

Alexandria Commission on Aging Minutes

October 9, 2014

Members Present: Bob Eiffert , Carol Downs, Jan Macidull, Charles Bailey, Alan Dinsmore, Joan Dodaro, Cedar Dvorin, Anestacia Graham, Elisabeth Palmer Johnson, David Kaplan, Jane King, Michael Kreps, Dan Kulund, Mary Parker, Del Pepper

Members Excused: Mary Lee Anderson, Sean Dunbar, Ben Kellom

Liaisons Present: Cynthia Pearce, Charles Houston Senior Center; Margaret Orlando, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities; Mary Belanich, Virginia Hospital Center; Mitch Opalski, Arlington Commission on Aging; Tom Bash, Fairfax Commission on Aging; Ian Torrance, Police Department

Staff Members Present: MaryAnn Griffin, Debbie Ludington, JoAnn Callender, and Lillian Hernandez, Division of Aging and Adult Services

Guests Present: Citas White and Pat Waddie and 14 residents, Claridge House Alexandria; Pat Killeen

1. Call to order: 4:00 p.m. by Commission Chair Bob Eiffert.
2. Welcome to new COA member: Elisabeth Palmer Johnson, Commission for Women Representative.
3. Welcome Guests:
 - a. Bob heartily welcomed the residents of Claridge House, where the meeting was held. Bob explained the role of the Commission and that visits to Claridge and Ladrey Senior Apartments are important ways of educating Commission members about the housing services provided to seniors by each. It also enables a direct way for residents to find out more about services available to them through the City and other organizations.
 - b. Introductions of COA members and liaisons were made, as were brief overviews services provided by each. Liaisons underscored their willingness to come back to make presentations. A resource list will be sent to residents with contact information.
4. Robust Walking warm up: Explained and led by Dan Kulund, MD.
 - a. Special Guests: Citas White, Senior Manager, Claridge House Apartments and Pat Waddie, former senior manager
 - b. The first Claridge house was opened in 1979, with the current one containing 300 units and 300-350 tenants opening in 1989.

- c. All the units receive the Section 8 housing subsidy from HUD, where no individual pays more than 30% of their income for rent.
 - d. Pat gave an overview of Claridge’s facility, amenities, and services for residents. Amenity rooms are provided, along with a resident lunch once a month. She said they plan to take advantage of the liaison presentation offers.
 - e. Discussion: Parking space was limited when the building was planned, with builders suggesting that “seniors don’t drive.” About 80-85 current tenants have cars. Claridge provides no transportation services for residents. The City provides a bus twice a week for grocery shopping. There is no computer room. This was tried in their other building and no one used it. Cedar Dvorin pointed out its usefulness with Medicare, especially open season. Security was raised as a concern by residents. Citas said there will be a meeting with residents about this on October 17. Residents were invited to share ideas about what’s needed for seniors in the community. Debbie Ludington distributed information about the expanded Senior Taxi program. There is no residents’ association, although there used to be one.
5. September Minutes: Correction on p. 4: Officer Torrance is from the Alexandria Police Department.
6. Executive Committee Report:
- a. Annual Report: Bob thanked Jane King, Strategic Planning Committee Chairperson, for her fine and thorough work on the Commission’s annual report to City Council. Jane noted that the report had input and review by chairpersons of Commission committees. She outlined the ongoing seven Commission Strategic Plan areas for 2015: 1. Communication and Outreach; 2. Housing; 3. Transportation; 4. Community Services; 5. Economic and Workforce Development; 6. Quality of Life/Advocacy; 7. Health, Wellness and Safety. Specific “Fiscal Year 16 Goals” were distributed, addressing Goals 1, 3, and 7. These include:
 - i. Goal One: Form a working group of city staff, senior and family-serving organizations, (the Commission AHA, SSA), and the faith community to identify previously successful outreach plans; determine ideas for successful communication and outreach on aging issues to an increasingly diverse older population.
 - ii. Goal One: Provide information to help older residents understand ways to modify homes, to enable aging at home, that will include descriptions of universal design, home modification assistance programs, health and safety audits, tax credits, and other supports available at the state and federal level.

- iii. Goal Three: Perform walkability audits in neighborhoods with high numbers of older adults, and share the results with the Complete Streets Coordinator.
 - iv. Goal Seven: Increase participation in Robust Walking in multiple areas of the City.

- b. Budget Process: MaryAnn reported that high priorities have been given to the City Manager. These include such concerns as: how to get information about programs to diverse communities; how to stay safely in your own home; assessing the City's walkability. Councilwoman Pepper noted the impact of COA's communication efforts on FY budget 2014. Bob clarified the Commission's role in the annual budget process, that being to monitor proposed budgets, provide input to decision makers, and advocate for priorities consistent with the Strategic Plan and COA's charge from Council.

- c. Alexandria Council on Human Service Organizations: Mary Parker announced that a new process is underway to update the community's human services needs assessment. This will include focus groups on specific service areas and use of volunteers.

- d. Committee Reports:
 - i. Housing: Charles reported on the roles, functions, and recent activities of Ladrey Senior Housing's Resident Association. Claridge residents asked when there will be more low income housing. Bob noted that senior housing is designated in the Beauregard Small Area Plan.
 - ii. Advocacy and Legislation: Bob explained the NVAN Legislative Platform for the state's January/February 2015 session which takes place over 45 days. City Council is presented with and historically endorses this Platform, occasionally with additions of its own. Action: The Commission approved the NVAN 2015 Legislative Platform, for forwarding to Council. Arlington and Alexandria's Commissions on Aging will cosponsor a legislative forum November 7, 9:45AM – 11:30AM, at the Fairlington Recreation Center.
 - iii. Communications: Carol explained to residents that a major finding from the Commission's Strategic Planning public meetings was that people are unaware of many services available in the community. The Communications Committee's challenge is to identify major ways to get this information to those who need it. When asked how many residents use computers, 3 residents raised their hands. Residents said church bulletins

are not especially helpful. Claridge's internal communications are not a major source of this information. The Committee will meet next week.

