

Senior Advisory Committee

Minutes – April 28, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by Chair Vail.

Roll Call

Members present were: Russ Anderson (Council Liaison), Lucky D’Ascanio (Community Programs Director), Jen DeRice, Joel Glass, Raymond Jett, Carol Kauffman, Amy Lamontagne (Staff Liaison), Peggy McGehee, and Dolores Vail.

Item 1 – Approve Minutes of April 7 meeting

Chair Vail moved to approve the minutes; Joel Glass seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Item 2 – Guest Speakers John Wasileski and Matt Teare from OceanView

Chair Vail introduced the OceanView guests. John explained his background, including work with Avesta Housing and his success bringing Blackstone to Falmouth in 1976. He described the auditorium at Lunt and says it is available for town use. Chair Vail would like the Senior Advisory Committee to visit OceanView and Lunt for a tour. John said he is happy to schedule a future visit at the group’s convenience.

Matt distributed proposal copies to the group. This is the same proposal given to the Town Council on April 13, 2015. The proposal is affordable housing which would be located inside the former Plummer School. Unlike a current proposal under development in Topsham, the Falmouth project would not be eligible for government subsidies. Matt is hoping to get historical tax credits to build 36 apartments with monthly rents of \$1200-\$2000. To get the historic tax credits, three guidelines must be met. First, the exterior view (façade) of Plummer cannot be spoiled from Middle/Lunt Roads. Second, the connector between Plummer and Mason Motz had to be removed to maintain the historical accuracy (completed last winter). Third, the old gym in the center of the building must be preserved. The space is 2500 square feet and could be used for a Senior Center.

Peggy had some questions about the 2012 agreement signed between the Town and OceanView that resulted in the sale of Lunt and Plummer. She wanted to know more details about the proposed town green and if the town would lose that space if the apartments are built. She wanted to know if fewer apartments could be built – maybe 20 instead of 36 units. She also mentioned the parking issue. It was difficult to find parking for the meeting tonight at Mason Motz, how would 36 apartments contribute to the challenge?

Russ asked John what he thinks are the primary needs of seniors in Falmouth. What is the highest priority while they age? John said homecare is very important – the ability to age in place. He also mentioned transportation, home repair, and elder fraud.

John said OceanView would like to provide services to the Town. He suggested it might be a kitchen to provide “Meals on Wheels” or a partnership with the Southern Maine Agency on Aging and the Town. The Plummer space could be owned by the Town and controlled by the Town. Or, perhaps it’s a lease that converts to

ownership. John needed to leave at 8:00 pm and ended his presentation. The group continued the Plummer discussion after John and Matt's departure.

Jen cautioned the group not to have tunnel vision and stressed the importance of discussing the charge and collecting data.

Lucky provided some background on the use of the village green at Mason Motz, including conversations she's had with OceanView. There are many parks and trails in Falmouth, but no "walking parks" or space for passive recreation. It's possible the space at Mason Motz could become an area with benches that encourage reading, picnics, and other activities.

Russ took an informal poll with the group about the possibility of locating a Senior Center inside Plummer. Group members were open to the option with caveats and the need for additional information.

Item 3 – Other Issues/Topics

Peggy reviewed and distributed copies of her working document. The document is titled "Falmouth Senior Citizen Advisory Committee – Report and Recommendations for Community Services for Falmouth's Senior Citizens." The document includes the Council's charge, description of the Committee's Reach, Demographic Information, references to the Comprehensive Plan, services the Town currently provides to senior citizens, etc. Peggy asked committee members to send relevant information to her and she will include in the document.

There was continued discussion about a town by town inventory. Amy volunteered to work with Lucky and Jen to create the document. It makes sense for the municipal employees to do it because they already have contacts and understand the nuances in different communities (i.e. Freeport's Community Center is not affiliated with the town).

In response to the earlier discussion about aging in place, Jen shared information about a Yarmouth business called "Simply Sized Home." For an hourly rate, they will organize your home and help downsize the items that have accumulated over the years.

Speaking of Cape Elizabeth, the next meeting is scheduled on **Wednesday, May 13, at 6:00 pm. The meeting location is the Mason Motz Activity Center.** The Wednesday date is to accommodate the Tuesday presentation of the Cape Elizabeth Senior Citizens Advisory Commission to the Cape Elizabeth Town Council. The meeting agenda will tentatively include a visit from Larry Gross from the Southern Maine Agency on Aging.

Item 4 – Adjourn

Chair Vail adjourned the meeting at 8:51 pm.