

**Senior Advisory Committee [SAC] Fiscal Year 2020**  
Annual Report (May 2019-April 2020)

The Senior Advisory Committee members are Sharonlee Vogel (chair), Genie Wessel (vice-chair), Pearl Atkinson-Stewart, Roger Chang, Steven Cook, John Eberhard, Elizabeth Johnson, George Laniado, Mary McGraw, Jean Salkeld, Paul Verchinski, and David Zeitzer. Staff liaison: Michelle Miller, Director of Community Services.

The committee met four times during the past year. Click on the attached link to review the minutes: <https://www.columbiaassociation.org/board-committee/senior-advisory-committee/>

**Accomplishments:** Each of the accomplishments ties directly to the SAC Charge or to an item in the Comprehensive Plan for Serving the Older Adult Community. The item number corresponding to the Comprehensive Plan is in parenthesis.

1. Presentations about topics of interest to seniors and toured various facilities: CA's Director of Sports and Fitness presented about Clarabridge; toured the Athletic Club and learned about programs for seniors; learned about Energy program and information on residential services; Howard Eco Works presented about their initiatives; Speak Easy Howard County presentation; discussed Homeowners Tax Credit and the impact on seniors; had regular updates from the Office on Aging, Commission on Aging, Maryland Commission on Aging, the Village in Howard, and the Columbia Association on programs and services of interest. At each meeting, each member shared with the Committee on what they are hearing/what seniors want in their Village and several members wrote Village newsletter articles about topics of interest to seniors in their Village. Participated in the Budget process by submitting testimony. (7, 8,F,Charge)

2. Information was shared and input solicited through surveys about CA's pressing needs in the development of the FY 20-24 Strategic Plan and survey shared about the Neighborhood Centers. Recruited new members to the committee from Villages that previously did not have representation. (Charge, 7)

3. Monitored the progress and gave feedback regarding the Older Adult Plan through regular verbal updates at meetings. The Comprehensive Plan for Serving the Older Adult Community was completed in May 2014. All of the 51 total recommendations all have been started, one modified, and ongoing progress being made to most of the items. (Charge)

**Charges for FY21**

1. Update the Comprehensive Plan for Older Adults with no more than five goals for CA.
2. Provide recommendations to CA Board of Directors and CA staff on how CA can enhance its programs and facilities to better serve the rapidly growing 50+ demographic in Columbia.
3. Work the CA and the County on Howard becoming an *Age-Friendly Community*.
4. Continue to work towards representation from every village on the SAC.

**Recommendation:** As a result of the COVID 19 funding impacts on CA, the SAC cannot support this year a grant to The Village in Howard [TVIH] in the next budget cycle.

Charges approved by CA Board: \_\_\_\_\_

(The Older Adult Implementation report update for 2020 begins on the next page.)

## Older Adult Plan - Implementation Update: May 2020

The Older Adult Plan was approved by the CA Board and implementation began in May 2014. The plan outlines CA's commitment to older adult services over the next 20 years. Much progress has been made through the years and many programs have become operational and reported in previous years! The following report highlights the progress on the implementation of the Older Adult Plan that occurred during the fiscal year 2020, May 1, 2019- April 30, 2020.

**1. Mobility** C. Senior Events Shuttle: The SES is looking at ways to reach a segment of the population that may be socially isolated by increasing outreach and awareness efforts and made presentations and shared information with at Columbia Community Exchange Events, The Village in Howard, Parkview, Miller's Grant, Dorsey Hall. Participated in outreach at 50+ Expo, Greenfest, other events throughout Howard County. Due to COVID-19 and the current state of emergency, the program was suspended in March 2020. 300 riders participated in 42 trips during the shortened year.

D. Neighbor Ride Support: The Volunteer Center is continuing the ongoing partnership with Neighbor Ride in which qualified seniors can use the service at half price for transportation to and from volunteer opportunities.

**2. Helping Older Adults Age in Place** A. Home Repair and Modification Program: The Columbia Community Exchange and The Village in Howard provide minor home repair services that are available to members of the respective programs.

F. Informational programs about services for older adults are part of the Columbia Community Exchange and the Village in Howard. Columbia Community Exchange has 290 members in FY 20.

