

Seniors Task Force Meeting Notes Nov 20, 2019

Attendees:

Kim Dixon, James Bay New Horizons
Anne Logie, James Bay New Horizons
Gail Snider, Victoria Silver Threads
Tracy Ryan, Victoria Silver Threads
Carol Turnbull, Cook Street Village Activity Centre
Kate Day, Cook Street Village Activity Centre
Kaye Kennish, James Bay Community Project, Capital City Volunteers
Don Monsour, VCAN – FGCA, BC Transit, MHRD
Darlene Strandlund, Member at large – Hard of Hearing Community
Bat-Ami Hensen, Member at large
Ron George, Victoria Native Friendship Centre Elder (Dakota)
Judy Elk, Victoria Native Friendship Centre Elder (Dakota)
Lisa Mercure, Victoria Native Friendship Centre
Victoria Adams, Member at large
Natasha van Bentum, Member at large
Mavis De Girolamo, ICA
Nicole Tremblay, Island Health
Wendy Young, Island Health
Denise Cloutier, University of Victoria
Councillor Ben Isitt
Councillor Geoff Young
Kimberley Stratford, City staff

Order of Business

1. Lekgungen Land Acknowledgement – provided by Lisa Mercure

2. Discussion regarding the outcome of task force and jurisdiction of municipal government.
 - a. Outcome – Seniors Action Plan which will contain specific actions the City can take to advance the quality of life for seniors, by category and with examples.
 - b. The City can take two roles – direct responsibility based on jurisdiction and advocacy roles. The action plan will be divided into these two areas.

3. Round Table Introductions, context for comments and identification of 3 key areas (identified with *)

Darlene Strandlund, Member at large – Hard of Hearing Community

- Hard of hearing community focus
- Hearing loss causes social isolation and health issues
- *Accessibility – captioning services and loop systems at city events, and encourage other organizations to introduce these accessibility measures
- *Promote Victoria as Hard of Hearing friendly community (e.g. make restaurants, events welcoming for people who are hard of hearing)

Bat-Ami Hensen, Member at large

- Issues with ageism and respect for the elderly. Would like a philosophical and heartfelt effort to raise respect for seniors
- Loss of familiar landmarks contribute to disorientation and alienation
- More and louder environments create stress and is barrier to conversation and relaxation.
- *Cultural discounts – museums, galleries, music events etc for seniors to keep them active and engaged
- *Visual continuity –add as weighing factor in land use decisions (specific to landmarks in the city)
- * City soundscapes –Sound friendly designation/ review noise bylaw

Ron George – Victoria Native Friendship Centre

- *Indigenous advisory position on city council may help with reconciliation and better representation of Indigenous people
- *Cultural competency awareness for Indigenous people (off reserve)
- *Benches that are easier to get out of
- *Advocates to assist people who need extra help (mental health especially)

Lise Mercure– Indigenous Coordinator at Victoria Native Friendship Centre

- Indigenous elders are the most vulnerable senior population
- *Building stronger connections for senior and elder populations
- *Health and homecare
- *Active socialization

Judy Elk - Victoria Native Friendship Centre

*Transportation – transit pass for elders and kids under 18

*Food security

*Housing – ongoing crisis for elders

Victoria Adams – member at large, James Bay resident

- Apply lens “What would cities look like if designed by seniors?”
- Seniors are often seen as invisible and irrelevant, not as people who contribute and their experience is not valued. Ageism is very prevalent
- Recognition that our cities are built and maintained by everyone; not just those of privilege

*Housing as a basic right. Address this through zoning and policies of local government.

*Equity as foundation of decision-making process

*Mobility/physical accessibility –

move people around city in a safe manner.

Safe and secure sidewalks and other surfaces for pedestrians.

*Family physicians / mobile clinic

Natasha van Bentum – member at large

*Make Victoria age-friendly

*Sidewalk mindfulness – public outreach program with ads on busses /intergenerational

Kate Day / Carol Turnbull – Cook Street Activity Centre

*Accessibility – washrooms, Life pass, raising the low-income level to increase access to services

*Housing options for lower income seniors / purpose-built rentals with rents set for some only receiving OAP

*Mobility around the city – more options including better parking

Kaye Kennish – James Bay Community Project and Capital City Volunteers

- City working with senior service agencies – advocacy and liaison between transit, health authority

*Provide agencies working on social determinants of health more support and more active engagement with City

*Transportation

*Advocate to the health authority and BC Transit to improve access for low income seniors

Denise Cloutier – UVic / Inst of Aging and Lifelong Health

- Many seniors are living on \$17k-\$20 / year – half to rent; quarter to food; remainder for everything else to build happy, fulfilling, meaningful life
- *Age Friendly community – tap into Saanich
- *Affordable and stable housing – especially homeless population of seniors
- *Food security
- *Social inclusion and sense of belonging

