

Town of East Hampton Senior Services Committee

To: The East Hampton Town Board

From: Mary Ella Moeller, Chair, Senior Services Committee

RE: Final Report

Date: December 2, 2014

The Senior Services Committee of the Town of East Hampton has met bi-weekly since March to review current services available. (See appointing Resolution 2014-259 attached.) In addition, a survey was undertaken to help assess current use of the various programs and to discuss future needs for a growing population of older adults who plan to age in place. The Committee is pleased to make the following recommendations to the Town Board based on immediate, short range and long range time frames.*

On-Line Calendar - Immediate

It is recommended that the Town purchase a calendar software program to be used for the creation of an online calendar with links to all of the institutions offering services -- with special emphasis given to affordable recreational activities/active exercise as 2 ½ hours of instruction-led, appropriate level activity supports healthy aging. This calendar, which could also be printed, would provide current information on the availability of the various programs for older adults scheduled each day, week and month in the community. The calendar should be featured prominently on the Town website. The Town should work with all local media to help publicize events online and in print. The Town should launch a PR campaign to advertise to all residents the existence and benefit of the calendar.

Inter-Agency Committee - Immediate

A permanent committee of service oriented institutions in the Town should be formed to facilitate information sharing and ideas for the development of new programs that could be offered by each organization. The purpose is to (1) advise on how best to coordinate the programs and services offered by all public and private entities in the Town; (2) work together on a regular basis to share information among the institutions to improve and expand their offerings in a coordinated non-duplicative manner; (3) develop improved methods of communication to provide information on the various programs in the community; (4) evaluate the progress of and attendance at services and programs to assess if current and new programs are meeting the needs and interests of as many sub-groups as possible.

*Immediate - 1 month to 1 year
Short Range - 1 year to 3 years
Long Range - 3 years +

Medical Services Committee - Immediate and Long Range

Although the Town of East Hampton does not provide medical services to its residents, a committee of East Hampton Town/Southampton town residents should be formed to work closely with Southampton Hospital in its planning process for the new hospital to be built at the Southampton College campus and satellite care facility which may be established in East Hampton to facilitate improved access to emergency medical services. Additional future medical services to be considered should be addition of geriatric practitioners and in-patient rehabilitation. The quantity and quality of these services available on the East End needs a great deal of improvement and are not sufficient for the growing population of older adults.

Transportation - Short Range

As residents age, many are no longer able or willing to use their own vehicles, especially in the evening. Understanding that most people wish to age in place rather than relocate to nursing homes or assisted living facilities, the Town should pursue a study of ways to increase transportation services for older residents, i.e., senior Town transportation to be used from 4PM – 10PM (October – April). It is also recommended that all major heavily trafficked roads be maintained with striped white lines.

Housing - Long Range

Housing for down sizing for all older adults needs to be fully explored. The Town should examine its current rules and regulations and change them with the goal of enabling residents to age in place in their current homes.

The East Hampton Town 2005 Comprehensive Plan suggested that housing for all older adults was an important component of the Plan. The Comprehensive Plan recommended that the town consider many types of housing for older adults. Currently, affordable housing developments for older adults have been concentrated in the lower income ranges and have excluded people who have previously owned homes.

There exists a need for housing for those who have been forced to sell their homes by age or infirmity to be able stay in East Hampton. There also exists a need for current residents who do not fall into the lower income ranges to be able to find affordable apartments in East Hampton if they need to downsize. The spectrum of housing needs for older Americans runs the gamut from single family homes, to apartments, to assistive living facilities, and to nursing homes. All these may or may not be cost effective in East Hampton and may have to be available on a regional basis. Notwithstanding that the Town should continue to explore the demand for these in the future and work with the appropriate agencies for planning purposes.

East Hampton Town Community Center - Long Range

The current Senior Services Center on Springs Fireplace Road provides vital services in the Town of East Hampton. It offers many programs including the popular lunch/nutrition program, adult day care, and limited daily exercise and social programs. However, the current Senior Center is inadequate for the types of programs and services that are needed to meet the current and future needs of the growing older adult community. The committee strongly recommends that the Town replace the current Senior Services Center with one that can serve the entire community. It is estimated that the over 65 population in East Hampton will be double the size of the school age population within 15 years. This population will need emergency medical facilities, assisted living facilities, senior housing, and a wide range of social programs and services. Adequate and appropriate space is needed. The Town Board needs to identify a centrally located site where a new center can be built and expanded with other future facilities as needed. A committee of interested and informed citizens needs to be appointed to work on the design, programs and services that such a facility would require.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Cohill, YMCA

Dennis Fabiszak, East Hampton Library

Mary Fallon

Paul Fiondella

Howard John Lebwith DDS

Jola Marcario

Mary Ella Moeller

Diane Patrizio, Director of Human Services for East Hampton Town

Dr. Nancy Peppard

Sheila Rogers, East Hampton Healthcare Foundation

John Rooney, Superintendent of Recreation for East Hampton Town

Tom Ruhle, Director of Housing for East Hampton Town

Kathee Burke-Gonzalez, Board Liaison

Resolution 2014-259: Establish and Appoint the Senior Services Committee

WHEREAS, the growth of the older population is increasing at an unprecedented rate as improved medical care and prevention efforts are resulting in longer life spans; and

WHEREAS, the aging of "baby boomers" (individuals born between 1946 and 1964) is also contributing significantly to this demographic trend as they reach age 65; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 US Census has determined that Adults 65+ represent 18% of the Town of East Hampton's population; and

WHEREAS, the aging of the "baby boomers" will place new demands upon the Town and the community to provide senior services; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Town of East Hampton establishes a Senior Services Committee to assess the diverse needs and desires of a senior population that spans three generations; determine the availability of senior services delivered by the Town as well as other local institutions; develop a plan to provide a coordination of services and avoid any duplication; and evaluate and research approaches taken in other comparable communities to ensure that the Town and community have a framework in place to support healthy aging, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the following members be appointed to the Senior Services Committee, to serve at the pleasure of the Town Board:

Mary Fallon
Paul Fiondella
Howard Lebwith DDS
Mary Ella Moeller
Dr. Nancy Peppard

As well as representatives of the following institutions:

Tom Cohill, YMCA
Dennis Fabiszak, East Hampton Library
Diane Patrizio, Director of Human Services for East Hampton Town
Sheila Rogers, East Hampton Healthcare Foundation
Michele Rothar, LCSW Case Manager for East Hampton Town
John Rooney, Superintendent of Recreation for East Hampton Town
Tom Ruhle, Director of Housing for East Hampton Town

Board Liaison: Kathee Burke-Gonzalez; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Senior Services Committee will report back to the Town Board with an assessment and recommendation no later than October 1, 2014.