

BELLEVUE NETWORK ON AGING
MINUTES

November 4th, 2021,

North Bellevue Community Center via Virtual – Zoom.

8:30am – 10:30am

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Gazel Tan, Hannah Kimball, Janet Jelleff, Diana Thompson, Berta Seltzer, Mary Fredeen, Dr. Gina Johnson, Abigail Brown, Desiree Leigh, Paul Bradley, Beverly Heyden, Catherine Wong.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Phyllis Smilen.

STAFF PRESENT:

Dan Lassiter, Bellevue Parks & Community Services
Christy Stangland, Bellevue Parks & Community Services

GUESTS:

Barb Loomis
Kathy Iverson
Ingrid Martin
June Palon
Karen Hartman
Janis Hyne
Terri Cleveland

PRESENTER(S):

Raquel Rodriguez, *ARCH of King County*

RECORDING SECRETARY:

Betty Lee, Bellevue Parks & Community Services

WELCOME AND ROLL CALL:

The meeting was called to order by Gazel Tan and the roll call taken.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Changes made on October minutes and approved.

PRESENTATION:

Raquel Rodriguez, *Program Coordinator ARCH of King County.*

Affordable Housing statistics and question & answer period with BNOA members.

- ❖ ARCH has been around for 25 years with the goal to bringing affordable housing, rental, and home ownership to East King County by having reduced rent or reduced home prices for low to moderate income. It's a coalition of 15 east King County cities including Bellevue.
- ❖ ARCH is going through a change in marketing and launching a new website. Raquel is here to gain input from BNOA in an effort to make the website easier to navigate for older adults.
- ❖ Raquel shared the current ARCH website layout and the process of navigating the website for senior resources and recognizes the much-needed updates.
Many agree that the printed resource guide is much more preferred for older adults. As Kirkland Senior Council continues to make updates to the resource guide, Kathy will send Raquel latest updates for the ARCH website.
- ❖ The BNOA Housing and Transportation has each year updated the senior housing options matrix. Hannah will send the latest updates to Raquel at the beginning of 2022.
- ❖ Some questions for Raquel; is there going to be a mobile version of the ARCH website? Does ARCH track demographic usage data to determine if additional outreach will be necessary? Will the new website have an option for an immediate input indicating if an update is needed?
- ❖ Raquel shared the layout of the new website that will be launched at the end of 2021 or early 2022. It shows to be a lot more user friendly with much less hidden links and can be opened on a smart device. The senior section is easy to find and has 3 simple links which includes a list of senior centers and a link to the resource guide.
- ❖ BNOA was asked if more or less information is needed, and if there are any suggestions to make it more user friendly. Please email Raquel any suggestions you may have going forward.
- ❖ Raquel will share a "ghost link" of the new website to BNOA members for preview and input.
- ❖ Christy suggested possibly having an on-going contact person that joins the Housing & Transportation Committee and provide updates to keep this as a live document. Also, is there a way to differentiate housing options for 1. Low-income housing possibly for those on social security income or at the cusp of homelessness? and 2. Housing more geared towards folks with a fixed retirement income and still looking for affordable housing but can afford more, then for those who can live at the higher-end places. In long term, what can this group do to revamp this list so that it's more useful for someone that doesn't have any knowledge around it and gets exhausted reaching out to all the different housing options that may not be ideal for them.

Q: How often is housing needs analysis page updated?

A: Not very often, last update was about 3 years ago.

Q: Is usage info available to determine what areas of the site are accessed more frequently?

A: No but looking into contracting someone to help with this as the executive board is also asking the same questions. Currently, mailings are sent out with demographic questions to determine what needs are in the community.

Q: How about a “coming soon” or “proposed” section? Possibly showing proposed housing that’s coming and housing that’s under construction to help with planning for both rentals and matrix?

A: Definitely possible to do with the matrix. Something similar has been done for rentals but it didn’t go well as they were bombarded with an overflow of questions daily.

Q: How does one find out when a new affordable apartment housing option is available? What is the time frame between something being open for occupancy and the time to make it onto the housing options matrix?

A: Two methods – 1. Apartment list for families and seniors, gets updated in the matrix as roughly two properties are added. 2. When a new property is available for seniors or rentals, ARCH sends information out to a mailing list through an email blast. Please sign up to be added to the mailing list through the ARCH website.

Q: Is there a Housing Needs Analysis update scheduled?

A: No, the last one was in 2015 and since then it has been decided not to update any longer. Lindsey is looking into providing this in a different way but not sure how in-depth it will be.

Q: How can BNOA have the data to advocate for things? Without updated data, it will not be as impactful as if it was current. Even if there are new numbers, publishing that on the website would still be useful.