Kim Dixon -James Bay New Horizons

- Provided description of an existing social outreach the JBNH and Victoria Silver Threads provide to reduce seniors isolation

Anne Logie – James Bay New Horizons

- *Housing – there are a lot of building changing the shape of the city / high end condos and office buildings
- *Health care – shortage of GPs – what can be done to encourage more family doctors?
- *Long term care facilities – lack of spaces
- *Seniors homes – high end and government support. Not many in between for people who don't qualify
- *Infrastructure – fix and widen sidewalks to reduce tripping hazards

Tracy Ryan – Victoria Silver Threads

- *Housing
- *Health care and physician shortage
- *Accessibility and transportation

Gail Snider – Victoria Silver Threads

- Volunteers providing services for seniors are often seniors and are aging out
- *More inclusive city

Nicole Tremblay – Island Health

- *Ageism impact – education campaign on what it is and how it shows up
- *Meaningful involvement in daytime programs / cross generational to address social isolation
- *Expand wet housing – low barrier housing for the more vulnerable seniors

*Take into account the additional layer of vulnerability of LGBTQ+ seniors

Don Monsour – VCAN

*Improved transportation

*Housing

*Health care assistance – mobile pharmacy

Wendy Young – Research Dept Island Health

*Increase awareness around advanced care directives (with advanced care directives, people go to emergency room)

*Promote system change through research (Get people involved in patient-oriented research)

*Promote Fun - Action plan should also address FUN, across cultures (b/c research demonstrates that if a person is engaged in a fun activity, will continue doing it)

Mavis DeGirolamo – Intercultural Association

*Work with partners to establish a house for people who are discharged from hospital with nowhere to go (and support for people who are homeless / living in isolation when they are discharged from hospital / care)

*Total review of roadways and sidewalks / fix bumpy roads – feel like going to fall into sinkhole (b/c of all wear-and-tear from new construction)

4. Public Engagement

Four open houses are proposed for the last week of January, at James Bay New Horizons, Cook St Village Activity Centre, Silver Threads, Victoria Native Friendship Centre. Kimberley will coordinate dates. After public engagement, feedback comes back to the task force to enhance the draft document

Accessibility measures to be pursued:

1. Ensure Large format font size to make materials accessible to seniors
 2. Ensure provision of “hard copy” print materials, for both task force documents (i.e. draft Action Plan) as well as opportunities for public comment
 3. Investigate making events “hearing friendly”
- Engagement needs to be hearing friendly
 - Online surveys – better for younger seniors / print outs of surveys for others.

- Leave it open-ended / invite respondents to share ideas
- Expand range of communication tools for engagement
- Invite comments from future seniors on changes they'd like to see as well
- Consider inviting comment from non-seniors (“future seniors”)

5. Possible sub-committees as suggested by task force:

1. Health and hard of hearing (Darlene)
2. Mental health and fitness (Bet-Ami)
3. Reconciliation and off reserve population of Indigenous people / indigenous advisory (Ron, Lisa)
4. Data and information gathering to share with other subcommittees /Sharing platform (Victoria)
5. Global Network for Age Friendly communities – phone meeting with Portland and Saanich (Natasha, Gail, Denise)
6. Mobility (Kate)
7. Wellness Services (Carol)
8. Liaison for advocacy (Kay)
9. Integration and coordination of all these committees (Denise)
10. Housing (Kim)
11. Safety of Seniors (Nicole)
12. Feasibility of the action plan – ranking resources in the deliverable (Wendy)

6. Final Thoughts / Wrap Up

- Discussion about extending task force life or reappointing members to a Seniors Advisory Committee / embed it with an indigenous perspective.
- Age friendly framework is an evolving framework / evidence base is building
- What information is missing? What data is available that could contribute to the framework? How can we make the data visual?
- Need quick reference guide as one of the outcomes of this task force
- Consider creating webpage for Seniors' Task Force materials and engagement opportunities

Next Steps

1. We'll circulate the notes from this meeting and will endeavor to have a rudimentary draft of sorting the inputs before next meeting on Dec 4 (sort info by jurisdiction)
2. Terms of Reference will be adjusted to reflect a more realistic schedule.
3. By next meeting, task force members should try to undertake some research in your topical areas and send it to Rich Elliot so it can be put into a sharable format.

Next meeting:

Wednesday, December 4, 2019

12:30 pm – Lunch

1:00 pm – Meeting starts

3:30 pm – Adjourn

Potential Agenda Items:

1. Workshop discussion of topical areas (mobility, housing, health and wellness)
2. Discussion of Draft plan
3. Identification of area for further research / policy
4. January meeting schedule
5. Engagement update