**3. Social/Cultural & Educational Activities** A. Village Association Cultural Events: Outreach to Latin, French, Korean, Ghanaian and Chinese cultures through the CA Multicultural programs, held at various villages community centers and public libraries. Implemented the monthly International Book Club (average 20 participants), Culture Cafes (average 200 people) and Culture Fest (average 500 participants).

C. Village Association Workshops/Classes: Village associations have had art paint nights, Master Garden classes, Bugs that Bite, senior luncheons and senior coffee, among other programs.

B. Informal Village Association Program Opportunities: CA has held Solar Cooperatives, Watershed and mosquito control workshops at the Community Association facilities. The Columbia Archives presented a program at Stonehouse in Long Reach Village Center. The River Hill Community Association began a pilot program that primarily serves Chinese American seniors. The program incorporated games, music and singing and opportunities for socialization during the winter months.

D. Lifelong Learning: Columbia Community Exchange (CCE) has hosted mini workshops, known as skillshare fairs, which are member led and teach do-it-yourself skills. Also, CCE had 17 technology training sessions were participants brought their own device. Programs were free to the public and only cost was utilizing existing staff that were regularly scheduled.

The Multicultural Program in 2020 had many opportunities for older adults participated:

- Africa CultureFest,celebrated 13 of the many countries and cultures on the continent with about 500 participants
- Haitian cooking class and dinner; cooking demo and dinner with 28 participants
- Lunar New Year Celebration at Columbia Mall, Feb 2019
- Liyang Middle School Visit, Feb 2019 (adult volunteers)
- French Cooking Class, 38 people
- World Languages Cafe - 12 meetings on the 4th Tuesday of the month; average attendance is 80 - 90 people, and 16 - 19 languages were offered during the year.
- International Book Club - 12 books on 2nd Wednesday of the month; 73 members, but attendance at meetings to discuss books usually runs between 10 and 18 people.

G. Outings:. CA Tennis continues its partnership with the Washington Kastles, professional tennis team in DC and hosted a CA Community Night at a Kastles home match during the summer. CA Tennis is looking at adding a community day during the Citi Open, a professional tennis tournament in DC as well as a day trip to the US Open Tennis Championships in New York.

**4. Programming - A Community for All Ages** A. Intergenerational Programming: Intergenerational programming continued with Teen Center, Library and Bain Center to teach older adults how to better use technology. Average 20 participants.

B. Programming Change within Existing Facilities: Converted the footprint of two tennis courts which used to be under the bubble at Owen Brown into a 6 court, state-of-art new permanent pickleball facility. Lights for night time play are being added to this facility. During the summer, we offer senior swim M-F at Hobbit's Glen pool every morning till the pool closes in August. Variety of Senior Lap Hours at Steven's Forest, Bryant Woods and year round at the Columbia Swim Center in the afternoons.

- The Art Center offered several daytime classes targeted at older adults, including Introduction/Advanced Watercolor with 15 students Introduction/Advanced Acrylic with 12 students Introduction/Advanced Pastel with 4 students Three ceramics daytime classes with an average of 8 students per class. The salon series, gallery talks and reading series also targeted older adults, and had an average of 50-75 participants per talk. Of those who provided their age, the Art Center had 105 participants 65 yrs and older participating in all art classes. 302 people did not provide their age and many of those are older adults.

C. Program Monitoring: Pickleball continues to be in full flow year around at CA. Five coaches on CA's professional tennis staff got pickleball certified by the Professional Pickleball Registry. A comprehensive pickleball program was introduced, including instructional clinics, leagues, drop in clinics, private/semi private and group lessons and drop in open play. Tennis continues to offer weekly doubles round robin play at the different tennis clubs for seniors at reduced rates, which draws several participants. Group Fitness, in addition to existing programs such as Aqua Arthritis, Build Your Bones, and Joints in Motion added several new programs/classes geared towards older adults of all fitness levels such as - BodyFlow (classes that combine yoga, pilates, and tai chi in one class), BodyPump Start, Cardio Tone Barre (a non impact workout using a variety of props with ballet inspired movements), Fit Essentials (a class for all levels combining cardio and strength moves), and Hula Hoop classes.

