

Minutes of the October 14, 2014 Staying Put Board Meeting

A meeting of the Board of Staying Put took place on Tuesday, Oct. 14 at 4:30 PM in the Parlor at the Congregational Church of New Canaan.

President Tom Ferguson welcomed everyone and commented that the new newsletter has raised the standard even higher, especially with all the smiles. The Sept. minutes were approved.

Executive Director Barb Achenbaum told the Board that requests for Sept. were 281, of which, 212 were for rides. Forty-nine drivers gave 51 members these rides. The number of ride requests was slightly lower than usual. Tech help and errands are on the increase and STAYING PUT is thinking about establishing an “errand day” to simply fulfilling these requests. There are 5 summer renewals still outstanding.

The Annual Appeal letters will be mailed out next week, along with the newsletter and personal notes on each of the 1300+ appeals. The stuffing and alphabetizing of the envelopes will be done by Mitzie Transue, Judy Johnson, and Barb Johansen. By the next fiscal year STAYING PUT expects to have a new database that will help

distinguish formal names vs. nicknames for these letters and salutations.

Events in Sept. included the Darien Historical Society's "Here Come the Brides" and a fun dinner at Fuji. The Rotary Club Lobsterfest was also well-attended, particularly by Board members and spouses. Cynn timer Yates, the chair of Office Volunteers, gave a coffee to thank all these lovely Volunteers in conjunction with the monthly "Coffee in the Kitchen" event. The Volunteers enjoyed it so much we may be asking Cynn timer to do this one again.

The party at Barb Achenbaum's lovely home was SO successful, it is worth mentioning even though it was on Oct. 2 and not officially a Sept. Event. The idea was to invite current Volunteers along with prospective Volunteers. At least 80 people came! Barb, Assistant Director Donna Simone and Volunteer Chair Lyn Chivvis will follow up with phone calls and meetings with some of these prospective Volunteers.

Donna Simone spent four days in DC at the Village to Village National Conference. There are 289 "village" members in this national organization. The conference was SOLD OUT with 275 members represented. Of those 275, 190 were "villages" that were already up and running, e.g., SPNC, Greenwich, and Wilton. Donna

reported that 39 states have villages and that there are 30,000 people involved in the Village Movement. By 2050 there will be 83 million people involved in one way or another. Since the federal government will not be able to handle the demographic bulge in senior population with the baby boomers becoming 65, these Village organizations will be taking up some of the slack. The first such organization was started in Beacon Hill, and STAYING PUT was soon to follow. Now there are 5 or 6 different “model” villages. STAYING PUT is The Model for a suburban setting.

In the past the V2V national organization was funded by MetLife, but since MetLife has discontinued its long term care operation, it has also stopped support for the national V2V organization. Therefore the organization has decreased its staff from 3 to only one employee. An anonymous donor will match up to \$40K to fund this change in finances. STAYING PUT donated \$1,000, as did some other Villages. Jane Nyce is Chair of the Transition Task force (as well as continuing on the Advisory Council) to help manage this next phase. Volunteers from other Villages will be needed for tech support, and research, as well as finance help.

Many of these distinguished directors of Villages voiced the need for a national voice or spokesperson to help inform people of their future need to belong to a Village.

More and more success stories about how these Villages serve our seniors must be told locally as well as nationally in order to educate and get more people involved.

With that in mind, some interesting statistics from a poll were recorded, as follows:

81% know more people

63% talk to more people

62% feel connected

40% leave home more often

39% are less lonely

33% feel healthier

78% know more about their community

84% more likely to know how to get senior services

Suggestions for volunteers and funding help included partnering with local corporations and hospitals.

(Medicare will not pay for a patient who is readmitted too soon after having been discharged.) Some local officials, e.g., mayor of New Haven and also of DC want to help their Villages. Boy Scouts of America may find a way to get involved with local Villages.

Dues were discussed at the conference also. At \$400 individual and \$525 per household, STAYING PUT dues are lower than most. One village offers a 6-month trial for \$295. Some Villages, STAYING PUT included, are experiencing people who join when their crisis starts, e.g., knee replacement surgery, and then when they are feeling independent again they no longer want to continue their membership. Should Villages offer incentives to join with a five year discounted rate?

Donna Simone said that STAYING PUT is “the most popular suburban model.”

Many thanks to Donna for such a comprehensive report. Much of what she reported will be material for the next Board retreat.

Treasurer Tom Turrentine said that STAYING PUT can expect to increase its revenues because of the Annual Appeal letter going out soon.

Tom Ferguson’s budget made it clear that as STAYING PUT increases its services, so its expenses will increase. All the more reason to keep the revenue coming in! The revenue stream is very seasonal, while the expenses are smooth throughout the year. Although STAYING PUT gets donations from local charities (Rotary, New Canaan Sewing Group, FCCF Giving Day, to name a few) the biggest chunk is raised from the Annual Appeal.

STAYING PUT has received a very generous donation from the Bartlett (Jim & Dede) Foundation. Grants from the NCCF and FCCF are to support new programs. STAYING PUT will step up its Planned Giving and Bequests program.

Tom Ferguson announced that Larry Brown, Bill Sessions, and Gloria Major-Brown will go off the Board at the end of their terms as of Jan 1, 2015. Bill and Gloria will join the Advisory Council, which only meets twice a year. Bill and Gloria are Founding Board members of STAYING PUT. The current Board will miss these three wonderful people for their wisdom and humor and willingness to Volunteer for the STAYING PUT mission.