- iv. Transportation: Dan asked that Alan Dinsmore go over upcoming plans for local and long distance transportation travel training. Alan said this will be done as part of a February 2015 program sponsored by Senior Services of Alexandria. A bus and transportation trainer will help people learn about available options and how to use them. Dan reported on the two Transportation Town Halls done by the City, attended by David. He is also working with Ann Booth of the City's Safe Routes for Kids Program and Margaret, focusing on making streets safe for kids and seniors. Residents noted that the DASH bus doesn't give discounts to seniors or persons with disabilities. David Kaplan, Vice Chair of DASH's Board and a COA member, said the monthly pass is \$40 and provides as many trips as you want for that month. An additional route has been added to help with East-West transportation. Residents also said the DASH #7 bus doesn't work on weekends, making it difficult to get prescriptions filled or go to the library.

e. Liaison Reports:

- i. Human Rights Commission: Bob requested a COA representative volunteer to fill this position.
- ii. Commission for Women: Elisabeth reported the Annual Christmas Bazaar will be December 7 at Charles Houston Community Center.
- iii. Fairfax Commission on Aging: Their two year strategic planning process is completed as of September, with 31 initiatives included. Their process for community involvement, modeled on Alexandria's, received input from over 700 people.
- iv. AHA: Carol provided residents with an overview of AHA.
- v. AARP: Jane said AARP Virginia is gearing up for the winter 2015 General Assembly. Patrick Killeen, former chair of AARP Wisconsin, was introduced and has applied to be a new COA member.
- vi. Virginia Hospital Center: Mary announced that they are instituting a "Safe Patient Program" to help patients when they return home. This includes two months' Lifeline Alert at no-cost.
- vii. Commission on Persons with Disabilities: Mary Parker explained the purposes of this commission. See attached report
- viii. Arlington Commission on Aging: Mitch noted that Arlington's Planning and Zoning Department has banned brick sidewalks. He then described Arlington's year-long Elder Readiness gap analysis. Arlington is also doing an affordable housing study to check further options. Bob noted

how a Baptist Church in Arlington built affordable housing on top of its facility. The Episcopal Church on Beauregard is looking at this near the Hermitage, with AHC. In Alexandria, Shiloh Baptist Church built the 8 unit Beasley Square at the corner of Duke and West Streets.

- ix. Adult Day Services: Rebuilding Together did \$30,000 worth of improvements to their site recently.
- x. Department of Aging and Adult Services: A reception will be held October 30 for members of commissions under the Department of Human Services.
- xi. Senior Services of Alexandria: Pat announced that Senior Law Day will be held October 18th at First Baptist Church.

Meeting adjourned 6 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Jan Macidull and Debbie Ludington

Report: ACPD Meeting, October 8, 2014
Submitted by Mary H> Parker, PhD, Liaison COA/ACPD

The Commission discussed the follow-up by Sandra Marks, Deputy Director, Transportation, T&ES, and Bill Skrabak, Deputy Director, Infrastructure and the Environment, T&ES, in response to an inquiry generated by discussion at the September ACPD meeting, regarding the misaligned curb ramp at Fairfax and Wythe Streets.

Following is the response to ACPD's questions regarding this issue:

• Q: Who drafted the original plan for this curb ramp?

A: This was submitted by a developer as a grading plan (not a full site plan review). The consulting engineer for the developer was Bowman Consulting.

• Q: Please provide a list of all departments and individuals who reviewed and approved the plan for this curb ramp.

A: Grading plans are reviewed by the transportation and engineering divisions as well as planning and zoning and various other departments as needed.

Q: Why wasn't ACPD included in the review of the plans?

A: Grading plans are not generally routed to ACPD. The MOU that was signed between T&ES and ACPD referred specifically to City Capital projects, and not private development projects.

Q: After the misaligned curb ramp was constructed, who inspected the work and approved it as completed?

A: Our Construction Inspection group is responsible for inspection of private development to ensure consistency with the approved plans. In this case, the developer did show the curb ramp as constructed (and was stamped by their professional engineer). The misaligned curb ramp was not caught in the City's review.

Q: What checks are in place or can be established that ensure that this type of misalignment will not happen again?

A: about the importance of ADA requirements as well as all pedestrian and traffic safety elements. In addition, we contacted the developer to identify the issue which they acknowledged the error and agreed to relocate the curb ramp per City standard. We have been notified that the improvement is scheduled to be completed by early next week. The Division Chief responsible for site plan review is independently contacting the consulting firm who's engineer signed off on the plans to make them aware of the issue and ensure better oversight in the future.

Q: What steps will be taken to correct the misalignment and what is the timeline?

A: See above.

ACPD NOVEMBER 12, 2014 MEETING: ACPD's November 12 meeting will focus on transportation and streetscape issues with invited guests to include the director of T&ES and the director of Project Implementation, among others.



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October 10, 2014

Ms. Citas White, Senior Manager
Claridge House II, Main Office
301 N. Ripley Street
Alexandria, VA 22304

Dear Citas:

Thank you so much for hosting our Commission on Aging meeting yesterday! We were so pleased with the great turn-out, lively discussion, wonderful refreshments and building tour. Please also extend our thanks to Pat Waddy and your staff for all their work and assistance. The Commission greatly appreciates your efforts to make the meeting such a success.

With Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bob Eiffert".

Bob Eiffert
Commission Chair