

ORANGE COUNTY  
ADVISORY BOARD ON AGING/  
MAP Management Team

January 10, 2012

Minutes

PRESENT: Leo Allison, Heather Altman, Alex Castro, Peggy Cohn, Ed Flowers, Mary Fraser, Haryo Marsosudiro, Jean Suddarth, Thelma Perkins, Jan Wells,

STAFF: Janice Tyler, Myra Austin, Latonya Brown, Terry Colville, Vicki Hill, Katherine Leith, Mary-Ann Weston

Capstone Students: Phoebe Goldberg, Laura Major, Marcia Perritt, Hannah Prentice-Dunn, Rebecca Woodruff

The joint meeting of the Advisory Board on Aging and the MAP Management Team was called to order by Advisory Board Chair Heather Altman at the Robert and Pearl Seymour Center. Following introductions, Ms. Altman expressed the group's deepest condolences to Kathie Kearns and family for the passing of her father over the weekend. The minutes of the November 8<sup>th</sup> Advisory Board meeting were then reviewed and approved as read.

In her Director's Report Janice Tyler announced that Mary Fraser was recently hired as a full-time, permanent Department on Aging employee. This means that she must resign her position on the Advisory Board, but will continue to work with the Board as the MAP Co-Chair. She also reported the posting of the open Senior Centers Administrator position.

Ms. Tyler pointed out a recent article in the Raleigh News and Observer featuring senior wellness programs with a front-page picture of wellness activities at the Seymour Center.

Ms. Tyler reported that the Master Plan for the Southern Human Services campus is being updated, which may provide an opportunity to expand parking at the Seymour Center. Even so, it may take 5 years before it is implemented. Overflow parking is now directed to the Southern Human Services parking lot up the hill. If overflow becomes more common, we might need to consider the use of shuttles. Janice will meet with Asset Management soon about Senior Center expansion and improvement plans. There is still space on the Seymour Center property for wellness center expansion and for the addition of an adult day program.

The Department on Aging will be asked again this year to score Outside Agency Funding Applications that concern older adults. Ms. Tyler will receive the applications soon and will place the review process on the agenda for the February Advisory Board meeting.

Latonya Brown, Department on Aging Resource Specialist, announced that the 2012 Community Resources Guide is now available in print and on-line through the Department website. The 2012 Resource Fair will be held on May 9<sup>th</sup> at the University Mall.

Master Aging Plan (MAP) Co-Chair Mary Fraser provided a brief progress report on the MAP and reported that the process is still on schedule. The five work groups commissioned to study Housing Options, Transportation and Navigation, Aging in Place Supports, Health and Wellness and Community Engagement are meeting and have finished 2 of the 5 meetings. The draft Plan is expected to be completed and available for review by the Steering Committee on February 29, 2012.

Each of the five Capstone Team members gave a brief summary of the issues being discussed in their respective work groups.

Health and Wellness Work Group (Hannah Prentice) – The work group has identified the need for better marketing of available resources to older adults as well as to the provider community. The group feels that the area is rich in health and wellness resources but their availability is poorly known. Older adults also need assistance navigating the health care system to take advantage of what they may be entitled.

Aging in Place Supports Work Group (Marcia Perritt) – Information sharing was again identified as a major need. Many services and supports exist, but many older adults do not know about them nor how they can be accessed. Moderate income groups find it especially difficult to afford many available services and supports since Medicare does not cover these expenses. The creation of “villages” within the county is gaining momentum as a way of providing low-cost aging in place supports, however, these groups may need the county’s help to get organized and to sustain themselves. Finally, access to unbiased financial information and counseling is a widespread need among older adults who are nearing retirement or transitioning from independent living to long-term care.

Transportation and Navigation Work Group (Phoebe Goldberg) – The work group would like a formal assessment of where sidewalks are and where they go throughout the County, as well as where public transportation routes go and don’t go. Navigation concerns include poor signage for drivers and the time allowed at crosswalks and intersections for walkers. Alternatives to public transportation are needed, especially in the rural parts of the county. Legal advice regarding liability of volunteer drivers is needed.

