

AGE-FRIENDLY SOCIAL PARTICIPATION WORKGROUP MINUTES



Date: April 27, 2020
Time: 03:00 PM
Facilitator: Ruth Coleman

In Attendance

Peter Brunner	Barbara Scher
Ruth Coleman	Terri Hansen
Andrew Monjan	Pat Sasse
Ann Benjamin	Jeannie DeCray
Colleen Konstanzor	

Minutes Approved

First: Peter Brunner
Second: Barbara Scher

Announcements:

- **Pat Sasse:** shared the definition of Social Participation
 - Regardless of a person's age, loneliness is often a debilitating health condition as having a chronic illness or disease. Sadness and isolation can be combated by having opportunities to socialize and access to affordable and fun social activities.
- Review the minutes, work on vision statement and identify what opportunities currently exist in Howard County. Discuss the organizations we currently know about, and develop questions for a community survey via SurveyMonkey to learn what is available. Brainstorm speakers we can invite to give us background information.
- Terri Hansen went over the changes that Andy Monjan had made.
- Ruth Coleman asked about the possibility of online focus groups - brought up at our last meeting.
- Terri: online focus groups may exclude individuals without access to computers; possible do it by phone? That requires reaching out to individuals not identified in the survey:
 - More women respondents than men – focus on men
 - Predominantly Caucasian
 - Higher education

Meeting on Friday May 1, 2020 with County Administration to discuss the overall timeline for the project, and how COVID-19 has affected our work (focus groups, listening sessions). Discuss extending the deadline and overall calendar of events.

New Business:

- **Pat Sasse:** we discussed many different topics; we need to create a vision statement for the workgroup - work up to a vision statement as oppose to starting out with a vision statement. Do landscape surveys, look at what is going out in the County and where the gaps are. Come up with ideas to cover those gaps.
- **Terri** is working with each of the work groups to develop vision statements, guiding each to keep them on task, and looking at the next several months to make sure they will be where they need to be. A vision statement is aspirational, with a starting point and a direction for the work as we move forward. What effects will the work that we do for Social Participation have in the end?
- **Pat and Ruth** like the last sentence of the definition of Social Participation and feel it encapsulates everything we are trying to do. From there, narrow down what our recommendations will be.
 - **Andy:** take that statement and divide into two sentences, the first being our vision statement and the second our goals. Our vision is to decrease the amount of loneliness people experience as they age. Often a debilitating health condition as having a chronic illness or disease. The goals would be to combat sadness and loneliness by having opportunities to socialize and the availability of accessible, affordable, and fun social activities. Include interventions in the second sentence?
- **Pat:** that is broad enough so as we do our work, we can see what is missing and what is needed to achieve our goals.
- **Andy:** we can use this as a working statement and modify as we go along.
- **Ruth:** look at other vision statements – did anyone find anything interesting or valuable?
- **Peter:** wants to introduce another element - the opportunity to grow intellectually.
- **Andrew:** what about using “to continue to grow intellectually?”
- **Peter:** that gets back to the notion of lifelong learning - to live is to grow.
- **Ann** thinks this is a good vision statement.
- **Terri:** can we remove “social” at the end and say “accessible and fun activities.” Should it be fun or meaningful?
 - Use community instead of social
 - Beginning – Envision a community where individuals have the opportunity to connect with others
 - Need to include inclusive
 - Instead of using activities use interaction.
- **Terri** read the vision statement with the current changes.
- **Colleen:** do we need to have loneliness, etc. That sounds like that should be in the explanation of why we are doing what we are doing. Vision statement should be what we want to see.
- **Ruth:** Manuel felt it should be more positive. What are we going to increase not decrease?
- **Jeannie:** would like to see increase, connectiveness at the beginning which is more positive.
- **Barbara Scher** suggested using the word enhance.
- **Colleen:** the statement is looking more mission than vision. Start out by saying “Envision a community of all ages” and so on. Could include social wellness and opportunities
- **Andy:** use promote fun instead of the word have or available.
- **Barbara** added social engagement.
- **Peter:** change to continuous intellectual growth.

