

**Aging Readiness Task Force  
Meeting #7 – June 16, 2011  
Clark County Public Services Center  
Hearing Room #680  
2:00 – 4:00 P.M.**

**Member Attendees:** Bob Holdridge, Bud Van Cleve, C.T. Thurston, Cory Bolkan, Erica Kelly, Jesse Dunn, Jim Wilson, Karin Woll, Lisa Rasmussen, Mike Teefy, Bob Watkins, Roger Jarvis, Todd Martin

**Members Absent:** Colleen Kuhn, Ed Rankin, Erica Dahmen, Erik Schott, Gail Haskett, Jada Rupley, Jan Wyninger, Kathy McLaughlin, Kiersten Ware, Marti Sanders, Steve Goff

**Guests:** Dave Kelly, Klaus Micheel, Larry Smith, Lynda David, Jan Wichert, Roserria Roberts, David Pilby, Dianna Kretzschman, Tony Golik, Axel Swanson, Vanessa Gaston

**Staff:** Commissioner Boldt, Bill Barron, Oliver Orjiako, Colete Anderson, Jacqui Kamp, Mike Mabrey, Marilee McCall

Jesse Dunn called the meeting to order at 2:00. There was a motion to approve the meeting minutes from April 21, 2011 which was seconded and unanimously approved by the committee.

Bob Watkins opened the report from the Transportation subcommittee by thanking all committee members and staff for their helpful input during the process. Mike Mabrey explained the committee's procedure was to gather feedback from the workshop in November, formulate a series of recommended actions, classify those into policies or physical improvements, and look at what agencies and people are currently doing and where the gaps are. The recommendations address those gaps.

Some specific recommendations to the BOCC:

- Create walkable neighborhoods with connected streets and develop specific code language to address this: Require stub streets at adjacent vacant or unutilized land every 500 feet. This would apply to new development only.
- Suggest code language on how to transition existing neighborhoods into mixed use neighborhoods.
- Improve building access from the street. The development community prefers to put parking lots in front of the building rather than locating front doors up close to the sidewalk. Discussion will likely continue on this as recommendations move forward.
- Ask County to support use of neighborhood electric vehicles (NEV). Distributor "Polaris" may soon be locating in the area.
- Continue to support the Human Resources Council in their efforts to fund a mobility manager position to coordinate senior transportation. Grant application pending.
- Promote the Aging Readiness Plan in the community. Raise awareness of senior issues and erase the willingness to participate in volunteer programs that will help build the infrastructure necessary for walking, bicycling and volunteer drivers.
- Continue to invest in bike lane and sidewalk improvements. Fill missing links in sidewalk network. Open the door to volunteers to help build trails and sidewalks. County Risk Management has developed a volunteer manual to address legal and liability issues.
- Keep an eye on state and national research regarding driver's licenses and support their efforts to require more frequent vision and driving tests for older drivers. Some insurance companies and AARP sponsor driver safety training or programs to help fit the car to the driver.

Recommendations to the C-Tran Board of Commissioners:

- Some short-term recommendations are already in effect such as improving safety at bus stops by posting the stop number and a phone number for emergencies. Also add physical improvements as funding allows.

- Funding for a 2-day workshop to help with better implementation of the Human Services transportation plan to take place third week of October. Many recommendations don't have funding and can't move forward at this time. Looking for a systematic way to get senior transportation services established and funded.
- Group consensus that a bus rapid transit or light-rail transit service should be provided where density and ridership will support it.

The Support Services subcommittee discussed transportation at their meeting and had a recommendation to add. Transportation is such a basic need that *public* transportation should play a major role in solving this issue. Expansion of current transportation services should be included in the final plan.

Jesse Dunn announced an addition to the meeting agenda. County Prosecutor Tony Golik was introduced by Bill Barron and he had an announcement to make to the group. He's been working on a project that parallels the work of the task force. Clark County has issues with elder abuse cases, including financial abuse as well as physical neglect and abuse. There's not a streamlined approach and there have been some failures in these cases. The need for an advocate program similar to the one within the child abuse division was a clear solution for this problem. The domestic violence division uses the same system. Officers, detectives, prosecutors, medical providers, and advocates all have the proper training to handle the case when it comes in. A similar, cooperative approach is needed to create an elder justice center that mirrors the children's justice center. A group of community partners are working on this effort and it's close to getting started. They are also looking at adding an advocate network out in the community. They would spot "at-risk" elders to help them avoid being victimized or if they have been, help them navigate the system to get their needs met. Tony believes looking at elder abuse is an important part of the Aging Readiness Task Force.

