



CITY OF BURLINGTON, VERMONT  
**Burlington Aging Council**  
 c/o Community & Economic Development Office  
 City Hall, Room 32 • 149 Church Street • Burlington, VT 05401  
 802-865-7144 VOX • 802-865-7024 FAX • [www.burlingtonvt.gov/cedo](http://www.burlingtonvt.gov/cedo)

**Minutes of the meeting of the Burlington Aging Council  
 Tuesday November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022 4:00pm – 5:30pm**

**Draft Minutes**

| Full Name   | November 15th |
|---|---------------|
| Symphorien Sikyala  | x             |
| Jeanne Hutchins   |               |
| Shawn T Hallisey  |               |
| Molly Dugan   | x             |
| Jane Catton   | x             |
| Kelly Stoddard Poor   |               |
| Andrea Viets  |               |
| Alison Miley  | x             |
| Chris Damiani   | x             |
| Brian Pine*   | x             |
| Barbara Shaw-Dorso  | x             |
| Glenn McRae*  |               |
| Martha Molpus   | x             |
| Charles J Messing   | x             |
| Lorna Kay   | x             |
| Marcella Gange  | x             |
| <b>Guests</b>   |               |
| DPW Staff: Laura Wheelock, Olivie Darisse, Abigail Fiala, Steven Gray, Susannah Ross. |               |
| Public: Suki +Alan Rubin  |               |

Meeting opened at 4.02 pm

1. Motion to approve agenda 11 15 22 - Approved.
2. Public Comment – no members of the public wished to comment
3. Great Streets Main Street Team – presentation and feedback. The presentation is attached and Main Street also has a website [www.GreatStreetsBTV.com](http://www.GreatStreetsBTV.com).

Questions or comments:

**Olivia Darisse, P.E.** she/her  
 Public Works Engineer  
 Cell: (802) 557-1414  
[odarisse@burlingtonvt.gov](mailto:odarisse@burlingtonvt.gov)

4. Report out on recent Villages meeting - Janet Nunziata. The meeting was very successful and Burlington group will be meeting with Jeanne (and other groups outside of Burlington)

Suggestion that the group focus on where the intersections are with existing programs and services – where there is overlap and where there are gaps – to help identify and fill gaps. There are resources to assist Villages to work alongside area agency on aging. Jeanne to provide any info on the follow-ups.

The programs and services of the City of Burlington are accessible to people with disabilities. For accessibility information, call 865-7144. For questions about the meeting Contact Marcella Gange at [mgange@burlingtonvt.gov](mailto:mgange@burlingtonvt.gov) or 802 865 7178

5. Report out on recent Listening Session with DAIL @Heineberg Senior Center. Please see Andrea's report below.

6. The State Aging Plan will be wrapped up by July 2023 – Jane offers to bring DAIL back to the BAC for feedback, once the listening sessions are complete and reviewed.

This is a recent press report on the release of the Windham Plan on Aging.

[https://vtdigger.org/press\\_release/windham-aging-releases-report-on-aging-plan-to-create-regional-plan-for-aging/](https://vtdigger.org/press_release/windham-aging-releases-report-on-aging-plan-to-create-regional-plan-for-aging/)

7. Update on City Department Survey. The survey was circulated and the BAC was invited to review the responses identified in the link, circulated.

8. Workgroup updates:

Family Caregiver Support: Please respond to Jeanne's survey for date setting. Plan to meet in December.

Technology Accessibility: Please connect with Jane if you wish to participate in this work group

9. Any other business or announcements: We have received applications for the intern position. Jane, Molly and Symphorien offered to take part in any interview process.

Meeting closed at 5.30pm

### **Report on DAIL listening session - from Andrea**

I do want to offer a brief report on the DAIL Listening Session held at the Heineberg on November 1st.

We did outreach via Front Porch Forum, our subscriber email list, Facebook, SASH coordinators at local senior housing, and our website. We had more than 30 people in attendance, which was many more than I expected. Many were familiar to me; we also welcomed some people I had not met previously. Of the people in attendance, almost everyone spoke at least once, which I thought was wonderful.

Angela Smith-Dieng facilitated the meeting, and had a great list of prompts covering six broad topics: Optimal Health and Wellness; Safety/Protection; Financial Security; Social Connection/Engagement; Self Determination; Housing, Transportation, and Community Design. Folks were asked to provide examples of successes and challenges in each area.