D. Group Hikes and Walks: Exploring Columbia on Foot provided scheduled walks in 2019. Harper's Choice did a group hike along then Savage Trail in spring 2018.

E. Off-Peak Programming: Group Fitness class schedules are evaluated quarterly and adjusted to include classes during the non-peak hours.

## **5. Facilities - Design and Location**

A. Facility Activity Hubs: The Columbia Athletic Club with a new featured lobby area successfully reopened and was very well received by the community.

B. Universal Design: Incorporated into the Long Reach Tennis Club, Owen Brown pickleball facility and major renovations to the Swim Center and the Athletic Club.

D. Walkable/Livable Communities: Staff advocated for funding of the Howard County Bikeway - a Horizon Foundation organized initiative to create a spinal network of bicycle pathways that would connect more than half of the county's residents to this network.

F. Park Furnishings to Serve Older Adults: The major pathways around the three lakes have benches installed since the plan went into effect. Some seating has been updated around the ponds. An additional water fountain with a separate dog water fountain has been added at Lake Elkhorn.

**6. Rates and Fees:** B. Financial Assistance: Ten percent senior discount continues to be offered as well as a 50% income qualified discount.

**7. Partnering and Cooperation:** A. Enhance Partnering: CA's Office of Planning and Community Affairs has continued to foster partnerships with Howard County Government (Columbia Market Study, Downtown Columbia to Patuxent Branch Trail Pathway Feasibility Study and Bike Share Feasibility Study, Complete Streets Implementation Team, ) and the Horizon Foundation (Community Building Speakers Series and planning for the Open Streets event on Little Patuxent Parkway loop), among others.

B. The Older Adult Program Manager has partnered with the Horizon Foundation on Speakeasy, Howard County. Created bicultural conversations in Aging between Korean and English speaking seniors. Held a Sweetheart dance for older adults in cooperation with the Camps department.

C. Educational Classes: Office on Aging holding chronic disease management classes at a CA facility. CA has hosted nutritional seminars and on-going health and wellness classes at the Haven on the Lake.

**8. Information, Training, Community Engagement and Coordination:** B. Older Adult Guide: Updated brochure in 2019 as part of the 50 + Expo. Sponsorship of bags distributed at 50+ Expo; includes CA branding.

F. Community Engagement: Created information sheets and helpful links for Older Adults that is posted on CA's website. Programs and classes that are of interest to the older adult community are promoted in the 3x yearly Activities Guide, which is posted online, delivered free to residents, available in CA facilities, and placed at community locations.

C. Website: CA is currently revising its website to make it more user friendly. PDFs posted on CA's website are being processed through software that makes them ADA compliant. This will affect Board and committee documents and facility schedules. (However, this will not be possible with Archives files.). Archives has moved many of its items in its database to online.

D. Video and Live Streaming: Live streaming of CA Board Meetings is now operational. Recorded videos are posted on the website within three working days.

G. Older Adult Subject Expert: Older Adult Program coordinator participates on Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC) Healthy Aging committee to promote CA's offerings and liaise with community partners to support healthy aging in our community. Partnered with the Horizon Foundation on Speakeasy,

Howard County.

**9. Health Promotion and Services** A. Health and Wellness Partnerships: Ongoing medical wellness programs (Optimal Health and Fit Beginnings) with doctors' offices and Howard County General Hospital and various medical practitioners.

B. Healthy Lifestyle: Ongoing and expanded program offerings, facility modifications and ADA accessibility at existing facilities and pools.

C. Mind-Body Wellness: Ongoing yoga and aqua yoga at Haven on the Lake as well as restorative yoga classes.

D. Medical Advisory Panel: Working with CA's medical director, Dr. Harry Oken, Dr. Jyothi Rao (Shakthi Health and Wellness Center), and Dr. Kevin Carlson (geriatric medicine) established a healthy eating series. The kickoff event reached more than 400 community residents. Planning is underway for future events.

E. Encourage Exercise: Marketing materials and campaigns have targeted those with an interest in warm water therapy and options that increase mobility and stability. Information on the Senior Swim Pass continues to be included in communications. Several magazine articles have included testimonials from older adults regarding program options that are therapeutic and results oriented.