SWAAD is working in partnership with the Human Services Council to be a resource for volunteers. There is a possibility for two groups, one would be available to the prosecutors as bookkeepers, accounting or financial in nature, the other would be trained advocates with a higher level of clearance that could be assigned by the prosecutor or the court as a side-by-side advocate for and on behalf of elders, along the lines of CASA volunteers. The problem is one of the most under-reported ones in the community because most often the offenders are relatives or close friends. Hopefully greater awareness will yield to preventing these events. To begin with, they will start small and operate with available funds and see what can be accomplished.

Lisa reported from the Supportive Services subcommittee. They've had very active conversations and are finding many crossovers with transportation and healthy communities. There is still material to be covered and they are working hard. The meetings will continue.

Jacqui gave a report from the Healthy Communities subcommittee. Jacqui acknowledged the committee members both present and absent. Their focus is on the built environment and how it affects our health. Land use components can make our communities healthier and offer more opportunities, such as connectivity (part of transportation), mixed uses (residential, commercial, entertainment), density, access to parks and open spaces, and a safe environment. Working with the County GIS department, a map has been created of about 25 neighborhoods in central Vancouver highlighting various aspects of the community such as single family houses, mobile homes, multi family, house boats, etc.

Another factor is the walkability. Information was gathered from a website called "Walk Score". They created a formula to determine services located within ¼ to 1 mile from your residence that you can walk to (restaurants, grocery, parks, entertainment, etc.). From that, a score is obtained which indicates how walkable your neighborhood is.

Transit is also important so bus stops and routes are shown on the map. Also included are parks and open spaces, showing connectivity to the houses. This shows where there are gaps in the system and what needs to be fixed. Access to healthy foods is included on the map as well.

After this exercise, the subcommittee developed four key challenges resulting from the workshop and survey:

1. Complete neighborhoods (goods and services within walking distance from home)
2. Access to parks, recreation and open space
3. Lack of healthy food
4. Information and communication

The strategies discussed to address the challenges were:

1. Complete neighborhoods
  - Develop asset inventory tool (the maps described have gotten this step started)
  - Neighborhood revitalizing plan
  - Promote mixed use and “third places” (place to go visit and socialize like coffee shops)
  - Improve safety and security
2. Access to parks
  - Utilize the Blue Ribbon committee and what strategies they’ve come up with
  - Community garden program expansion
  - Volunteer program to help maintain new parks to take ownership
  - Encourage parks as meeting places i.e. Fruit Valley neighborhood
  - Expand urban forestry program, already established in Vancouver, believe it can be expanded to the urban areas
  - Encourage joint use facilities like fire stations and schools being used for meetings or recreation spaces
  - Create urban park facility classification
  - Construct heritage trails, learn about history while being active and walking i.e. 78<sup>th</sup> Street Heritage Farm
  - Survey park usage, find out what neighbors want to see
3. Lack of healthy food
  - Develop a healthy food store incentive program
  - Encourage grocery store development in underserved areas
  - Encourage sustainable urban agriculture i.e. community gardens, farmer’s markets, non-profit organization that works with parks to identify space for new community gardens
4. Information and communication
  - Survey residents on what they want
  - Can information be provided in a different way to reach more people?
  - Working with neighborhoods on land use issues, get them involved

The final subcommittee report was from Community Engagement. The first meeting will be next Wednesday and there are three meetings scheduled. Call Jacqui to be added to the list if you would like to be on this subcommittee.

The public workshops concluded last month with Community Engagement. Jesse asked for comments and impressions from that.

Dave heard repeated comments from the crowd about getting volunteers to do the work. He left the meeting enthused about the focus on volunteerism and the county agencies effort to hire a volunteer coordinator. As a committee we have an opportunity and the energy to clear the way for additional volunteerism to work and be implemented.

Bill felt significant impact from the statement “turning silver into gold”, changing the paradigm from “how are we going to deal with this” to “we have an enormous asset and resource, now how do we nurture that”. Also exciting is the concept of reverse internships, turning the elderly into trainers for those who will be taking their place and looking at seniors as an asset not “something to deal with”.

Bob agreed. There are many who work beyond 65 and are happier, contented and add to the economy. We shouldn’t encourage early retirement.

Bill said that Commissioner Boldt has been active in promoting the hiring of a volunteer coordinator for county Parks Department. The Blue Ribbon group has made recommendations to city managers who are meeting now as a group to take those recommendations and expand them to regional management of our parks. In that is the vein of volunteering to help us work together to better manage parks.

Vicki added that the new volunteer coordinator is going to be a city-wide position but they will be housed with parks and recreation administration and their final interviews are this week. They hope to have someone on board in a few weeks.

Volunteerism is the only way to go as there aren't funds to hire additional staff. But volunteers need to be managed properly or you'll lose them. That's why the commissioners committed to a coordinator.

