia Programs at the forefront to advocate at the commission. Discussed also was the committee will review and prioritize Nursing Home Quality for "*Winter Focus*". The decision was to focus on Assisted Living and what can be done to provide affordable High Quality Assisted Living.

**Public Policy (PP)**— Ryan reported on the PP February meeting. Guest attendees: Chris Burt (Aide to Delegate Pam Queen) and Mary Ann Buckley (Executive Director of GROWS—Grass Roots Organization for the Well-being of Seniors). Discussion: The committee discussed first reader legislation in the General Assembly form the legislative chart prepared by Stephanie. Legislation that the committee judged to further the Commission's issue priorities—housing and protecting vulnerable seniors—was prioritized. The committee discussed a number of bills and made recommendations on which the Commission should support. Those bills include the following:

- SB 4 to establish a task force to study quality of care in nursing homes;
- SB 386 to set time frames for OHCQ to investigate serious complaints;
- SB 427 to change the residency requirement for seniors to get local property tax credit from 40 years owning the home to 25 years in the county (not necessarily in same home);
- SB 466/HB 556 to allow the register of wills to waive probate fees for low income heir when all that is involved is real property;
- SB 547 to allow state elections by mail (a letter of support was also sent Rockville City proposal for city elections);
- HB 956 to allow for attorneys' fees and treble damages in civil actions by elder abuse victims against perpetrator;
- HB 995 to allow Montgomery County to enact a just cause eviction law; and
- HB 1465 to protect homeowners from having house sold at tax sale if taxes owed are \$750 or less, and to provide other protections including notification of legal help and tax credit programs.

The committee will monitor other legislation that might be of interest. There have been 1800 bills filed in the House and 1200 in the Senate. The Commission has sent letters in support of eight bills.

**March 28<sup>th</sup> Public Forum**-Isabelle gave an update on the Public Forum (formerly the Stakeholders Meeting) that will take place on Wednesday, March 28<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at One Veterans Plaza located in Silver Spring MD. The forum will focus on Age Friendly domains not addressed last year, and will include a plenary panel and breakout sessions on the following issues: Public Safety; Elder Abuse Prevention; Employment; and Civic Engagement. Volunteers are still needed on a variety of tasks.

**Dementia Friendly Business Kick-Off Event** - Jerry Morenoff attended the Dementia Friendly America (DFA) business kickoff breakfast, February 15, 2018, at the headquarters of Bright Focus Foundation in Clarksburg. Jerry reported that the event was intended to educate local businesses about no cost staff training and other available resources to deal with dementia in the workplace. Speakers included representatives from the Bright Focus Foundation; the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (N4A); the Alzheimer's Association; and Jay Kenney of Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services Aging and Disability Services. There were about 30-40 participants including representatives from the County's business community, several County Chambers of Commerce, and local banks and County-based businesses. The DFA Action Team will come to business offices and provide free 30-45-minute training sessions to:

- (a) Teach about Alzheimer's and other types of dementia;

- (b) Help businesses recognize the signs of dementia;
- (c) Provide tips on ways to communicate and interact with someone living with dementia;
- (d) Establish tips for creating a dementia friendly physical work space

Isabelle expressed appreciation to Jerry for attending the kick-off event on behalf of COA. For more information on this dementia business initiative, including instructional films please visit [www.dfamerica.org](http://www.dfamerica.org).

**New Business: Ageism in Communications Proposal-** At their February meeting, the Executive Committee considered and approved a new proposal submitted by Hillery Tumba on Ageism in Communications, to be conducted by a task group that Hillery volunteered to chair. Hillery described the approved proposal (which had been provided to the COA members) including that the task group will review resources on this topic and will conduct a short-term review of County communications. The group will also look at how other communities have addressed ageism in their communications. Attendees were invited to sign up to work on this activity with Hillery and six Commissioners and Stakeholders signed up. Anyone interested in participating is encouraged to contact Hillery.

#### **Liaison Updates:**

**Seniors Today**—Austin Heyman spoke about topics discussed on *Seniors Today*. The *Seniors Today* is a monthly County Cable show that is co-sponsored by COA. February 2018 Senior Today program #175 was the 150<sup>th</sup> episode. Guests included: Council President Hans Riemer and representatives from the Montgomery County Volunteer Program.

COA recognized Austin Heyman and Michael Bruen for their outstanding achievement to the community in producing this show. Isabelle presented them with certificates acknowledging *Seniors Today*'s 150<sup>th</sup> episode.

**Housing Opportunities Commission**—Stephanie Moore mentioned the Real Estate Zoning Division has started planning for the Holly Hall property. Current residents will be moved to Victory Crossing. About 30 people will move into the property. Holly Hall will be torn down and the plan is to have retail space in that area for non-profit and profit.

If anyone is interested in the retail space next to 500 residential units contact HOC. This is a 3-year project for those who may be interested.

**Department of Transportation**—Denise Isreal mentioned the Department is focusing on outreach and Senior Centers that have programs. Department of Transportation now offers free rides for seniors and persons with disabilities Monday-Friday, 9:30 am-3:00 pm; Saturday, 8:30 am-4:00 pm and discounted all other times.

MCDOT and Connect-A-Ride are sponsoring Ride Smart Public Transit Travel Training on March 7th and 8th. Ride Smart is a free, public transit, travel training workshop for those ages 50 and older. Learn how to travel on Ride On, Metro bus, Metrorail, obtain a Senior SmartTrip card that allows those eligible to cut regular fares in half, a group bus and Metrorail ride, and more at the two-day workshop.

The travel training will be held at the Benjamin Gaither Center, 80-A Bureau Drive, Gaithersburg on March 7, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and March 8, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free lunch will be provided on March 7. Reservations are required. Call 301-738-3252 or email [ConnectARide@AccessJCA.org](mailto:ConnectARide@AccessJCA.org).

**Department of Recreation**—FY 18 budget cuts that will impact seniors will begin April 1<sup>st</sup>. JCA buses to senior centers will discontinue services on Fridays. Department of Recreation will continue to work with Shawn Brennan, Mobility and Transportation Manager, to find other solutions to get seniors to and from the senior centers on Fridays. Approximately 50 persons are affected.

**Commission on Veterans Affairs**—James Campbell spoke about Warrior Canine Connection. Warrior Canine Connection utilizes a Mission Based Trauma Recovery model to help recovering Warriors reconnect with life, their families, their communities, and each other. Warrior Canine Connection needs volunteers to help socialize animals to allow people with PTSD to travel and cope with life. Puppy Petting helps in the critical role of socializing puppies. Completion of Puppy Petting Orientation is required prior to signing up. Orientation sessions are held at the Boyds, MD Healing Quarters, and are approximately one long. For more information visit their website at <http://www.warriorcanineconnection.org/get-involved/volunteer/>

Meeting adjourned at noon  
Respectfully submitted

Stephanie Edelstein  
COA Vice Chair