

City of Ashland  
ASHLAND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION (APRC)  
ASHLAND SENIOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ASAC)  
Meeting Minutes  
January 13, 2020

Committee Members Present:

- Rob Casserly
- Mike Hersh
- Mike Gardiner
- Mary Russell-Miller
- Stef Seffinger
- Sandy Theis, Chair

Staff Members Present:

- Isleen Glatt
- Natalie Mettler

Committee Members Absent:

- Anne Bellegia, Co-Chair

**CALL TO ORDER**

Thisis called the meeting to order at 3:31pm.

**OPENING**

Invited speakers and other guests gave short introductions: Scott Fleury (Deputy Director of Public Works), Jackie Bachman (Housing & Human Services Commissioner, OHRA board member), Judy Emanuel (Ashland physician and Senior Services patron), and Gina Duquette (Housing & Human Services Commissioner).

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion:** Gardiner/Russell-Miller m/s to approve the minutes from November 4, 2019. Voice vote – All AYES.

**ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA**

None

**PUBLIC INPUT**

Following up on the November meeting’s discussion about how ASAC could better connect with other City boards and commissions, Bachman offered to facilitate communication between ASAC and the City and community groups of which she is part (Housing & Human Services Commission, OHRA Board, Emergency Management Advisory Council, Revitalize Downtown Ashland). This asked if there are any current issues from these groups of which ASAC should be aware. Bachman shared that the Revitalize Downtown Ashland project has heard from OSF patrons that there needs to be more disabled/special needs parking, although there must be a balance of parking spaces as loading zones for downtown businesses. She also wants the public to be more aware of the option of rounding up their utility bill to fund the City’s ALIEAP program, which benefits low-income residents, including seniors.

**TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION UPDATE, NEW RVTD PROJECTS – Scott Fleury, Deputy Director of Public Works**

Fleury reported on three main transportation and transportation planning projects that are relevant to seniors:

1) RVTD Ashland Connector

RVTD, with the support of the Ashland City Council and Transportation Commission, applied for and received a Special Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) grant from the state to run this demand-response microtransit system pilot, which had a soft start last month and is scheduled to run through June 2021. Two ADA-accessible vans are stored at the B St yard and use the City’s fueling station, allowing RVTD to save operating costs. They currently run from 11am-4pm with a \$2 fare (or \$1 reduced fare for qualified riders, including seniors 62+), but expanded service hours are planned. The goal is for clients to be picked up within

30 minutes of making their same-day reservation, using special customized software. This app will learn trip time and travel patterns, thus facilitating the improvement of service over time. These vans will be able to access the narrow streets and steep gradients above the Boulevard, which has long been a transportation challenge in Ashland. Continuation of this pilot depends on usage and cost recovery.

Hersh asked about accessibility of the Ashland Connector to low income riders, including seniors. Fleury replied that the Connector operates with the same reduced fare fees and 90-minute transfers as the regular route 10 and express 1x routes that serve Ashland. Glatt added that the Touchpass cards are available for free to eligible seniors at the Senior Services office. Fleury noted that the Senior Center is a preferred stop location for the Ashland Connector.

Casserly shared that OLLI participants have given feedback on how well the Ashland Connector is working, and they would like to know the policy on tips for the Connector drivers. Fleury stated that, unlike Uber, there is no obligation for tips as this is a route service, but will check with RVTD about any formal policy. He has also heard positive feedback and urges ASAC to help get the word out about this service so that people use it and support it; future service past the pilot depends on ridership and the continuation of the state STIF levy used for funding.

## 2) Updating the Transportation System Plan

Updates to Ashland's Transportation System Plan, which covers roads, sidewalks and bike lanes, will take 12-18 months. The proposed update plan will be presented to the Transportation Commission on Thursday, Jan 16. To gather community feedback, there will be three open houses and three small group community workshops, to which advocacy groups will be invited. Fleury requested that ASAC recommend a representative for the Citizen Advisory Committee; Glatt and Theis noted that Katharine Danner is already an advocate for seniors on the Transportation Commission.

Fleury stated that this system update plan embodies a "complete street philosophy," meaning that it accommodates all transportation modes in evaluating the level of traffic stress for all users, including bicyclists and pedestrians, and accounts for all ages and abilities. It also considers features such as landscaping, lighting and storm water management to build a complete street view. Seffinger asked if this complete street philosophy had ever been applied to Glenview Drive, as had previously been discussed. Fleury confirmed that Glenview Drive, as well as Grandview Drive and Ashland Loop Road, are all defined in the current transportation system plan as "shared roads," meaning they are 15-20ft wide, posted at 15mph and have pedestrian refuges. Their primary function is not for cars, although cars are permitted, thereby creating an environment for other users such as bicyclists and pedestrians. He added that more such roads and especially alleys are planned for the future.

Theis asked where these alleys are and how they are being prioritized. She also asked about surfacing alleys, for congestion mitigation and dust suppression. Fleury responded that priority is given to areas based on the number of adjacent residents who make requests and participate of their own financial accord, showing resident support; all this is kept in public input files. A priority list is being compiled, per ODOT request, to determine how funding will be allocated.