Community Engagement and Information Access (Laura Major) – The work group has identified the need to better protect older adults from exploitation, especially scams. They have also discussed the need for creative methods of information sharing among older adults, especially those who do not have access to a computer. Older adults all across the county have limited knowledge about community engagement opportunities and how to access needed services. There are transportation gaps in helping older adults access activities.

Housing Options (Rebecca Woodruff) – The Housing Options work group has first tried to tackle an understanding of what housing currently exists for older adults as a form of baseline to track changes over time as well as to identify where the housing gaps appear to be. Housing options are the narrowest for older adults in the low and moderate income levels. There are many more choices for those who are very poor and those who are wealthy. The group has decided to focus on three areas: increasing affordable owned and rented housing options, increasing access to subsidized congregate housing options (such as HUD 202 apartments, Special Assistance funded family care homes, public housing/Section 8 vouchers, tax credit apartment complexes like Carolina Spring and Eno Haven), and unsubsidized congregate housing options, such as private group homes like the Yorktown and co-housing and other intentional communities. Options to build new developments are limited by land use policies and/or by the

availability of subsidies. Strategies to expand options might include getting existing policies or regulations changed that present barriers to development, advocating for a larger share of state and local housing funds, and creating new options with untapped private money.

Discussion followed the work group reports highlighting several common themes. Ms. Fraser asked the group to identify these issues and those that were not being discussed by the work groups, so that they could be clearly assigned to a specific group for attention. A few issues emerged, e.g. mental health and long-term care quality to be addressed by the Health and Wellness group, liability issues for volunteer drivers to be addressed by the Transportation and Navigation work group, need for unbiased financial planning resources to be addressed by the Aging in Place Work Group. As time remaining was short, Ms Altman called for a process to carry on this conversation so that all unaddressed issues could be assigned. After some discussion, it was decided that individual Board members should contact work group staff to get more information about issues being discussed.

Once the draft plan is approved by the MAP Steering Committee on February 29<sup>th</sup>, it will go out again for public comment during the month of March. There was discussion about the best method of receiving public comment. Some members felt that a public forum should be held in each of the county townships to replicate the initial public forums held this summer. Others felt that this plan was inefficient as attendance was very low at some of the township meetings. Ms. Tyler reported that there is a short deadline to get the meetings scheduled so that they can be publicized in the next Senior Times. The group gave her authority to schedule meetings in advance of the publication deadline. Other methods of getting public comment on the draft plan will be discussed at the next MAP Management Team meeting, scheduled for January 23, 2012 from 9-11am at the Seymour Center.

Ms. Fraser mentioned that the Department on Aging has a chance to recruit another Capstone Team for the 2012-13 academic year. The proposal deadline is February 3, 2012. Alex Castro, Thelma Perkins, Peggy Cohn and Hannah Prentice agreed to serve on the proposal committee. The application deadline is in advance of the Board's February meeting, so they will send the draft out to Board members via email for their review and suggestions.

Haryo Marsosudiro reported on behalf of the Friends of Central Orange. He announced that the Las Vegas Night event has been postponed to April.

Thelma Perkins reported on behalf of the Friends of the Seymour Center. She announced that the Cole Porter event was very well attended.

Heather Altman reported that the Chatham-Orange Community Resource Connection will participate in the Partnership for Patients Summit on January 13, 2012. The summit will focus on improving hospital and healthcare transitions.

Ed Flowers announced that the focus of the Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee for 2012 will be on the quality of the activity programs provided. Mary Fraser announced that the Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee currently has two vacancies. She added that since she will no longer be a member of the Advisory Board on Aging, she can no longer serve as the Board's liaison to this Committee and will need to be replaced.

Jean Suddreth informed the Advisory Board that the next session of Senior Tar Heel Legislature will be held in March.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Tyler, Secretary