It was a rich and varied dialogue, with participants sharing really personal experiences and feelings, and thoughts about ways to improve our community for seniors. A few highlights from my pages (and pages!) of notes: the Heineberg serves a vital role for many people, offering exercise classes, social connections, food, and more. This came up several times over the course of two hours and people spoke with real emotion about their connections with HCSC and one another.

Isolation, loneliness, depression, mental health issues all arose several times as well. The pandemic hit seniors so hard, and many are just beginning to get out and about in the community. There is a strong need for more mental health services - could Cathedral Square

bring MH services to housing? The process of accessing any kind of health care is confusing, overwhelming, challenging, expensive, and takes FAR too long (six months for a neuro appointment). Tilley Drive and Williston feel very far to travel to.

A lot of discussion about crime in the community: "I just don't go downtown any more." Various concerns - more guns, less police, more drugs, less substance treatment, more unhoused people, less safety in general. The issue of gender came up, with expressions of women feeling much less safe in public than men. Sidewalks need to be in better repair - fear of tripping and falling, and ice in winter.

There was also a great discussion about generativity - having a sense of meaning and purpose, sharing wisdom, belonging to a faith community. The idea of a Circle of Elders was raised, and is something we will be discussing more here at the Heineberg. There was also a strong interest expressed in multi-generational living - wanting to have some families and children sharing housing with seniors in order to experience youthful energy, shared meals, mentorships, etc.

SSTA is totally overwhelmed and is difficult to rely on. Senior housing should be built with underground parking garages. Senior housing should be built with walk-in showers and other features to make apartments safer. Strongly value neighborhood parks, walking paths, green spaces, community gardens, schools, presence of children and pets.

Folks wanted follow-up and accountability. What will happen with this information? How will we effect change? There was also strong appreciation for the invitation - people were exceptionally glad to be asked to share and be listened to.

We ended with an agreement among participants that perhaps we would make this an annual event here at the Heineberg, in order to share experiences, progress, setbacks, ideas, hope.

## **BAC WORK AND PLAN ON AGING**

The plan will encompass eleven areas that were identified in the charge given to the council.

The BAC will address each of these through task groups assigned to gather information, conduct a rapid assessment, and provide actionable recommendations for policy and program development.

### **BAC AREAS FOR FOCUS**

- I. Combating Social Isolation, Increasing Social Inclusion for Burlington's older residents (draft complete)**
- II. Housing: Affordability, Availability, & Accessibility (draft complete)**
- III. Health Care Workforce (draft complete)**
- IV. Accessible Outdoor & Indoor Public Spaces- Kelly (nov-jan)**
- V. Technology accessibility- Jane (nov-jan)**
- VI. Multimodal Transportation (Sep-Nov) Chris**
- VII. Family Caregiver Support (Sep-Nov) Jeanne**
- VIII. Food Security (Jan-Mar)**
- IX. Industry Support & Working past 64 (Jan-Mar)**
- X. Civic Engagement and Volunteerism (Mar-May)**
- XI. Health Prevention, Access, & Quality: Nutrition & Physical Activity (Mar-May)**

## **Plan template for workgroup input to the Plan:**

To provide consistency across workgroups and assemble a more coherent plan of action of highest use and reference for City Council and Burlington's Administration each work group will organize itself to address and then provide a report along the lines of the outline below:

### **1) What is the current state**

- i) Background information, data, issues re: to Burlington**
- ii) What is currently in place to work on or address the issues identified?**
- iii) What current disparities, based on race and other identities, exist for community members?**
- iv) Where are the gaps? What is not being fully or effectively addressed?**

### **2) What are opportunities and what are the specific needs to address?**

- i) What opportunities or actions would address race and other identity disparities? Identify specific projects or actions.**
- ii) Is there a priority order in which to best address issues?**
- iii) Is there low-hanging fruit that should be addressed immediately?**
- iv) Are there key opportunities due to funding or the work of other organizations that Burlington should capitalize on?**

### **3) What are specific action steps needed for Burlington?**

- i) Recommendations for programming and investment – focus upon race and other identity disparities**
- ii) Recommendations for new policies/plans**  
**Note the desired outcomes, outputs, and how these recommendations may address racial equity and other identity disparities**

### **4) What is the advocacy agenda for getting broader support from the state or federal government?**

*This meeting will be a hybrid meeting. To comply with open meeting law requirements the in-person aspect of the meeting will be staffed at the Queen City Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor City Hall, 149 Church St, Burlington. Please inform staff if you are unable to attend the meeting remotely and by zoom [mqange@burlingtonvt.gov](mailto:mqange@burlingtonvt.gov)*