

Greater Richmond Age Wave Coalition Neighborhood Livability Action Team March 1, 2017 @ 1:00pm-2:30pm

Richmond Regional Planning District Commission
9211 Forest Hill Ave, Richmond, VA 23230
Facilitator: Ken Lantz

Neighborhood Livability Action Team

Facilitator: Ken Lantz

Notes: Stephanie Scott

Objective: Increase opportunities for affordable housing and home modification services for older adults, increase mobility and transportation infrastructure in order to decrease isolation of older adults and persons with disabilities, improve physical infrastructure including accessibility to housing and public transportation, promote public safety and make disaster planning widely accessible. The Greater Richmond Age Wave Plan

The Meeting

Molly MacBean asked if the GRTC Survey was complete and have the results been posted. Are there any updates? Ken Lantz advised he has not seen anything yet.

Charlie Rasnick from Mechanicsville Churches Emergency Functions (MCEF) gave a presentation on Hanover Senior Rides. The program began in July 2012 with the first year spent on planning as well as looking at similar programs. The first ride was given in July 2013. In Hanover there is no public transportation and there is a need for older adults to get to medical appointments, personal business and errands. The first step was to conduct a survey and talk to other agencies that provide similar services to this age cohort. MCEF looked at the Easter Seals model for program design and implementation. Currently, the Shepherd's Center in Chesterfield is also using this model. Services are only for people who are ambulatory with a cane or a walker. They do not have the functionality yet to accommodate people in wheelchairs. In addition, volunteer drivers are over 65 and may have a difficult time assisting people with wheel chairs.

Volunteer drivers take the client into the appointment as well as leave their number for when they should return, they do not drop the client off at the curb. Drivers must complete DMV & background checks and have a positive driving record. In addition, they complete an AARP - AAA safe driver course. Currently they have 24 volunteer drivers and serve 104 clients in the Hanover area. They purposely started small and aimed to grow incrementally, in order to learn from mistakes that would not cause the program to fail. They serve people in the community that are age 60+ or anyone who have a critical need. The average ride is 3.5 hours long and the annual cost is \$18,500 for an average cost of \$30.00 per ride. The goals for the future are: additional funding, recruit additional drivers, contract a wheelchair van and expand services to the entire county. Also, they currently have a volunteer who is a grant writer and they plan to utilize this expertise.

Questions:

1. Is there is a cap on how many times a client can use the service? Yes - Two trips to the grocery store and two personal business trips per month. The plan is set up a trip for one purpose (not multiple stops) they do make an exception for going to the doctor and picking up an Rx.
2. The training programs that you currently utilize- do any of them provide training on assisting someone in or out of the car with a cane or walker? Yes, the drivers provide help getting in and out of the car with a walker or cane. However, they currently cannot transport someone in a wheelchair. Senior Connections has assisted with rides for wheel chair clients.
3. Are you at capacity? Can you handle more clients/drivers? Answer: the challenge is getting enough driver volunteers. One issue is that a lot of volunteers do not want to give social security number for background checks.
4. Do drivers take their compensation checks for 25 cents/mile? Answer: about 50% keep the money and 50% cash the check and then give it back to the ministry as a donation. Mileage is paid from the volunteer's home (round trip).

Sara Morris and Karen Moeller provided an update on meetings with localities: Henrico County, Charles City, Chesterfield County, New Kent County and City of Richmond. All localities have a common goal of providing services and resources for citizens of all ages. However, resources vary greatly by locality.

- Henrico County - Partners with GRTC (Website transportation for seniors not readily available) Molly advised they are currently working on this issue
- Charles City - A lot of activities organized by the county with two full time staff members. They rely on Bay Transit and are very active.
- Chesterfield - A lot of transportation options are offered. Utilize Access Chesterfield and currently the infra structure cannot handle much more capacity.
- New Kent - Corner Stone Support Services (limited services) do things around mental health, housing and transportation for their clients. They also provide Logisticare-arranged transportation for Medicaid clients. They are in the process of conducting an evaluation to see what is needed and look at gaps. Three main areas of focus: transportation, housing repairs and food.
- Richmond - Very excited about what we are doing with transportation

