



The New York  
Academy of Medicine

*At the heart of urban health since 1847*

## **Age-friendly New York City Community Forum Notes**

**Complete set of notes from 14 community forums**



# The New York Academy of Medicine

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**Age-friendly New York City Community Forum Notes  
Amico Senior Center  
Council Member Vincent Gentile  
April 11, 2008**

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Approximate number of attendees: 120

More than half of attendees indicated that have lived in the community for more than 30 years; about 75% for more than 20; only about 10 folks raised their hand to indicate 50 years or more.

- Computers
  - Only a handful of people raised their hand to indicate they now use computers. However, when asked, about a quarter of participants raised their hands to indicate that they would like to learn how to use computers or increase their use of computers
  
- Thoughts on living in this community?
  - One gentleman said he tried to move away but came back to the neighborhood. “I tried to live in Staten Island to be close to family but I felt like I was in prison. I kissed the ground when I moved back to Brooklyn!”
  
- What do you like to do?
  - Go to the Crystal City club for dancing
  - Go to church
  - Play music
  - See plays in Brooklyn using a senior discount (“for only 10, 12, or 14 bucks!”)
  - Bowling

- Soccer in the park
- Play cards
- Golf once a week
- Lots of people play pool
- Swimming in the local community pool
  
- Barriers to walking
  - Broken sidewalks
  - People riding bikes on sidewalks is dangerous
  - Cars parked in driveways poking out and obstructing sidewalk
  - About 25% of attendees indicated that there are a lot of kids out on the corners and they're concerned they're up to no good
  
- Transportation – area seems well served and good in the big picture
  - About 25% of attendees indicated they have a car
  - Stairs become more of a problem as we age
  - Buses are unreliable
  - Lighting on buses is bad; can't see the streets and street signs
  - Not enough street lights
  - Access-a-Ride:
    - problems sometimes but good overall
    - we need it, it's a good system
  
- Working for pay
  - Only two individuals indicated that they are currently working for pay; about 75% of all attendees indicated that they are retired from paid work (all indicated this work was in New York City)
  - One woman said she wants to work for pay and is in the process of moving so she hasn't pursued it but feels she could do a few hours for someone
  - We need to showcase the power of seniors more
  - An older gentleman: "I don't want a full-time job but there should be part-time jobs available for older people like me. Organizations should probably do more along those lines."
  - One person said they volunteer at Amico Senior Center for 30 years
  - Attendees didn't seem to indicate a huge desire to learn about volunteer opportunities available
  
- Isolation?

- Fewer than 10 people have children in the community; about five of these people live with their children in the community
  - About 25% live alone
  - The neighborhood is spread out geographically
  - An older woman: “I have no one. I only have my friends.”
  - People call each other through the senior center if someone doesn’t show up for awhile. “We look out for one another.”
  - There is need for people to go in and check on the homebound sometimes
  - An older gentleman said that since moving into his building 3 or 4 people were found dead days after anyone noticed
  - The Post Office is aware of isolated people because if the mail starts piling up for several days, they will contact building management or neighbors
  - The people who live alone don’t want our help; they want to be loners
- Health
    - Where do you go for help/answers?
      - Go to the doctor for a check-up
      - Dial 311
    - Medicare doesn’t cover dental plans which is expensive
    - Many of us have HMOs and they’re not all equal. We need more information about which option is best for whom



# The New York Academy of Medicine

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**Age-friendly New York City Community Forum Notes  
City Hall Senior Center  
Council Member Alan Gerson  
May 7, 2008**

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Approximate number of attendees: 150

*Note: The forum was translated into both Cantonese and Mandarin.*

What do you like about NYC?

- Convenience of having everything nearby
- Good weather

Four major issues emerged during the discussion:

- Affordability and the City's high cost of living
  - Over half of the attendees indicated issues with Medicare and prescription drug prices
  - The seniors overwhelmingly pushed the notion that public transportation should be free for older people. "It's free in China, why not here?" one older man asked.
- Language barriers
  - Seniors indicated a high reliance on the City Hall Senior Center because it is one of only a few that speak Chinese and are welcoming. Many seniors travel from other neighborhoods because of the void of such services in their local area. The cost associated with is high for many. One couple said that they earn \$200 per month and spend \$40 per month traveling by bus from their homes to the City Hall Senior Center each day.