- Barbara: the word wellness seems misplaced in the statement. Look it over and see what you think.
- Colleen: use something that it will accomplish, whether fitness or other opportunities.
- Terri: the word fitness is too narrow a word.
- Colleen: connecting to care for ourselves, mentally and physically could encompass faith-based activities.
- Ruth: move the word wellness to a different part of the sentence?
- Jeannie: the word wellness or well-being, a more holistic version of wellness, incorporates it all.
- Terri: is this a vision that puts you as a workgroup in a place that you feel comfortable with? Does it provide a focus for where you are going over the next several months, and give you your bearings?
- Andy: change the first word to power because it is the workgroups' vision.
- Terri: stay away from first person; she will check with some of the other workgroups as to how they got around that.
- Ruth: moved onto the next item - to identify opportunities that currently exist in the County and identify gaps to be addressed. Survey other organizations about opportunities they currently provide that fit into our vision statement.
- Peter: there are organizations within the County that provide that capacity, some Governmental, others diverse like the Columbia Film Society.
- Jeannie: a lot of what is offered through the 50+ centers is this level of engagement; the same is true with Recreation and Parks.
- Peter: that OAI and Rec and Parks are opportunities in and of themselves; they are agents for providing.
- Barbara: create an inventory of the possibilities that exist - what the community has as potential engagement opportunities.
- Amy: most organizations provide the basis for these types of social interaction.
- Barbara: if people look at a long list of things, it might inspire collaboration where there is currently none.
- Colleen: should we look at the private sectors too? There is much more out there beyond what the County has to offer – how do we get people to connect to it?
- All agreed to having both private and County information.
- Pete: include a few examples, with a broader list in the appendix.
- Should faith-based communities be added as well?
- Ruth: our purpose to identify all these organizations and the programs they offer and as Pat said, do a gap analysis. What do we still need to do? Are there barriers to programs such as price, transportation?
- Peter: is that what we want to address in the survey - what they have and then identify through the survey the areas we would still need to address.
- Barbara: we need to identify the gaps as well as virtual opportunities.
- Andy: one of the gaps is information and how to access this piece.
- Peter: we could go back to our vision statement for the questionnaire where we identified cultural, social, educational and wellness opportunities, then develop that into broad categories. Ask organizations which areas of activity they address.
- Ruth: how do we decide which private sectors to send the survey to?
- Peter: there are some organizations that have listings, for example the Association of Community Services' directory lists 80 to 90 organizations, many of which fall under the

categories we are looking at. We also want to include service organizations, churches and synagogues in the survey.

- Pat: there are also cultural organizations.
- Colleen: COGS is a good resource as a list of related services.
- Peter: we could access in the foundation data base all the organizations within the County that file an IRS 990 by zip code to identify organizations within the County that are potential targets for this survey.
- Colleen: the Chamber of Commerce membership is broken down by type or focus.
- Ruth: can committee members find contacts for the different organizations we have listed so far? Once we have contact names, we can send them the survey through SurveyMonkey.
- Ann: as far as the faith-based organizations, we have a great start with our two interfaith centers, Oakland Mills and Wilde Lake. We can randomly select a few other churches that have large and small congregations for a good mix.
- Ruth: let's go over the list and have committee members pick who they can contact.
 - Peter – Foundation database
 - Manuel – COGS and Knights of Columbus
 - Margaret and Ruth - Recreation and Parks
 - Pat – Association of Community Services (ARC and Best Buddies and Special Olympics) and Library
 - Ann – Howard County Arts Center and Council
 - Colleen – Howard Community College
 - Barbara – OAI
 - Andy – Columbia Association
 - Peter – Village in Howard
 - Ann – HCPSS
 - Ruth and Seema – Cultural and Ethnic Associations
 - Pat – HCGH
 - Colleen – Faith-Based Communities
 - Peter – Columbia Film Society
 - Andy – Environmental Organizations
- Ruth: once you have a name, send it to Ruth or Pat. Will have a spreadsheet on the google drive for members to enter their information.
- Andy: our task is to find the name and email for the organizations?
- Peter: wait until he goes through the Foundation data base because he may be create a spread sheet to cover some of the other organizations.
- Peter: can a subgroup work on this and report to the committee at the next meeting?
- Ann: could everyone write a couple of questions to discuss at the next meeting?
- Terri: re: timing - if you need this information to do other work, you need it sooner rather than later – do not wait until the next meeting to get your questions.
 - How long are you going to give people to respond to the survey?
 - When do you want to get the survey out?
 - What work will you be doing while waiting for surveys to come back?
- Pat: not sure how quickly we can get the survey back due to the current situation. The other group I am working with had to extend their survey deadline. The idea was to invite speakers to discuss some of the ideas we have - that will give other work while we wait on the surveys to come back.
- Ruth: #4 on the agenda number was to brainstorm about speakers. In the work and civic engagement work group they had Minah Woo from Office of Workforce Development. Is there anyone we should invite to our next Social Participation meeting?

- Tonya Atkins from the Library
- From Montgomery County regarding the Social Component
 - ✓ Names on the website that we can contact
 - ✓ Pavit Aziz – On the board of directors on the Village to Village network
- Minah Woo from Howard Community College
- Cultural Association (such as Indian or Korean).
- Ruth: does the group have 1 or 2 people we would like to invite for the next meeting?
- Peter: there are members of the Cultural Association that are also on the Commission on Aging. For the Chinese Language School there is Wei Guo.
- Ruth suggested inviting Wei and Pavit to our next meeting. Thirty minutes should be enough time for speakers to provide a good summary.
- Ruth will contact Niti about the Indian Cultural Association.
- Peter will contact Pavit Aziz (Montgomery County).
- Ruth will go over the questions for Survey Monkey if not already complete before next meeting and create a Google doc for the survey questions. Will put in subheadings that are listed in the Vision statement.
- Terri: thanked the group and the Co-Chairs for all their hard work on getting the Vision statement done and remaining involved. Hopefully will have some news for you in what changes we will be making to our timeframe. This is a good time to gather data, work from inside and look at what else we need to know, by learning from our research.

Homework Assignments:

Work on questions for Survey Monkey and add them to the Google doc.
Find contacts for the organizations noted above.

Next Meeting:

June 1, 2020 3:00 PM (Use the same WebEx link from April's meeting)