Janet Lanaway was elected unanimously and will join the Board in November. Janet is a CPA and has served on various parent-school boards, the Carriage Barn, Encore, and the Red Cross, to name a few. She will fill the position of Treasurer from Tom Turrentine. Tom has served as treasurer for 5 years.

All Board members are encouraged to send any nominees to the Exec Committee. Board members are required to have a passion for this work, among other abilities...

Transportation for our seniors is a big subject in suburban areas. To wit: in the 12 months from 9/1/13

to 8/31/14, STAYING PUT gave 2278 rides to 109 members. (NB: when STAYING PUT first started the rides program, Volunteers gave 30 rides a month.) Therefore STAYING PUT & GetAbout have continued a dialogue on how to collaborate more effectively. It helps that the people who started GetAbout are the same people who started STAYING PUT. Phil Ives, Judy Bentley, Barb Achenbaum and Donna Simone met with Paul Stein (GetAbout President) and Judy Fuegner (dispatcher) to discuss better coordination of rides (to and from the Inn and Lapham Center for example), and better training for the GetAbout drivers in helping their riders. The Inn will also be involved in coordinating riders so that STAYING PUT does not send two separate drivers to take two people to the same destination. An effort will be made to increase GetAbout ridership from the Inn and decrease the reliance on STAYING PUT drivers. The distinction here is that a ride from an STAYING PUT Volunteers is also a personal visit, and is therefore much more desirable to the rider.

Barb presented an analysis on STAYING PUT rides for the aforementioned 12-month period. In that 12 months, 83 drivers gave 2398 rides – these rides include the ones that STAYING PUT staff (mostly Donna) gave as well as the Volunteer drivers. Thirty of the Volunteer drivers gave between only one and five

rides during that 12-month time frame. Increasing this group of drivers' number of rides will be a big help to STAYING PUT. Suggestions include personally contacting those 30 drivers to see how that ride went, and hopefully encouraging the Volunteers to give rides more frequently.

On the other end of the spectrum, 5 drivers gave 100 rides. There is a real red flag here in times when one of these wonderful drivers is away or unable to drive for some reason. STAYING PUT must increase the number of such dedicated drivers.

Staff does 90% of the long-distance medical rides to Westport, Fairfield and Greenwich; these average one a week and take about 3 hours each. Obviously, some of these rides must be done by Donna as a medical advocate for the STAYING PUT member. STAYING PUT will look into alternate transportation for some of these out of town rides.

STAYING PUT has had guidelines in place for ride requests; three rides a week are the maximum, and a request must be made at least 24 hours ahead of time. Not all members adhere to these. STAYING PUT will look into having laminated cards made up with the guidelines; these cards can be kept next to that telephone! Perhaps this will help some of the members,

but not all. Another potential guideline would be to establish an Errand Day (perhaps Wednesdays); errands will be done on Wed. only. This too will require some training of the members by the staff.

The Inn residents used 40% of STAYING PUT Volunteers rides in the 12-month period. Other members received 60% of STAYING PUT rides, i.e., 1384 rides.

Many thanks to Barb for giving transportation such a detailed analysis, and to Judy, Donna, Phil and Barb for their work with GetAbout.

George Brakeley reminded the Board that the Archive Project is not just about maintaining the history of Staying Put in New Canaan. These records will also allow Barb to refer other towns that call with questions on starting up a village to the archival material rather than having to spend a lot of time on the phone with them.

George has gotten oral histories from 7 Board and former Board members; he plans to interview 4 more. One important question he asks is what do these people see as STAYING PUT goes forward; "What is STAYING PUT's destiny?"

Technically these archival histories will be put on the web with help from Patti Geanakos and the Tech Crew. It will be password protected, and STAYING PUT will consider whether or not to charge a fee for access. Beacon Hill did charge STAYING PUT \$400 for its account of how to start a village.

Thanks to Sue Scannell, the STAYING PUT Membership Committee has partnered with the New Canaan Sewing Group at the Farmers Market and will partner again at the Holiday Market. Membership Committee plans to have a table in front of Stewarts Market, at Mrs. Greens, and at the next Pop-up Park.

Many stories are in the Publicity hopper: one on Priscilla Thomas and how involved she is after moving here to be closer to her daughter. Other stories will include STAYING PUT Volunteers; one will have a photo of Donna and tell about her trip to DC to the National Convention of V2V. The local papers are letting many on staff go; therefore stories are not always put into the papers immediately. Indeed, if a story is not time-sensitive, it may not show up for weeks.

Events Committee continues to have a “Coffee in the Kitchen” once a month. The Kitchen Bridge has been altered to be more inclusive, and is “Kitchen Games.” Lyn Chivvis made a request to this witty Board for

suggestions for a better name – preferably one that does not sound like a cooking class. The “Here Come the Brides” at the Darien Historical Society was such a success that Events Committee will hold a Wedding Picture Champagne and Wedding Cake Party in the winter. It was suggested that members bring photos of whatever wedding they want – their first, their second, or perhaps their daughters’.

Lyn reported that the Volunteer Thank You party at Barb’s on Oct. 2 was a huge success, with over 80 attendees. Some of these were current Volunteers and some were potential, or Volunteers In Waiting. Barb and Lyn will follow up with these Potentials by phone and with more face-to-face time. Donna and Lyn continue to give the Drivers Thank You Coffee once a month because the drivers who come enjoy each other’s company and because many times Donna can fulfill a ride request right there and then! Thanks to all the Board members who continue to drive and drive and drive our STAYING PUT members.

The meeting closed at 5:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lyn Chivvis, Secretary to the Board

10/17/14