- “I’m an older woman who speaks only Chinese said she feels as if she were blind, mute and deaf, “I’m blind because I cannot read documents written in English. I’m deaf because people speak to me in English and I don’t understand. And I’m mute because I cannot communicate with anyone who does not know my language.”
- Housing
  - Over half indicated that they are facing harassment and are being pushed out because of gentrification
  - Many indicated not having enough money to qualify for low-income housing, which often requires an income of at least \$18,000
  - Many seniors indicated being on wait lists for Section 202 housing for 7 or 8 years
  - One woman indicated that she has an income of \$300 per month because she rents out the living room in her one bedroom apartment (the rent is \$250 so she pockets just \$50 per month)
  - Another woman (87 years old and frail) was crying as she spoke. She has no income and was forced to double-up with three other people in a small apartment. Even though she needs a home health aide and is eligible to have one at little or no cost, her apartment was deemed unlivable and she cannot get a home health aide unless she moves. She doesn’t know what to do.
- Safety (generally defined)
  - When asked, nearly all attendees raised their hands to indicate that they do not feel safe in their communities. When press farther, only a handful indicated that they had personally been the victim of crime “in the last few years.” Even fewer people raised their hands to indicate that a friend or someone they knew had been such a victim.
  - Need more street lights
  - Need stronger penalties for elder abuse
  - Need to educate young people better so they will “do right” and we can feel safer
- Misc.
  - Need better snow removal on the sidewalks
  - Traffic lights are too fast in Chinatown (many raised hands to indicate agreement)



# The New York Academy of Medicine

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**Age-friendly New York City Community Forum Notes  
Corsi Senior Center  
Council Member Mark Viverito  
March 24, 2008**

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Approximate number of attendees: 60

## **Safety and Security**

- Difficult to go out at night because of crime
- Need more police and protection
- Security is bad in buildings; need cameras installed, etc.
- Homelessness and prostitution are problems in the community
- The selling of drugs is a big problem in the community
- Lots of noise and fighting in the elderly building (Section 202?) nearby because people bring in unruly guests

## **Housing**

- No respect for people moving in with Section 8
- Lack of affordable housing; Need lower rents
- Should let disabled people stay on the first floor in NYCHA facilities; An older gentleman said, “How can I get outside if I can’t even get out of my apartment?” If his elevator is not working he is stuck in the house; he put in an application for a first-floor apartment but didn’t get it; another woman said she applied for a first-floor apartment three times but did not get it
- Need elevators in apartment buildings for those with wheelchairs or difficulty walking
- Everyone in a wheelchair is stuck at home

### **Outdoor spaces and buildings / transportation**

- Crossing lights and traffic are dangerous – “cars are flying by and don’t stop for seniors” said one older woman
- Holes in the street are never repaired
- Need for 3-way lights at intersections
- People are falling in streets
- When it’s raining at 117<sup>th</sup> Street lots of water accumulates on the street
- Need timer on sidewalk crossing to show how much time is left to get across; and the time should be extended because people don’t have enough time now
- There are no park benches but there was overwhelming support for some to be installed
- Very sunny in the area so there’s a need for more trees and shade (the Go Green Project will add more trees soon?)
- People do not curb their dogs which is nasty and makes it difficult to walk around the neighborhood
- Need more buses

### **Social inclusion / dynamics**

- The changing neighborhood scares them about the future: the renovated and new buildings going up are for the rich but nothing for them – “Where are we going?” asked one older woman
- Once children get married they leave the community because they want a better life and there’s nothing for them here (most of the seniors have children who have moved away)
- There’s nothing for older people here; no jobs or anything. But once you’re here you have to stay.
- People need to look after each other and check-in with one another more

### **Health**

- Health is a major problem in the community such as asthma (linked to pollution in the community) and the prevalence of diabetes caused by the concentration of fast food options but few healthy choices; the closing of supermarkets in the neighborhood, and the high cost of healthy foods
- Need a better system for when people are discharged from the hospital so that people are alerted and can keep tabs on their peers

### **What do you like to do?**

- Pool, Bingo, dominoes, theater, laughing, trips, going to parks, singing, etc.

**How do you get information?**

- Television such as channel 41, C-SPAN
- Radio such as NY1 and 1010 WINS



# The New York Academy of Medicine

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**Age-friendly New York City Community Forum Notes  
East Tremont Senior Center  
Council Members Palma and Vacca  
April 24, 2008**

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Approximate number of attendees: 60

*Note: Spanish translation was provided at this forum.*

## **Where people turn for help**

- Maintenance of building super
- Friends or family
- Police department
- Senior center
- 911
- One person told a story about slow ambulance response for ill husband; doesn't trust ambulance service

## **Quality of life issues**

- Dogs
- Graffiti
- Loud car radios
- The City needs to do something to address this. Maybe hold educational program to educate people about quality of life issues.