Maria Holperin Terrell provided a report on her meeting with The Shepherd's Center of Richmond. The Shepherd's Center of Richmond provides various supports. The membership fee is \$25 per month. They provide classes, transportation and light house repairs (universal contractors). A referral is provided by Senior Connections for transportation needs with a 7 day requirement. There is no fee; however, riders can make a voluntary contribution. There are no minimum hour requirements for drivers and Ride Share software is used for scheduling. Currently some zip codes are restricted to medical trips only and other zip codes are limited due to lack of volunteer drivers. These restricted zip codes are in lower income areas mainly in the east end where 13% of the population is over the age of 65. Drivers are volunteers and receive no mileage reimbursement. Recruitment is difficult and they often get more clients than volunteers. Often the Open University classes that are offered attract volunteer drivers. They currently do not conduct a background check due to the cost burden. However, they do require references. Each

volunteer receives training guidelines and a copy of the letter regarding the program is sent to each client. In October they conduct a Driver Dinner Celebration to build camaraderie. The Shepherd's Center staff provides back up to the volunteer drivers. Their hours are 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. with no holiday or weekends.

Financial status – majority of funding through donations, some grants (currently considering targeting the children of the riders for donations). They do not want to pursue government funding, it is too much red tape and mandate) Corporate sponsorship is difficult to maintain.

Volunteer drivers must have their own insurance, The Shepherd's Center has liability insurance as an umbrella policy if there are injuries while driving or transporting. They would also fall under the Good Samaritan law. Their future goal is to increase senior transport and to make the community more of a community (larger regional picture) by utilizing new mutually beneficial partnerships and programs. They currently make 100 trips per month with 240 clients and costs are kept to a minimum. Unfortunately, they are at capacity and cannot expand past the 100 trips per month

Ken presented a presentation on TRIP, the Transportation Reimbursement and Information Program. This is a pay for membership model. Once a referral is complete and you are deemed eligible for the program a letter is provided explaining your eligibility. Riders recruit their own drivers and the reimbursement is given to the rider who then pays the driver directly. TRIP does not recruit, schedule or own any vehicles

Questions:

How is the program funded? Through grants and other sources

Ken provided a handout with a community meeting schedule of the GRTC discussion on the new bus network proposal. Ken plans on attending one of their upcoming meetings and will provide an update at the next Neighborhood Livability meeting. GRTC's plan is to extend bus stop spacing from the one block to three blocks as well as eliminate some stops.

Catherine provided an update on the grant she has been working on. The goal has been to look at self-driving cars to address the first mile/last mile bus route challenge. When bus schedules change, walking an extra mile to the bus route is a barrier. A letter of intent has been sent to the new technology partner NAIA. NAIA will provide a self-driving mini-van at 25% of the grant award. NAIA has a special commitment to the first mile/last mile challenge. They are eager to show what their self-driving vehicles can do in the older adult space. A letter with the details will be sent to the program participants. And, one goal is to cut out the use of Smart Phone App & utilize wheel chair accessibility.

Molly asked if we could start accumulating transportation information into some sort of repository. Ayn Welleford suggested Ken take charge of a collection site to house this information. It was agreed that the information will be posted on the agewellva.com website.

Next Meetings & Events

Wednesday, April 5th 1pm – 2:30pm

Richmond Regional Planning District Commission, 9211 Forest Hill Ave. Richmond, VA

Transportation Forum sponsored by Senior Connections

April 25 from 12-2:30pm at the Glen Allen Cultural Arts Center

Stakeholders, transportation providers & local government officials

Goals & Next Steps

- Ken – Complete research and provide an update on driver programs
- Ken - GRTC meeting update
- Catherine - Clean-up will be complete of the list of service providers
- Senior Connections - more information on forum in April

ATTENDEES

Name	Organization Affiliation
Ayn Welletford	VCU Gerontology
Kayla Diggs Brody	VCU Partnership for People with Disabilities
Thelma Watson	Senior Connections
Iselle Cardenas	Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)
Sara Morris	Senior Connections
Amy Marschman	Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)
Charles Rasnick	VCU Hanover Senior Rides
Annie Rhodes	VCU Gerontology Student
Karen Moeller	Greater Richmond Age Wave Coalition
Catherine MacDonald	Greater Richmond Age Wave Coalition
Maria Halperin Terrell	Greater Richmond Age Wave Coalition
Stephanie Scott	Greater Richmond Age Wave Coalition
Molly MacBean	VCU Gerontology student and VanGo

ABSENT