

MANSFIELD COMMISSION ON AGING MINUTES

February 14, 2022 held via Zoom in virtual format

Town of Mansfield

In accordance with PA 21-2 §149 and social distancing guidelines recommended by the CDC to slow community spread of COVID-19, this meeting will be held virtually. A video recording of the meeting will be available on YouTube at "MANSFIELD CONNECTICUT STREAMING CHANNEL" (<https://mansfieldct.gov/video>) within seven (7) days after the meeting. Public Comment will be accepted by email at human.services@mansfieldct.org or by USPS mail at 4 South Eagleville Road, Mansfield, CT 06268 and must be received prior to the meeting (public comment received after the meeting will be shared at the next meeting). Please email human.services@mansfieldct.org or call 860.429.3315 by 08:30 AM on the day of the meeting to receive instructions for how to view, listen, or comment live.

Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bt3eA7J95WY>

Meeting called to order at 9:31 AM

PRESENT: John Riesen (2024), Martina Wharton (2023), Devon Hock (2023), Joanne Sousa (2024), David Stevens (2023), Will Bigl (2024), Nancy Trawick-Smith (2023), Sylvie DelaMotte (2023), Laura Austin (2025)

ABSENT: Sarah Taylor: Senior Center Supervisor

STAFF LIAISON MEMBERS PRESENT: Patricia Schneider, Director of Human Services

Additional Community Members Present: Jillene Woodmansee, Jennifer Kaufman, Senior Planner

John Riesen made a motion to accept the minutes of January 10, 2021. The notion was seconded and approved.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- John reports correspondence from Linda Painter regarding inability to join meeting on Feb 14th, however that she made arrangements and Jennifer and Jillene are present to speak to the commission.

GUEST SPEAKER JENNIFER KAUFMAN'S REPORT:

- Jennifer Kaufman, Senior Planner reports that none of the projects currently are specifically oriented towards seniors.
- Jennifer discussed current projects going on in the Mansfield area.
- Jennifer directed members to development website where the public can view current projects that are in the works.
- Four Corners – Willards Parcel: Closed the public hearing on last Monday night, and Jennifer thinks they are going to put forth a motion of approval. Per regulations they will contribute significant funds, 1.7 million towards affordable housing projects on South Eagleville road.
- Jennifer reports they are constantly meeting with multi-family developers, but most developers want to build the larger apartment complexes.
- 497 Middle Turnpike – Also looking to develop multi-family residential development, approximately 250 families.
- Recently met with Masonicare but they have not submitted their proposal as of now.
- Jennifer reports that there will be some affordable units at 80% AMI per regulations that will have to stay affordable which is the case for all of the multi-family development that are underway.
- They are working on establishing an Affordable Housing Committee and are looking for community members to apply. They are planning to establish an affordable housing trust fund.
- Pat Schneider reports concern for individuals not having options to age in place or age in the community. She asked what the town can do to encourage development to keep our senior and disabled population a vital part of the community as well.
- Jennifer reports it is a concern for the town, but they are dependent on what developers want to build since it is their land. Discussed difficulties and boundaries in choosing what is developed.
- Pat Schneider asked, with the town having two vacant schools and adjacent property, is there any talk regarding controlling development in those spots as well? Jennifer responds to encourage members to talk to town council to communicate what members/town residents would like to see there.
- John asks regarding policies for affordable housing, and Jennifer responds it is

based off of AMI, low, moderate, and workforce income. John asked regarding policies for those who are disabled as well and Pat responded that it is set by federal and state guidelines and the ADA.

- Tax programs for people with disabilities are available.

GUEST SPEAKER, JILLENE WOODMANSEE'S REPORT:

- Housing Rehabilitation Program: Helps folks with low to moderate income to be able to renovate their homes to be more energy efficient or ADA compliant. The town picks up the cost, and the property is leased at 0% interest until the house sells or changes ownership.
- Covid Assistance Program: Funds to help low to moderate income residents deal with the effects of Covid and it includes rental assistance, food assistance, and childcare assistance. The state eliminated the rental assistance piece, and 500,000 dollars were allocated for food assistance and childcare assistance. Also, Juniper Hill had to increase their cost for their noontime meal, and these funds are also helping to take over this cost. This Friday, they are also providing meal kits from Moe's to families in need.
- Pat also reports that seniors are eligible for some of these programs which goes through the end of this calendar year and reports Yamil is able to help residents through this process.
- Jillene reports since the start they have processed about 75 applications and are helping about 60 residents.

PATRICIA SCHNEIDER'S REPORT:

- The town received a silver award for sustainability 5 years ago and is starting the process again and is asking the various commissions how they are looking at sustainability.
- Pat strongly reports to reach out to the town regarding voicing opinions regarding use of two vacant properties coming available in the town.
- Agency grants are due at the end of this week. We will be representing the seniors in that meeting.
- Jessica D. has resigned due to family reasons so social services is short one staff member. She has generously said she will continue to volunteer with the gardeners in the gardening program.
- Sarah is arriving late today. Senior Center is doing regular drive through meals, and also waiting for Town Council to make decisions regarding what the Governor will decide regarding masks etc.
- New van is in! It has more seating than the current van, and now there is a back-

up van available.

- Nancy asked what the new van will be used for? Pat stated it will be used for trips once the weather is warmer, medical transportation for people in wheelchairs and that it accommodates two wheelchairs.
- The policy is that residents need to be able to get to the van themselves.

WRTD REPORT: Will reports that there is currently no new news.

HOUSING REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS:

Rolling Hills (Jensen's Park): Will reports, construction continues.

Glen Ridge: Martina states nothing new.

Juniper Hill Village: Mary unable to attend meeting due to illness. No report at this time.

Wrights Way: Position vacant. Still waiting for representative.

Old Business:

- A. Website is up and running with link for At Your Fingertips brochure.
- B. Neither of the sub-committees have met since the last meeting.
- C. John has started researching at the town hall regarding when the need for more space at the Senior Center began as well as collecting census data.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION:

- Discussed that the link for the meeting is at the top of the Agenda if a member of the public wants to join the COA meeting.

New Business:

- Martina proposed if the Commission will draft a letter to the town regarding the two vacant buildings in town and use of available facilities. Plan to address this plan at next meeting.
- Plan to extend an invitation for the Mayor to meet at our April meeting.

ADDITIONAL REPORT: N/A

The meeting adjourned at 10:37 AM. The next regular meeting is Monday, March 14, 2022.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Devon Hock.