## **Housing**

- Only 3 people lived in stand alone housing; rest in apartment buildings
- All lived in elevator buildings

- One women (in a wheelchair) said she left her home in Parkchester because, even though it had an elevator, it had steps to get into the building
- Housing is expensive and cost of rent and/or maintenance goes up every year
- Only some people in the room knew about SCRIE
- Utilities (especially ConEd) also expensive and costs increasing
  - They need a senior discount on utilities.
- Assistance with home repair and maintenance needed
  - “I need an organization that can send someone to plaster and paint my apartment.”
  - Can’t afford to pay someone full price
  - Develop a youth program to help seniors with home repair and decorating
  - On City Island, Boy scout troops do these kind of services (painted the church); they could be used to help seniors

### **Information**

- General agreement that it can be hard to find information
- Many (about 2/3) have had good experiences with 311
  - Few Spanish speakers know about or have tried 311, and one had a bad experience when she tried
- Need information on access-a-ride, how to get help with rent, and emergency housing for seniors (sr. ctr staff)
- About 3-5 people have computers
  - About half indicated they would be interested in learning how to use computers
  - One got a free computer through RAIN
  - One knows how to use a computer but can no longer do so because of her poor vision. There is software that could help her, but it’s too expensive (\$600).

### **Employment**

- 2-3 people indicated they wanted work. One said she didn’t know where to get a job.
- Age discrimination is an issue.
  - One women told of a friend who is an attorney who can’t get a job. “no one wants him once they hear his age.”
  - Another woman who used to run a job club noted that age discrimination is subtle and that the age at which you are “over the hill” is younger and younger (now 50 is considered over the hill for employers)

- “I’m at the top of my skills, but I can’t get a job.”
- “I worked at Department of Education for 20-30 years. I retired, and when I reapplied, I couldn’t even get an interview.”
- Older workers have advantages that only some people recognize
  - Recommends doing PSAs or commercials about the advantages of hiring older workers (e.g., knowledge, experience, reliability.)
  - “I worked at a bank, and they wouldn’t accept my retirement. They said seniors are more responsible than the young ones.”
  - Some companies (McDonald’s, Burger King and Casinos in Atlantic City) are good about hiring older people

### **What do you like to do?**

- “2-3 years ago I took a class at JPAC and it opened up my life. I’m never home now. I’m more active than I’ve been in 50 years. I’m an activist.” (Woman in wheel chair)
- Volunteering
- Shopping
- Race track
- Cards, bingo, maj jong
- Walking
- Senior center activities (programs, trips, etc...)
- Only 2-3 go into Manhattan
  - “It’s not easy.”

### **Transportation**

- Woman in wheelchair took subway into Manhattan and got stuck in the gap between the train and the platform.
- She also got stuck on a bus when the lift broke. The Fire Department had to be called to get her off the bus.
- Long wait between buses on City Island but no benches at bus stops.

### **Outdoor Spaces**

- Need more time for crossing intersections. (wide agreement)
  - Letter from friend of a woman who was run over by a truck crossing the street and lost her legs. She is now moving to Tucson so her niece can look after her.
- Sidewalks on City Island very bad. Tree roots have lifted up the paving stones.
  - “I’ve fallen several times.”
  - Reports of broken hips from bad sidewalks

- Not enough enforcement of laws requiring home owners and retail to fix sidewalks
- Trees limbs obstruct the sidewalks and the Parks Department “never comes to City Island” to cut the trees back.

Woman in wheelchair made the following comment: “A little girl was walking along the shore throwing star fish that had been stranded on the beach by the tide into the ocean one by one. A man came by and asked her what she was doing. He said, ‘you can’t save all the star fish.’ She picked up another one and threw it into the ocean and said, ‘no, but I saved that one.’ Don’t think that you can’t make a difference. I’m just one person, but I’ve moved mountains.



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**Harewood Senior Center  
Council Member Albert Vann  
April 17, 2008**

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Approximate number of attendees: 120

Approximately 25% of attendees indicated living in this community for 50 years or longer; about half of attendees indicated living in this community for 40 years or more. Only 2 people indicated living in the community for 5 years or less.

