



Mar Vista Community Council



MAR VISTA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Aging in Place Committee

Thursday, February 19th, 2015 at 6:00 PM

Windward School Room

500 building, upstairs, in the CTL (Center for Teaching and Learning)

11350 Palms Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90066

Co-Chairs – Sherri Akers, Robin Doyno

Approved Minutes

Attendees – Marlena Ross, Sherri Akers, Debbie Rochlin, Rachel Caraviello, Debra Kaufman, Lenore French, Mohamed Hassan, Tatjana Leuthi, Mark Buchheim, Elizabeth O'Toole, Marilyn Zweifach, Mandi Carpenter, Birgitta Kastenbaum, Sharon Commins, Suzanne Benoit, Karen Lefever, Abigail Benitz, Nancy Johnson

- Called to order 6:05
- Introductions and public comments
- Motion to approve January minutes – approved with one abstention
- **Special guest presentation – Rachel Caraviello, VP, Programs and Services, [Affordable Living for the Aging](#)**
Rachel will give an overview of Affordable Living for the Aging's Home-sharing Program for Seniors and answer questions. She will also invite a senior who is currently sharing her home and can speak to the experience. Affordable Living for the Aging is a non-profit that matches isolated and financially vulnerable seniors together to share homes. It's a co-ed version of the 80s TV show Golden Girls – roommates are widowed, divorced or never married, and each match gives seniors a chance to maintain their independence through interdependence. Staff screen every applicant and monitor matched clients by visiting their homes. As a result, ALA has a success rate of 94%. (30 minutes)

Rachel began with a 4 minute video and 20 minute presentation which led into a robust Q&A. Since the balance of the agenda items were not time sensitive, the group decided to dedicate the meeting to our speaker presentation. While it's impossible to put 90 minutes of conversation into minutes, some key points are covered below for the benefit of those unable to attend.

There are 125,000 low-income seniors in the City of LA and approximately 7,800 affordable senior units. (Source: *Housing Element 2013-2021*, adopted December 3, 2013. Los Angeles Department of City Planning. Chpt. 1, p. 1-19.) Congress hasn't funded any new construction since 2011. There are 150,000 seniors living alone in the city of LA (more in the County). How many of these people are making \$40,000 or less a year? The concept of sharing their home is a big adjustment and lifestyle change for some of them

The program is very customizable depending on their goal (social or financial). After match, arrangements will be monitored and mediated by ALA. After trial period becomes a permanent situation, ALA will draft a contract with specific details. Average rent is \$600 - \$700 or service exchange. ALA's challenge is reaching the people who need this service or support. How to reach the isolated senior home owners, inform them about ALA and the benefits of extra income and companionship. After the recommended trial period they charge the 1st month's rent as a onetime fee. If the match dissolves, that is refunded. Most of their revenue comes from foundation and donors and a small contract with LA County. They currently have a 140 active matches. They also have 100 people prescreened, but don't have

enough home owners to introduce them to. When a contract dissolves it is usually around changes as in health or a new job opportunity.

Question - What are the rules and rights if a senior cannot get rid of a person they'd like to cancel the contract with?
Answer - we are also a property manager, it becomes a tenant / landlord contract, and can follow the same legalities. ALA provides this emotional and legal support and service. In the last 4 years, that happened twice.

Senior housing is not being funded. Money is allocated to vulnerable homeless, veterans, and seniors on streets to develop this buildings and service contracts.

They have two models -

1. **Supportive Housing:** pay 30 % of their income and get access to full time social workers, nurses, mental treatment, etc.
2. **Shared Housing:** operate their own properties, and matching program

Question – Are there intergenerational plans for supportive housing? Answer - The logistics due to funding is that you are juggling two projects with two different service providers. With shared housing, they would do intergenerational matching if requested. Currently most match making is happening with senior in their 70's and 80's?

Question - do you work with candidates researching their own network to see if there is relationships they could make it work with? Answer - Great idea to do during the interview and provide them with the support.

