

Senior Housing Work Group
City of Oneonta Housing Commission
6 April 2023
Meeting Notes

Present: Bob Brzozowski, Ellen Fallin, Andrea Ronovech, Tamie Reed

Absent: Nicole Blanchard, Peter Friedman, Rachel Jessup

The meeting began at 4:30 PM.

The March meeting notes were reviewed and accepted without changes.

Housing Commission Updates: Bob had sent the Work Group his review of the Commission's March meeting via email shortly after the meeting. He added that each Work Group is to name two new members, and that each Group should review its postings on All4Oneonta.org. We decided to wait until we make a proposal before adding new members.

Focus Group Review and Analysis: There were about a dozen persons at the March 17 Focus Group meeting. Tamie interviewed by telephone five persons who did not attend the meeting. We briefly discussed the Comments Recorded From Participants, assembled by Tamie.

We then moved on to discuss formulation of a draft proposal for the Housing Commission. The Commission will then decide to send it on to the Common Council for its action. From the Focus Group comments it is apparent that seniors are split between staying in their home and living in a new development of some sort. We discussed five possible parts of a proposal:

1. **Help with maintenance:** Andrea mentioned a recent Daily Star article about a Delhi contractor which has started a sister company to respond to small jobs, a great help for seniors who wish to stay in their homes. (For more info on StructureWorx and LN Decker Construction, see https://www.thedailystar.com/news/delhi-contracting-company-provides-service-for-small-local-jobs/article_9a708a78-ca65-11ed-819c-0b91a061fc7f.html.) Ellen said she would like the City to be more responsive to seniors' maintenance needs by, for example, offering snow clearing at a reasonable price.
2. **Rehab Grants:** With the decrease in student rental housing, which is expected to dramatically increase in the next few years, there will be houses on the market that will need rehabilitation for other residents. One of the options should be accommodating the houses for seniors.

3. **Small Houses Complex:** Other communities, including ones smaller than Oneonta, have found developers who are building small, one-story ranch style houses in groupings. Oneonta would benefit from such a complex, whether for seniors or for all ages.
4. **Co-op Housing:** An alternative to traditional senior housing, senior cooperative housing is an option to explore, in single buildings or in a complex. Seniors own a share of the building and pay maintenance fees. Religious organizations may be encouraged to follow this model.
5. **Marketing Senior Housing Projects:** Otsego Now, the County of Otsego Industrial Development Agency (COIDA), the Otsego County Chamber, and other entities should encourage the private development of housing for seniors, especially those of middle income.

Ellen will draft a Senior Housing Proposal, using the template which she had shared earlier with the other Work Group members. The Work Group will continue to work on the Proposal at its May 4 meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 PM.

Meeting notes taken by Bob.