

City of Birmingham
Regular Meeting of the Ad Hoc Aging in Place Committee

December 13, 2023

Martha Baldwin Room

Baldwin Public Library

300 West Merrill Street, Birmingham, Michigan

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham's Ad Hoc Aging in Place Committee held on December 13, 2023.

1. Call to Order: AIPC Chair Hoff convened the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call:

Present: Melissa Mark, Pam DeWeese, Rackeline Hoff, Cris Braun Leslie Pielack, Rosemary O'Malley, Rebekah Craft

Absent: Jay Reynolds (Alternate)

Guests: None

3. Approval of Minutes

A. Regular meeting of the AIPC on November 15, 2023

Chair Hoff asked if there were any comments or corrections to the draft minutes from this meeting.

Chair Hoff stated that in Section 6, F, (ii), it appears that the same sentence was repeated twice. Upon examination, the correct wording of the improvement should read, "I have adequate health care and am healthy enough to age in my residence." Staff Liaison ACM Clemence stated that he would see that the correction to the minutes would be addressed.

Chair Hoff asked for a motion to approve the AIPC minutes of November 15, 2023 with the noted correction to Section 6, F, (ii).

Motion by CM O'Malley to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2023 meeting as amended. Motion seconded by CM Mark. Voice Vote:

Yeas: Hoff, DeWeese, Pielack, O'Malley, Braun, Mark, Craft

Nays: None

4. Guests: None

5. New Business:

A. Chair Hoff greeted the public in attendance and thanked them for coming to the meeting.

- B. Staff Liaison ACM Clemence then went through a detailed summary of the work completed by the Ad Hoc Aging in Place Committee (AIPC), including the following:
- i. The function of the AIPC –To study current demographic trends, evaluate the needs of the City’s aging population and to prepare a City-wide action plan outlining the vision and goals to improve the health, safety and welfare of older citizens and to encourage residents to age comfortably in Birmingham.
 - ii. The AIPC is made up of seven regular members and one alternate member.
 - iii. The AIPC was formed in June of 2023 by the City Commission and has been meeting at least once a month since July of 2023:
 - a. July 26, 2023- Kick-off meeting.
 - b. August 30, 2023 – Review demographic data and analyze existing services.
 - c. September 27, 2023 – City planning and Building review.
 - d. October 11, 2023 – Workshop to discuss Community Survey.
 - e. October 25, 2023 – Discussion/edit of Community Survey.
 - f. November 8, 2023 – Discussion/edit of Community Survey.
 - g. November 15, 2023 – Discussion/edit of Community Survey.
 - h. December 2 and 3, 2023- Staff Liaison ACM Clemence distributed Community Surveys at the City’s Winter Market event.
 - i. December 13, 2023 – Public Engagement meeting on the work of the AIPC and input from the community on aging in place.
 - iv. The Community Survey will be available for anyone to complete and is available in both printed form as well as on line at engage.bham.org/aginginplace.
 - v. In an effort to reach as many residents as possible, the City is going to be sending out a print copy of the Community Survey in every resident’s water bill. The Community Survey can be completed in electronic form using the “QR” code in the upper right hand corner of the survey page or be completed in print form and returned to the City via the U.S. Postal Service or be dropped off at City Hall, the Birmingham Public Library, the Birmingham Museum or Next.
 - vi. In constructing the Community Survey, the AIPC considered all eight of the domains of livability. The eight domains of livability have been used by many other communities to gauge where their communities are in terms of factors that are critical to older persons and their quality of life.
 - vii. In order to meet the important goal of reaching as many people as possible, the Community Survey had to be limited to two pages (front and back) in order to be included in the City’s water bills. As a result, the AIPC utilized the following categories on the Community Survey:

- a. What is most important about Birmingham for older adults?
- b. Demographics
 - i. Population is aging.
 - ii. More households with adults age 65+.
- c. Birmingham & Your Needs
 - i. What are older adult support systems?
 - ii. How familiar are people with the services offered by Next?
 - iii. Are the City's parks and facilities accessible?
- d. Transportation
 - i. Is it accessible? Safe?
 - ii. Pedestrians need safe sidewalks and crossable streets.
 - iii. Encourage public transit and outreach.
- e. Housing
 - i. Studies have shown that older adults want to remain in their current home.
 - ii. What assistance do older adults need with home modifications? Snow removal? Lawn care? Or other basic home repair assistance?
 - iii. What is the affordability of housing in or community? Is the affordability of housing a concern for older adults?
 - iv. What can the City do from a planning/building perspective to encourage affordable housing (zoning law changes, ADU's, tiny houses, shared housing).
- f. Social and Civic Engagement
 - i. People need public places to gather, both indoors and outdoors.
 - ii. Accessibility concerns.
 - iii. Everyone wants to feel valued. Intergenerational gatherings/activities.
 - iv. Loneliness can be reduced by creating opportunities to socialize and engage in physical activity.
 - v. Do older adults feel connected to the community?
 - vi. Does the City have enough civic destinations?
- g. Communications
 - i. The City's website, newsletters, social media and emails are popular methods of communication.

