

Commission on Aging, Colchester, Connecticut
Biennial Report
January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2019

MISSION:

The Colchester Commission on Aging shall assist and support the needs of Colchester residents 55 years of age and older in the areas of nutrition, employment, economic and physical well-being, social services, housing and any other areas of concern; develop and implement programs; advocate for the population and collaborate with the Colchester Senior Center and the community.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Active member participation in 2017-2022 Colchester's Senior Center Strategic Plan, Department of Senior Services. Presented to Colchester's Board of Selectmen in early 2018.
- Partnered with Cragin Memorial Library, Colchester Senior Center and Colchester Historical Society to present "Harvesting Stones". This is a documentary of early immigrants from Eastern Europe to Southeast Connecticut. The film was later donated to Cragin Memorial Library. Collected and donated over fifty pounds of non-perishable food to the Colchester Food Bank.
- "Senior Safe", a program presented by CorePlus Credit Union which provided advice on how to protect your money and financial accounts from scams, exploitation and identity theft was presented to members and the Colchester community.
- Three printing productions of the "Senior Resource Guide", widely distributed to Colchester and area residents. This Guide is also provided to new members of the Senior Center, is available in Town Hall and has been a valuable resource providing listings of a variety of services, facilities, centers and professionals relevant to an aging population.
- Partnered with Senior Center to coordinate and support the Center's 40th Anniversary Gala, "Ruby Jubilee", held at "A Villa Louisa", Bolton, CT. Commission provided funds for the printing of the program as well as a \$100 gift card for the raffle.
- CoA Members staffed a booth at the Farmer's Market on the Green, promoting the Commission, providing Senior Resource Guides and selling tickets to the "Ruby Jubilee".
- Presentation by Jeffrey E. Burt, Colchester Superintendent of Schools providing objectives and goals for administration, teachers and the students of Colchester.
- Member participation in the quarterly Commission on Aging Regional Round Table meetings. Seven regional towns provide meetings or workshops on various topics relevant to the aging population.

- Hosted CoA Roundtable with a presentation by Dianne Stone, Director of Newington Senior and Disabled Center. Ms. Stone is also the Chair of the Senior Center Task Force and a member of the Commission on Women, Children and Seniors.
- Presentation by Sandy Luebner, Department of Rehabilitation Services and the State Unit on Aging. Her focus is to ensure that the senior population has access to the supportive services they need.
- Presented a Q & A with First Selectmen Art Shilosky and Board of Selectmen Member, Rosemary Coyle, on the future of a new Senior Center. Seniors provided input, suggestions and their “wish list” on what a new center might look like and provide.
- Presentation to members and the public by Pamela Atwood, Director, Colebrook Senior Living, Hebron, CT, entitled “Senior Bullying”. Bullying is an increasingly common problem among seniors. She focused on issues and possible responses.
- Presentation on Senior Financial Scams sponsored by Chestelm Health and Rehabilitation Center, Moodus, CT. Unfortunately, seniors are the target of many financial and misleading scams and we learned how one can protect one’s self from financial exploitation.
- Created a Commission on Aging Brochure, sharing our Mission, outlining our accomplishments, encouraging attendance at our meetings and identifying our goals. As noted in our Brochure and to quote Betty Friedan, American feminist writer and activist, “Aging is not ‘lost youth’ but a new stage of opportunity and strength.”
- Presentation to members and the public by Kris Sortwell, Education and Outreach Director, Alzheimer’s Association, on the “10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer’s Disease”. \$50 Donation to Alzheimer’s Association. This presentation was very well received and the audience agreed that this is a topic that they would like the Commission to continue to pursue.
- Supported the Colchester Senior Center’s Holiday Fair providing baked goods, contributions for the raffle and volunteer services.
- Chair and Vice-Chair began exploring co-generational programming with the students at Bacon Academy. In partnership with Jill Lavasseur, Environmental Teacher at Bacon, and her students, plans were underway to present “Food, Stuff, Energy and Water” in the Spring of 2020. Due to Covid 19, plans were postponed until the end of 2020.
- Scheduled future presentations by Kris Sortwell, Alzheimer’s Association, were also delayed until the end of 2020 due to Covid 19.
- Chair and one other CoA member serve on the Colchester Senior Center Building Committee and provide ongoing updates to CoA members.
- Vice-Chair and one other CoA other member serve on the Norton Park Committee and provide ongoing updates to CoA members.

GOALS FOR 2020-2021:

- Continue our efforts to assist, support, advocate and educate Colchester seniors.
- Serve as an active voice promoting programs and services on behalf of the elderly.
- Work tirelessly to move the new Senior Center project forward to completion.
- Reschedule programs that were canceled due to the pandemic. These include our partnership with Bacon Academy and the Alzheimer's Association.
- We look forward to continuing our partnership with the Senior Center, assisting and enhancing their continuing efforts to meet the needs of our aging population.

ATTACHMENT:

The following chart was taken from “**COLCHESTER 2015 PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT**” and illustrates historic and anticipated trends in Colchester’s age composition. As noted, the 55 and older population will reach 40% of Colchester’s entire population in 2030.