Oliver's feedback is that we have to begin to look at other ways of getting things done. The workshops have opened our eyes to other ways of implementing the recommendations. There are good recommendations coming in from the subcommittees, but funding is going to be an issue for implementation. We haven't begun to put a price on things yet, but other tools and mechanisms to fund these will be vital as we move forward.

Bob feels it's important to have a strategy in place to talk to people in the community, that the era has changed and we'll have to sacrifice more. Before we ask the elected officials for money, we have to convince the public they have to spend more of their own money.

Mike suggested that the neighborhood associations could be a means for contacting seniors. They might do a survey of seniors for example to organize events such as a group walk. They could be a good resource for communication.

Jesse feels part of the challenge is to re-educate ourselves as far as what it is we can do, what exists in us collectively to contribute and give back in terms of intellectual capital, muscle, sociability, etc. All of this comes from the generosity of spirit that has characterized our society for years. Some of these ideas rekindle this spirit as a value that this community wants to promote and push forward.

Colette introduced three of the six person team from 2011 Leadership Clark County (LLC), John Vanderkin, Bonnie Moore and Doug Steinbarger. In the beginning they talked about communication being a key problem, so their group decided to take that on as their project.

John, who is president of Employers Overload, said LLC agreed to take on the project of changing demographics and the topic they felt passionate about was information. There are a lot of resources and services in SW Washington but the residents and even some service providers don't know about them. As a team they decided to put together a website and called it My Encore Years "myencoreyears.org". On the site, there are five links to five organizations with directories or resource guides that help people locate services. These links can reach 80% of the services. They saw two needs; getting the information of the website out to the residents and addressing folks who find themselves in crisis or immediate need. For the folks in crisis, they created a magnet featuring the web address and with help from project partners printed over 40,000 of them. They are being distributed to services that deal with people in crisis such as the fire districts, local sheriff, Vancouver PD, and hospitals. Secondly they made rack cards for distribution in general public places such as Fort Vancouver libraries, community centers, and various municipalities.

The last steps in the project are this meeting and getting more magnets done for delivery. Hopefully the partners will continue to communicate and allocate funds to move this forward. This isn't the only answer, but it's a stop gap. The reaction from most people is thank you and this is a great first step.

Bonnie said the project team recently had a booth at the 50+ Expo. They talked to over 120 people and asked them questions about their needs. They better understood how they find their information, many

through their grown children. They also helped come up with the name for the website, which is very positive.

Colete said the rack cards will be at the Fair booth as a handout. The website is being hosted by 211 so there is a mechanism to keep it updated. Also, part of the funding came from United Way, Human Services Council, and SWAAD in a combined effort. A PDF of the rack card is available on the website so distributors can print additional copies.

Lisa gave an update on the Fair booth. The county will cover the cost of the booth in the air conditioned building and staff is helping with the development. Lisa stressed the most important thing is to get an email address from every person that visits the booth. This is a tool to get people's names and get their feedback. Free entry and parking will be provided to all volunteers and they can purchase four ½ price tickets for family and friends. There will be computers set up for the public to access the reports and look at the plan on healthy communities. Lisa is asking each of the subcommittees to come up with one question they'd like to ask of the public, what is the most important feedback you want from the community at large? And also give her feedback on how you'd like to see it, whether by handwritten questionnaire or online. There is minimal space in the booth but there will be chairs to sit down, a table with a skirt to hide belongings under, an ice chest for keeping things cold and water provided. Lisa will send out the schedule and call each person a day ahead to confirm attendance. She will be there Friday morning when it opens and close it down every evening. Call Colete, Jacqui or Lisa if something happens and you can't make it. Senior Messenger has offered volunteers. Lisa will send out guidelines about what to say to people and where to direct people for services. Remember this is about the aging task force, not an information booth. The rack card is a portal to information. There are five websites included there as a "go to" for the expert information. A hard copy or CD of the plan will be available by calling Community Planning in September if someone doesn't have internet access.

Review of the schedule: At the next task force meeting in August we will review the last two chapters of the plan. Another task force meeting has been added in September. At that juncture, the report will be completed altogether and you'll need to make a recommendation whether to move forward or not. At that meeting we'll go over the public event scheduled for October. We're working on the venue and will have the date and location to announce by then. February 7, 2012 this plan will go before the BOCC for their consideration. We will need task force members present, asking them to adopt it. Mark your calendars with these dates.

Public comment: Sue Pauley, local realtor, has taken care of her elderly mother for 8 years. Her needs are starting to mount and she wants to get all the information she can because she lives with the issues every day. She is interested in anything she can find out, particularly housing, because her house can't be retrofitted.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:52 pm.