Seffinger asked about whether installing sidewalks on the streets adjacent to Lithia Park would be part of the transportation system plan. Fleury clarified that above Nutley Street, these areas become roads with easements that are APRC property and so not considered part of the public right of way transportation network. The APRC Trail Master Plan and other documents will be among important documents to be considered for the Transportation Master Plan, so they can be referenced where there is overlap.

### 3) RVTD Ashland Express bus (Route 1X)

#### **SUGGESTION TO ASK ASAC MEMBERS TO ATTEND OTHER COMMUNITY MEETINGS AND REPORT BACK**

Hersh stated it would be good to add one or two more members to ASAC to extend the Committee's reach to attend community meetings. In addition to the Citizen Advisory Committee to the Transportation Commission, other valuable groups to attend might include: Chamber Greeters, Ashland Police Department, Jackson Public Library Services, Asante Ashland Community Hospital, Ashland Emergency Food Bank. This responded that ASAC members could make a point of sharing from organizations of which they are already part in the "Items from ASAC Members or Work Groups" part of the agenda. She noted that ASAC and SSD have already made significant progress in communicating and collaborating with other community groups. This asked that ASAC members send Glatt a list of the community groups they are involved with so this information can be shared at the next meeting. ASAC could then think what other groups would be beneficial to attend, if they have members available to attend.

Seffinger requested that ASAC review major documents such as the Trail Master Plan, which she feels doesn't account well for senior needs. Gardiner responded that there are opportunities for ASAC or their allies to be on citizen advisory committees to advocate for senior needs, as well to be tuned in to planned changes, but he cautioned against overloading the finite capacity of ASAC members. Glatt agreed with Gardiner that it is daunting to add more groups to attend; this is an ongoing struggle.

Gardiner noted that it would be interesting to associate with the Chamber Greeters, as connecting with the business community is often overlooked. Casserly asked about hosting the Greeters at the Senior Center. Glatt said this had been considered in the past, but it is problematic given the early morning timing conflicting with regularly scheduled classes at the Senior Center, but she would look at options. Gardiner suggested hosting Greeters on the deck or at the pool property.

#### **STANDING REPORTS**

##### **a. APRC Update**

Gardiner reported that ongoing discussions about repairs to the Community Center and Pioneer Hall may affect some seniors who used those facilities. He responded to Seffinger's comment about the need for sidewalks in Lithia Park, stating that he better understood, following Fleury's presentation, what the difficulties are for installation, and that easements might be the best solution.

##### **b. City Council Update**

Seffinger reported on the Trail Master Plan presented to the City Council, which includes a major path on the TID that potentially impacts seniors negatively, as it is one of the few relatively flat areas that seniors on that side of the TID can access for exercise and recreation. She noted that, in general, seniors and those with disabilities should be able to access more of the Ashland Creek Watershed but currently there are very few trails with steps or handrails that would make them more usable for these groups.

##### **c. Education Report**

Mettler provided [flyers](#) for upcoming events so that ASAC could share with their networks: Ashland Connector Workshop (February 5); Life History Story Time (February 26); Avoiding Frauds, Scams and Cons (March 11); Sue DeMarinis author talk (April 8). Mettler featured the March 11 presentation by retired detective and Crime Prevention Specialist Ron Kohl, encouraging ASAC to attend to learn about this important senior issue. She also reported that the Education Programming Work Group met on January 3 to discuss developing a better evaluation process for events and programs, and staff is working on developing new forms and mechanisms.

**d. Senior Services Superintendent Report**

See Senior Services Superintendent Report in meeting packet. Glatt highlighted the new RVTD Ashland Connector service and associated workshop on February 5 and shared a [handout package](#) on the new service. She shared the feeling of having turned a corner in serving the community by reaching new audiences, offering more and bigger events, and improving the facility (e.g. painting, acoustic paneling). She thanked ASAC and staff for helping develop and support a new culture of partnerships, enabling the Senior Services Division to do more with a small budget.

**ITEMS FROM ASAC MEMBERS AND WORK GROUPS**

**a. Advocacy/Age-Friendly Communities**

Bellegia, Glatt and Theis will attend the February 4 City Council Meeting to present the application for Ashland to join AARP’s Network of Age-Friendly Communities, which has already been approved by the APRC. Administrator Madding also requested an update on ASAC and SSD progress addressing community senior needs, which will be given at this or a future meeting.

**b. Public Awareness**

Russell-Miller provided a [written update](#), “ASAC Public Awareness Work Group Meeting Notes 12/19/19 Updates 1/13/20.”

**c. Mayor Stromberg’s offer to take ASAC members to see local universal housing development**

Mayor Stromberg has secured an open invitation from Laz Alaya, the developer of new universal design housing in Ashland (The Garden Cottages at 476 N. Laurel St.), for a tour of this age-friendly development. Glatt will work on scheduling for a non-quorum group to attend.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

- a. Monday, March 9, 3:30-5:00pm, at Ashland Senior Center, 1699 Homes Ave
- b. Monday, May 11, 3:30-5:00pm, at Ashland Senior Center, 1699 Homes Ave

**Adjournment – 4:59 pm**

Respectfully submitted,  
Natalie Mettler, Senior & Adult Services Coordinator, Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission