



Municipal Data Across Sectors for Health (M-DASH)
City of Eastport

Task Force Meeting
February 2, 2021 – 10a.m.-12p.m.
By Zoom

Attending: Betsy Fitzgerald, Jim Porter., Tessa Ftorek, Marianne Moore, Lynn Rutledge, Jim Porter, Jeanne Peacock, Debbie Pottle, Dyan Walsh, Ellen Angel, Barry Curtis, John Ferland, Effie Rorke, Jess Maurer, Anne Schroth

Meeting Notes

I. Welcome and Overview

- a. Jeanne Peacock, Eastport City Council, introduced new Interim City Manager, Jim Porter.
- b. Question: Should all city employees be on this task force?
 - i. May not need all employees, as a municipal initiative led by the city, we do need information about how the municipality makes decisions about funding and priorities for older community members. There are big issues for municipality to consider from perspective of all departments.

II. Introductions

- a. Tessa Ftorek, community member, memorial nursing home board, grocery volunteer, mostly retired but very busy.
- b. Lynn Rutledge, Priest, Christ Episcopal Church, President of food pantry and emergency heating program.
- c. Betsy Fitzgerald, Washington County Manager
- d. Jim Porter, Interim City Manager
- e. Jeanne Peacock, Eastport City Council
- f. Debbie Pottle, RN: Care Coordinator, Eastport Health Care
- g. Ellen Angel, architect; EAAA Board Chair, former Eastport resident and property owner
- h. Dyan Walsh, Executive Director, Eastern Area Agency on Aging
- i. Sen. Marianne Moore, District 6 State Senator, member of Aging Caucus
- j. Barry Curtis, Washington County Sheriff
- k. John Ferland, President, Ocean Renewable Power Company (ORPC)

III. Review Updated Data Dashboard

Data dashboard and PowerPoint slides distributed with these meeting notes.

IV. Discussion

- a. Additional data sources?
 - i. Eastport hasn't done an age-friendly/livability survey?
 - ii. Chris Grannis, Eastport Art Center – might have some older adult information
 - iii. Any data that could come from Code Enforcement? Conversation with CEO?
 1. A lot of work they see is maintenance and repair which does not require permit process at all.
 2. At least anecdotally would be useful to hear from CEO about housing stock.

- b. Working age population: Ratio of working age to older adults is 1.67
 - i. 1.6 means EP doesn't have enough workers.
 - ii. Workforce fuels economy; drives up cost of workforce if fewer workers; fewer people to care for older adults.
 - iii. We do have a lot of people moving here and buying houses, which makes taxes a little higher. 1.67 is a deceiving figure... a lot of people come into town from Perry, Pembroke, Robbinston. Younger people have moved there and they are our workforce, too.
 - 1. We can re-calculate with circumference around Eastport
 - iv. Canadian workers?
 - 1. Not much in-migration of Canadian workers -- kind of can't get there from here..unless by boat.
 - 2. Some healthcare workers come from Canada.

- c. Haves vs. Have-Nots – Retirement Income vs. Household Income
 - i. Those who retire here are the ones who are buying shorefront property and renovating or rebuilding places that are considerably more valuable than the ones that were there before.
 - ii. Many people who have come from other states and bought homes have chosen to stay during COVID.
 - 1. Add a lot to the community by improving houses, employing contractors and others in the building industry.
 - iii. We don't have the traditional "summer people" (like Blue Hill or Bar Harbor), who have been coming for generations. Our people are newer to the area.
 - iv. People coming here and buying houses say it is a steal compared to further downstate. To us and to our 25-year-old residents, property is expensive, but not to those from away.
 - v. If large numbers of affluent people are moving into Eastport, is there going to be a greater divide of individuals who can pay for whatever they need vs. those who cannot. Challenge of creating equitable services.

- d. Broadband and Teleworking
 - i. Anecdotally, at least, there are those who move here and try to work remotely but then move to another town for better internet.
 - ii. Many who move here want to be able to work from home – we need good broadband.
 - iii. We could talk to National Digital Equity Center about whether they have broadband data for the area.
 - iv. Also need better cell phone infrastructure

- e. Walkability (including street crossings benches, traffic calming measures, etc.)
 - i. Can't think of anything that's not walkable, unless you live in Quoddy Village (3 miles uphill). Depends on capability.
 - ii. The hill needs railings, benches.
 - iii. Big complaint is deterioration of sidewalks. Thomas was working on a big grant to improve that. Hope we can continue.
 - 1. Even sidewalks we do have are not cleaned off.

- f. Transportation
 - i. No great Eastport-specific EMS data or transportation data.

- ii. We have EMS data but provider reports only Washington County as a whole. Can try to get more detailed data about Eastport from Fire Chief.
 - iii. “Senior citizen” car
 - 1. Thomas said no data was collected about use of the car.
 - 2. Jim will follow up on putting together data about car.
 - iv. Other sources of information?
 - 1. Senior Companion Program?
 - a. Dyan will send contact info for new director.
 - 2. Some people who take people to airport or pick people up. No advertising.
 - 3. We have West Bus, goes to Perry Corner, but have to have someone pick you up.
 - 4. EAAA: Elizabeth West Transportation Program: provides mileage reimbursement for individuals who are not eligible for MaineCare (just over income): only for medical transportation.
 - a. EAAA sent info to city when we sent list of services; we have staff that do outreach education; on EAAA website.
 - b. Maybe Quoddy Times could write an article
 - 5. Patient navigator at Eastport Health Care helps with arranging transportation.
 - 6. Lady in Eastport collects cans and gives money for above income level people that don’t qualify to get transportation for cancer treatments.
- g. Depression data from EHC
- i. Depression figure was disturbing.
 - 1. Depression data from Eastport Health Care is 21.3% of patients over 65, compared to 17.8% for entire state.
 - ii. Seniors have lost senior center for now. Such an important part of life. Provided:
 - 1. Exercise classes
 - 2. Wednesday lunches
 - 3. Cooking class with Healthy Acadia (pre-COVID)
 - 4. Regina Mitchell posts a lot of FB; they do have a board of directors. They must have to have some kind of data collection. Elaine Abbott is president.
- h. Housing
- i. Energy Efficiency & Weatherization
 - 1. Energy efficiency: heat pumps as alternative to oil furnaces
 - 2. Would be great if there was data that expressed # of people at “energy-risk”
 - 3. Efficiency Maine has a lot of programming tailored to Maine
 - 4. Maine climate action plan goal: weatherize 17000 homes in next 5 years. Install heat pumps.
 - 5. For the purposes of working with pilot aging programs, they could work with this group to pilot an effort specifically to address issues of aging and what that can mean for improving quality of life, lowering out of pocket costs (with housing improvements that add value to property).
 - 6. Most houses need too much basic repair that wouldn’t be useful to just do weatherization.
 - ii. Housing for Older Adults
 - 1. Could we get a housing complex for older population only? Now it is mixed and can be less than satisfactory and a little dangerous.

- a. Tough sell: the idea of intergenerational living is getting much more mainstream. Less support for funding exclusively older adult housing.
- 2. Calais Methodist Homes project
 - a. Could we work with them?

V. Does any issue rise to the surface as something the community should be focusing on?

- a. Should we send out a survey to get Eastport citizens' view on this?
 - i. Typically when we are doing surveys of older people or everyone in community we are asking quality of life. The things we are looking at in terms of data here don't usually come up (e.g. falls, city expenditures, poverty)
 - ii. What do we want to know? Would hold us up in moving forward...
- b. Of the issues identified, are there models of similar type communities where action plan occurred that we can learn about?
 - i. There are lots of models of things that have worked.
 - ii. E.g. transportation initiatives and models; Housing (home repair, design, zooming, ADUs, etc.)
- c. FQHC data on food insecurity seems low. Could they be transferred to other org for additional screening?
 - i. They agree it is low; reluctance on part of patients to report
- d. Consensus -- highest priority:
 - i. Poverty and food
 - ii. Housing and home repair

VI. Next Steps

- i. Three deep dive conversations (sign-ups/recommendations from meeting)
 - 1. Food insecurity
 - a. Lynn Rutledge
 - b. Dyan Walsh
 - 2. Income insecurity
 - a. Dyan Walsh
 - 3. Housing insecurity
 - a. Jeanne Peacock
 - b. John Ferland
 - c. Ellen Angel
 - d. Dyan Walsh
 - e. Tessa Ftorek
 - f. Code Enforcement Officer
- ii. Ask for additional sign-ups from those not at this meeting when notes are sent out.
- iii. Next meeting: 4/6 at 10a.m.-12noon