A: nothing specific defined.

Q: On the old website, there’s a list of communities with very outdated rent pricing from 2011. Will this list be updated on a regular basis?

A: No, ARCH is trying to move away from having to do constant updates, especially with rent prices which fluctuates frequently.

Q: Since not all affordable housings is listed under ARCH, would it be helpful for BNOA to look for other affordable housing options and get them directed to ARCH? Or does ARCH already have a way to be connected with them?

A: The old apartment list used to have more resources regarding organizations like King County Housing Authority (KCHA) or Catholic Community Services (CCS) that were providing affordable housing. However, they have decided not to have them listed anymore due to overwhelming inquiries about these properties that ARCH wasn’t able to provide additional information for. * Maybe these items can possibly go to Kathy for the Kirkland resource book.

❖ Link for preview of new website: silver-rust-3ygc.squarespace.com Password:3677ARCH
Please browse through and email Raquel if you think something *has to* go on this website but she would really like to keep the links to a minimal for user friendly browsing.

HUMAN SERVICES UPDATE: *Christy Stangland*

- ❖ Human services need update is still in process, will go to council towards the end of January. As long as they don't have any major concerns, it'll be published.
- ❖ Hiring two positions – Alex's position and ARPA coordinator has been posted. This is a short-term temporary position for about a year.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: *Members were asked to read the following committee report minutes before the meeting for discussion:*

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MINUTES:

1. SENIOR LOBBY CONFERENCE Discussion of Senior Lobby October 21st webinar. Desiree said that the meeting was interesting, and she relearned some things that had been presented in the past. Diana said she was interested in the presentation which focused on how the federal government is organized in relation to seniors.

Kathy stated she would send to all BNOA/KSC advocacy members a link to the power points presented at the meeting.

2. DISCUSSION OF WHAT IS HAPPENING AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL. A great deal of what we have supported will not be included in currently proposed legislation. However, at this point it appears Medicare will be expanded to include hearing aids for persons with severe and profound hearing loss. Diana noted that AARP is still trying to get one important change—reduction of price of medication.

3. Discussion of Proposed State Legislative Agenda. The following suggestions for our agenda were presented by Diana. (She included some examples of bills with requests related to the majority of these items. She also noted she had contacted the Alzheimer's Association about bills they are supporting and will receive information by end of November.) Diana also noted she had written Senator Keiser, who drafts many of the bills regarding the price of Medicine, and suggested she might want to contact Rep. Slatter, a retired pharmacist.

1) Maintain Washington's Long-Term-Care Infrastructure and increase support and availability of services which enable older adults to remain in their homes and in the community.

2) Support legislation, which will reduce the price of prescribed medication.

3) Increase access to death with dignity under Washington's Death with Dignity Act.

4) Support and fund legislation that will assist persons with dementia, their families, and organizations that serve persons with dementia.

5) Support legislation that will adequately fund the Housing Trust Fund and assist seniors in aging in place, while retaining the power of municipalities to enact zoning law.

The members agreed on all items except Caryn opposed item 3. Diana stated she would bring up this issue when she gave a report to the BNOA.

Abigail gave her thoughts on items that the Advocacy Committee might want to include in our 2022 local legislative agenda.

- a) Changes in City regulations and procedures, so that it can be easier for seniors to remain in their homes and age in place

Abigail believes that current regulations, the waiting time if you seek variance, the cost of a variance, and the response of builders can stand in the way of seniors modifying their home when modification is needed to age in place. She believes that lower costs, quicker response by the City and a change in setback requirements could enable more seniors to make modifications to their home so they could continue to live at home. (Examples of home modifications needed to enable some seniors to age in place: a) add a bedroom to ground floor, b) make a bathroom useable, c) modify a staircase so you can add chairlift)

b) Help with current technology: e.g., helping seniors if they get hacked, lower cost for broadband (Diana recommended we should wait on this issue until we find out what is happening in Broadband, etc. due to action and funding in the 2022 Washington legislative session)

c) Need for advance notice to seniors and Bellevue residents if major building changes are being considered in Bellevue or at the border of Bellevue and another jurisdiction. We didn't receive notice of the low-cost housing unit to be located at the Bellevue-Redmond border nor the hotel near Microsoft.) What can we do to get notification in advance? What can be done so we can give input? Need to contact local politicians, City managers, etc.

- ❖ Motion moved to add the above 5 items to the state agenda, voted and passed.
- ❖ Dan will take this to the intergovernmental office, then move it to being formal.