Discussion about the need for outreach - testimonials from clients, storytelling is powerful. View this as the next chapter but still something you create...presenting as an opportunity. Mar Vista is an aging population, we like to stay here. How do we reach the community to present available options? Encourage adult children of senior parents to become educated on the alternatives and begin planning ahead as you would with your child's education rather than waiting until in crisis mode. How to make present shared housing as attractive and how cool versus a death sentence. Why can't baby boomers do it that way? Some of us have had untraditional lives. Baby boomer can reinvent their old age.

Ongoing discussions are key. Looking into the future, defining what we need and saying it out loud. What about a series of workshops around their needs to raise awareness about ALA? People who are going through a transition don't want to be perceived as declining. Hiding their circumstances prevents them from sharing knowledge and resources. How do we inspire networking?

Question - What if a group wants to sell our homes and move into an apartment house together - would ALA be able to facilitate that? Answer - it might be able to work as long as it fits into ALA's mission.

Village models target the middle and upper classes but hasn't been successful in lower income classes. Is Westchester Playa Village expanding into Mar Vista? Contact them as a potential guest speaker.

Discussion about our desire to host an Aging in Place Open House where we could reach both seniors and adult children of senior parents that are about to face this problem.

- Old Business – tabled due to time
- New Business – tabled due to time

- Public Comment –
 - Nancy Johnson spoke on behalf <https://www.compassionandchoices.org/>. The City of West Hollywood has approved a Resolution that urges the Los Angeles County District Attorney to deprioritize prosecution of physicians and family members supporting death with dignity decisions of terminally ill, mentally competent individuals (see addendum below). They are doing outreach to get more community support and would like to present to the MVCC Board. The committee requested that we invite Nancy to be the guest speaker at our March meeting with a possible motion of support. Since we feel the topic will need an in depth Q&A, the agenda will prioritize that presentation and dedicate the time needed to fully explore the discussion.
 - Discussion about the importance of prioritizing the speaker series and plan an open house to learn about alternative options in a format that is accessible to our stake holders.

- Meeting adjourned 7:44

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Addendum -

West Hollywood City Council Passes Death with Dignity Resolution City Council Voted Unanimously on Resolution Urging the L.A. County District Attorney to Deprioritize Death with Dignity Prosecutions Resolution is the First of Its Kind in the State

WEST HOLLYWOOD, November 18, 2014 – The West Hollywood City Council, at its regular meeting last night on Monday, November 17, 2014, unanimously approved a Resolution that urges the Los Angeles County District Attorney to deprioritize prosecution of physicians and family members supporting death with dignity decisions of terminally ill, mentally competent individuals. This is the first Resolution of its kind to be passed in California. The decision comes just over two weeks after 29-year-old Brittany Maynard, a former California resident, chose to end her life with the support of her family and assistance of her physicians. Leading up to her death, she had become a prominent voice in the Death with Dignity debate and an outspoken advocate. If the L.A. County District Attorney were to deprioritize the prosecution of physicians and family members supporting Death with Dignity options, it would ensure terminally ill individuals the right to preserve their dignity and manage their medications as they see fit through end of life. The L.A. County District Attorney's recognition of the medical practice of aid in dying would also grant physicians medical legitimacy in honoring the wishes of their patients to have a dignified end of life.

“During the height of the AIDS epidemic in West Hollywood we learned the painful lesson that sometimes death with dignity is far more humane and moral than an agonizing painful existence,” said Councilmember John J. Duran, in response to the passing of the Resolution. A significant number of West Hollywood's residents live with HIV or AIDS and the City of West Hollywood is recognized as a strong advocate for self-determination.

Currently five states — New Mexico, Vermont, Montana, Oregon and Washington — have passed Death with Dignity policies to expand end-of-life options for competent, terminally ill patients. Maynard moved to Oregon after being diagnosed with terminal brain cancer early this year. In the months

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City of West Hollywood

For more information, please contact Ian Matthew Owens, Deputy to Councilmember John J. Duran, at (323) 848-6460. For people who are deaf or hard of hearing, please call TTY (323) 848-6496.