

Date: Thursday 9 October 2014
Time: 5.00pm
Meeting Room: Fickling Convention Centre
Venue: 546 Mt Albert Road
Three Kings

Puketāpapa Local Board

OPEN MINUTE ITEM ATTACHMENTS

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**Report for the Puketapapa Local Board on the Board's Plan 2014 - 2017
from Anne-Marie Coury – Auckland Grey Power October 2014**

These comments are informed by both Auckland Grey Power's submission to the Auckland Plan and Age Concern's submission to the same document and many of these comments are also a part of the focus of the new Seniors Panel's work programme. It is important to appreciate the context in which we are responding to the Board's request for additional comments and input into the plan.

Auckland Grey Power looks forward to being an active participant in developing and implementing the Board's plan around improving social participation of all seniors, especially recreation, inter-generational activities, and civic participation on matters of community concern.

Over the past three years, we have advocated to Council staff, and elected representatives through actively participating in submissions in consultation rounds, to consistently build up awareness of seniors' needs. Institutional knowledge of how to reach seniors groups, and their leaders to break through the digital divide, has been lost with the many restructurings that have occurred within community development.

The movement towards the development of a UN Convention on the rights of Older Persons, will shift the debate from a needs based approach to a rights based approach in the coming years. This should strengthen provisions for access to services, like transport, and housing. We are strongly advocating for the eight pronged developmental model of the Age-Friendly Cities movement. Three major areas of focus of this model; transport, housing and urban design form a substantial part of the Seniors Panel's work programme for the next three years.

Population Snapshots

The COMET contribution to planning around training, skills and education within each Local Board area during Auckland Council's first term, brought us many useful statistics in a very useable form. Having a similar data set on seniors, access to transport, adequate and affordable housing, and social activities and breakdowns for ethnicities would be extremely useful. Statistical information has been supplied to the Deputy Chair, Harry Doig, along with this report.

One third of our current population is over the age of 50 and the over 65 year olds are expected to increase rapidly from 12% to 19% by 2018.

Within our recent migrant population, an astounding number are over the age of 50. Given the 5,000 plus Chinese migrants coming in per year, many couples are bringing in two sets of elderly parents. So we have increasing pockets of ethnic elderly, some even dumped here, while the family moves on the more affluent living in Australia and the US. There are cases of Indian families mirroring this pattern and it is not isolated only to these two ethnicities.

What we do know from many ethnicities attempting to set up retirement villages and rest homes for the older folk, from care workers in the field, and from gerontology researchers, is that as people move into the old old age period, they do regress and return to their primary language spoken in childhood, no matter whether they developed their abilities in

speaking English. So all engagement strategies and community-based programmes to reduce isolation and increase social participation, need to reflect the value of inter-generational activities, where grandchildren can play the role of translator, and encourager.

The suicide rate in our over 80's is the highest of any age group, even ahead of youth. And next to the youth comes the 50 –65 year old males. This group also features highly in violent crime, and in unemployment. The next group of seniors to come through onto the NZ Super are going to be significantly different from our current seniors, 80% of whom own their own homes. 53,000 nationwide do not own or have adequate or affordable housing.

This suggests poverty in the over 65 age group will rise rapidly in the next five years. Current figures officially hover about 16%, but non-Govt social service agencies, offering assistance, suggest the figure is grossly under reported and the reality is more likely to be around 20 – 25%. 51% live only on the NZ Super and a significant number of those are living alone and may have high health needs.

Access to information, services, esp transport and housing, are going to feature as pressing needs both short and long term in the Auckland suburbs of the Puketapapa Local Board area. On-going statistical data on seniors' needs will be needed to follow trends and issues and target assistance.

Increasing Auckland Grey Power is presented with hand written letters requiring advocacy covering complex situations, regarding access to adequate housing, or resolving deferred maintenance, or fears of tenants in Housing NZ units being moved on out of their communities. Without an office, and inadequate income from donations to pay a market rental, it is difficult to see these people, and to constructively work on their cases.

Specific Recommendations for Inclusion

A Prioritising Open Space

One concern that must be highlighted is the critical importance of Open Space to life expectancy proven by international research done by Sir Michael Marmot leading the WHO Inequalities Strategy.

Although Auckland Grey Power submitted on the Open Space Strategic Plan after also mentioning it as high priority in our submission on Auckland Plan, we were overstretched in our responding to multiple Local Board plans across the old Auckland territorial area, and haven't given it the focus it deserves.

Given the expected population increase in each Local Board area of 20 – 40,000 folk over the next ten years, open space per head of population will decrease rapidly and we already have insufficient amounts by international standards. This means we can expect lowered life expectancies for our seniors and indeed the population as a whole. **If the health outcomes in the plan are to be available to all, a greater priority on protecting and enhancing Open Space is needed.**

The only ameliorating factor in the plan is to increase walkways and cycleways. We could prioritise facilitating more community social activities in open space areas, that are free and encourage people to discover the spaces available. The ratio of sport and recreational activities that utilise open space areas for fee paying activities that only support the 11% of the population, who play sport must be balanced with support provisions for the 89% who do not play sport or belong to clubs.

Recommendations

Page 5 under heading Our Future line 6

We recognise protecting and enhancing our open spaces will impact on the health and wellbeing of all ages.

Page 13

Project PETER

We will foster intergenerational learning/mentoring.

Paragraph 5

We will link with the Seniors' Panel over their leadership on access, participation and valuing contributions through the International Day of the Older Persons celebrations.

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The additions are welcomed.

Former Roskill Borough Council Building - supported strongly

For Board information not necessarily to be written into the Plan

"Seniors Community Hub concept" supported by Grey Power, Age Concern as advocacy space as neither organisation has central Auckland office space or advocacy interview room space available.

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Support for pilot social enterprises And upskilling

Other key agencies – Grey Power and Probus
Seniors to offer mentoring

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Support proposals for bike refurbishment

- also include 50 plus folk and trial bike hire at strategic hubs
- like RYZ.

Page 24

Advocate for better cross town services – critical

e.g. 007 to health care at Greenlane and UNITEC
e.g. 010 Mt Albert Road too infrequent yet links with Mt Albert Station.

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**Healthy and Active
First Paragraph**

We will promote an intergenerational focus within our support for events and activities to ensure older folk are included and there is mutual respect and learning encouraged in our communities between youth and the aged.

Page 33

First paragraph

We will encourage “bumping places” through supporting community facilities, seating outdoors, and plaza type spaces in parks. This ensures social participation and reduces social isolation, which assists wellbeing for people of all ages.

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Healthy Lifestyles

Promoting services.....

“Supporting pilot innovative seniors’ programmes”

Conclusions

We are delighted with the improvements to the Board Plans so far.

Our recommendations may become more relevant at the implementation stage,

But at any stage we are willing to advise and support the Board's Plan.

Please make contact with us as we have experience in getting people more active and involved in their communities and hold our meetings in the Roskill area.

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