OUTREACH & EDUCATION COMMITTEE MINUTES:

- Committee review and finalization of the BNOA Resources List was the primary item on the meeting agenda:
 - Reviewed updates to some of the sources on current list
 - Reviewed new sources that were added to replace those that were no longer relevant
 - Dan will send the list to graphics department for formatting and publication. A booklet format will be considered.
 - We also discussed starting a new project to create another list/booklet that is focused on caregiving and dementia support:
 - Janet has been collecting resources, and we will continue to add to that list
 - We will reach out to Jullie Gray from Aging Wisdom who has offered to be a resource to BNOA/Outreach Committee
 - Old Friend's Club, Eastside Momentia are also sources for information
- ❖ Committee will discuss more about making a separate resource list for caregivers and dementia. Everyone please send in 5 suggestions so the committee can discuss them and put in a framework.

- ❖ Need someone to write an article for December. Maybe Joanne Gainen could speak about “virtual village” and programs for seniors that are remaining in their homes. Possibly an article regarding special events that are happening around the city for the holidays. Janet will see if Mark already has something like this in plan.

HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION MINUTES:

- Kathy Iverson, KSC, discussed recent Puget Sound Business Journal article regarding top eastside housing builders, housing prices, and Average Median Income (AMI) by zip code, based on 2019 data. AMI for Bellevue was generally around \$120,000, which means that at 80%, 60%, and 30%, a senior on fixed income would be living on approximately \$96,000, \$72,000, or \$36,000 per year, respectively. If those are the price points at which builders aim, then many seniors on fixed incomes are simply shut out. Emphasis has been on 80% across the eastside, the 60% and 30% categories just aren't available. No matter how you look at it, affordable housing is woefully inadequate. In addition to the systemic lack of affordable housing, the same situation applies to options for eventual assisted- or long-term care for seniors. Those monthly costs, across large chain facilities and adult family homes, range from \$4,000 to \$10,000 per month, an unrealistic and unsustainable financial model.
- Discussion moved on to the question, "how can we raise interest in, awareness of this situation? can we design and launch an education program that will grab hearts and minds, that will put this dire problem front and center?" Can we form productive relationships to bolster our efforts? Phyllis will contact AARP; Kathy will contact Imagine Housing. Gazel will send out the ARCH senior housing options link for us to review in preparation for discussion and questions with Lindsay Masters, ARCH ED, at our November 4 BNOA meeting.
- Phyllis Smilen updated us on the Mobility Design Challenge grant review panel she's working on with other Eastside mobility advocates.
- One big question, why did the Redmond Loop and Kirkland community van transportation routes fail? If we get a community van service in Bellevue, who will our target audience be? How can we develop a stable rider base? The grant is for \$25,000 and is to provide a sustainable transportation solution for immigrants, refugees, older adults, and other vulnerable populations.
- ❖ BNOA’s discussion centered around the development of building codes first for King County and then for the City of Bellevue and how we as older adults have representation on issues that affect older adults such as senior housing without parking and ADUs. How can we give input while these codes are being developed before it passes into law? Is this something the Advocacy Committee wants to take on? Christy commented that BNOA’s Advocacy committee has our own city priorities and is very productive and impactful and significantly exceeds the legislative committee forum. Props to Diana Thompson for leading this effort and keeping people engaged.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP REPORT:

Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative: Hannah has sent an email to the members.

WA Senior Lobby, Aging and Disability: Nothing to report.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS:

- ❖ Gazel attended the joint Human Services presentation and emailed the PowerPoint presentation to BNOA members.
- ❖ Diana attended a very informative state tax webinar regarding revision of our state taxes. Diana will send the survey link for those who would like to submit it.
- ❖ Phyllis attended two days of discussion regarding transportation options on the eastside for older adults and people in need. They came up with around 7 options and will narrow it down to 3 options of which to move forward.

NEW BUSINESS: (Dan)

- ❖ December meeting: BNOA decided not to have a speaker but have a fun activity and include the new recruits.
- ❖ Retreat on January 6th: Any ideas? Do we want a meeting facilitator? Please think about what we would like to discuss at the retreat.
- ❖ Please start thinking about serving as a chair or vice chair for BNOA. Hannah would like to comment that being a chair of a committee is an enriching and learning experience so please think positively about taking it on.
- ❖ In December, Dan will be putting out nominations for chair and vice chair and your committees should be doing the same and decide who's going to take over for next year.
- ❖ North Bellevue Community Center is continuing to add more programs slowly, CISC and IAWW have returned to limited in-person programs. Covid19 vaccine verification or negative Covid19 test result is now required for all participants.
- ❖ Happy Thanksgiving everyone!

Meeting adjourned at 10:38am