"walkable", then the City should be the one responsible for cleaning off the sidewalks and maintaining safe sidewalks. Resident Stacy Goldberg added that she has found it difficult to find reliable lawn and snow services. CM Braun stated that Next could be contacted and that they have a list of vetted contractors. CM Braun stated that through the use of the City's CDGB grant funds, income qualified residents can receive lawn and snow removal services. Resident Kay Bell stated that a list of services/contractors would be very helpful to older adults.

- vi. Resident Shari Tattire asked if residents were responsible for snow removal on the sidewalks in front of their homes. Ms. Tattire was informed that residents are responsible for clearing snow on City sidewalks adjacent to their property.
- vii. Resident Gordon Rinschler stated that he came to tonight's meeting to make sure that the new Next building maintained a "warm and inviting" front lobby for all. Mr. Rinschler stated that the Next lobby has always been a place where people felt comfortable. Mr. Rinschler stated that people need to feel good when they enter the building and that the current lobby area of Next is the "magic" of the operation. Mr. Rinschler reiterated the importance of social contacts for older adults and the need to feel connected to the community. While many in our community have financial resources, many do not have social connections and/or resources. Chair Hoff stated that the lobby area of the Baldwin House is very similar in nature and is important to that community. Chair Hoff stated that people sit around and talk and that it gives the building a sense of warmth and more of a "home" feeling.
- viii. CM Pielack stated that if there is any area where a respondent does not feel their voice or concern is being heard on the Community Survey, there is an area to make additional comments, or you can attach additional comments or you can check a box that you are interested in receiving a call in reference to a personal interview.
- ix. Resident Kathy Devereaux asked what was going on at the Community House. Ms. Devereaux stated that the Community House used to be a big part of the City's fabric, but that seems to have fallen by the wayside. Resident Gordon Rinschler commented that the Community House used to be a community asset. However, the Community House has gotten rid of all of their community functions and/or groups that utilized their building. Mr. Rinschler stated that this was not anything the City did, but it appears that the old way of connecting with the community was no longer in the Community House's "business plan."
- x. Resident Kay Bell brought up that she hopes the new Next/Community center promotes "intergenerational activities." Ms. Bell stated that in the country of Iceland, pre-schools are often apart of their senior centers. Gordon Rinschler also commented that he participated in a senior to senior (high school senior with actual senior citizens) event that he found to be a wonderful experience.

- xi. Resident David Young stated that he believes the AIPC should consider the issue of technology. Mr. Young explained that technology is advancing so rapidly, that it may be difficult for older adults to keep up. Mr. Young feels that this will be a challenge for the City in the future. Mr. Young gave the examples of tele-health and AI (artificial intelligence). CM Craft stated that the Birmingham Public Library will be having an AI informational program at the library on January 31, 2024 at 7:00 pm.
- xii. Resident Kay Bell stated that in terms of housing, maybe the City should consider a tax abatement program. Resident Kathy Devereaux stated that maybe the City could somehow incentivize builders to build more affordable housing in the City.
- xiii. Resident Stacey Goldberg stated that she believes that people of her age group need to start thinking about their aging in place plans. There was discussion amongst the AIPC and residents about learning opportunities at possibly Next or other senior centers that have dynamic programming of this type. It was brought up that the senior center in Shelby Township is a fantastic resource and has programming of this type.

6. Old Business: None

7. Open to the Public for Items Not on the Agenda: None

8. Miscellaneous Communications: A copy of the Community Survey is available for the public.

9. Announcements:

- A. Chair Hoff asked if the AIPC would like to meet in the month of January. CM O'Malley stated that she felt the committee should meet to discuss some of the items that were brought up during tonight's meeting. CM Pielack stated that those items could be included in a meeting in February. CM Braun felt that the group could discuss what the City-Wide Action Plan could look like. Chair Hoff stated that she thinks it would be wise to make sure we have all the data and research completed before any determination of content is discussed or decided upon. After discussion, Chair Hoff asked the AIPC if there was consensus to meet in January and there was consensus that the AIPC should meet for their regularly scheduled meeting in January of 2024.

10. Adjournment:

- A. Chair Hoff stated that with all business being addressed, could she please have a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion to adjourn by CM DeWeese and seconded by CM Mark. Chair Hoff adjourned the meeting at 7:40 pm.