Over half of all attendees indicated that they raised their children here and about the same number indicated that they have grown children in the community. About 10 people indicated having a grandchild living in their home.

## Outdoor spaces and buildings

- Need more speed bumps. People go too fast on small streets and when I have to slow down to park into my garage people get mad and want to pick a fight (they use her street as a shortcut to avoid red lights and are agitated when she slows them down)
- Need to trim trees. One gentleman indicated that he has been asking the City to cut back the trees near his house since the 1980s to no avail. “How can we speed things up?”
- Need better intersection safety in the crosswalk
- The sidewalks need repair
- Need more public benches
- Need a park (or section of an existing park) designated for older people
- People need to curb their dogs in parks. “I remember when you used to be able to lay down on the grass. God forbid you do that anymore.”

## Transportation

- Public transportation
  - Need to reopen public restrooms in the subways because I have diabetes and have to urinate more often than I used to. How can we open these closed restrooms? They must be safe however because people fear crime.
  - No elevators or escalators here in Brooklyn; subway steps are tough to maneuver (need to speed up the plan to put elevators at subways while improving Access-a-Ride)
  - Seniors should not have to pay for public transportation
  - Need additional express buses
  - Seniors should have their own buses
  - Buses don't always lower to the curb and it's a long way to step down
  - People take the priority seating on the buses
  - Need benches at bus stops
- Access-a-Ride:
  - I've had cars take off because they are fearful of the safety in the NYCHA development (Council Man Vann indicated he has worked on this issue and has come to an agreement with DOT officials to designate a safe place within the development where Access-a-Ride cars can stop to pick-up and drop off passengers)
  - Not getting better. It should be a top priority for your report

## Housing

- Need more senior housing at a reasonable rate. When asked to give a show of hands:
  - 6 attendees indicated that they climb at least one flight of stairs to get to their apartment
  - about 35% are worried about potential rent increases
  - about 10 people are worried about getting tossed out of their apartments because of gentrification
- Utility bills are too high; one man was turned down for the HEAP program because application process was too complicated, he needed assistance: "can we simplify the process?"

## Employment

- Where can we go to get temp work? Many people were interested in the ReServe model touched upon by the facilitator but few had knowledge of it
- A show of hand s:
  - Only a handful indicated that they still work for pay
  - About 10% would like to work for pay, but no one wants a full-time job
  - About 75% of participants indicated that they are happy to be retired

### Affordability

- Medications are so expensive
- An older woman who serves on the local community board discussed the growing economic divide affecting seniors in the community. The definition of poverty is wrong and needs to be examined because the cost of living is so high. There isn't enough low-income housing so people fall through the cracks (low-income and middle-income)
- Need to increase food stamps given out for use at farmer's markets. "Twenty dollars is not enough."
- Need free legal services for seniors
- Cell phone companies charge too much for service; they should create a senior rate that is cheaper and offers fewer minutes per month. "This is a safety issue."

### Where do you get information?

- Newspapers
- Borough President's Office
- Internet
- Radio
- Television
- Free local papers
- Amsterdam News
- Converse with family and friends
- KISS FM radio program on Sunday mornings

### Miscellaneous

- Shouldn't have to use so much energy to get advocacy/community changes. We need to make it easier to go through the process such as creating a centrally located place that triages problems instead of 311
- Our block association has been successful: we have block parties and we've received a new speed bump on our street

- Taxes are unfair for seniors. One woman thought she didn't have to pay taxes anymore because she was a senior and was hit with penalties because she was mistaken. Need help navigating the system and getting help filing taxes
- A staff member at the senior center offered suggestions:
  - Larger print on cell phones and computers
  - More curb cuts
  - More community health fairs for men



# The New York Academy of Medicine

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**Age-friendly New York City Community Forum Notes**  
**ADAM CLAYTON POWELL, JR. – STATE OFFICE BLDG.**  
**April 23, 2008**  
**Council Member Inez E. Dickens**

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Approximate number of attendees: 140

Representation from local health/social services/volunteer organizations were present and were vocal (and knowledgeable) about the needs of their community, their clients, and their agencies. (North General/Mount Sinai gerontology/ palliative care units)

## **CONCERNS**

- Rezoning and gentrification, 125 Street plans, & the Columbia University expansion plans are current, public activities which have met with mixed response and some resistance – and hostility.
- One early remark from the audience was a plea for community participation in the planning. Several stated they did not wish to, once again, provide their observations and suggestions - and never have their recommendations realized.

## **HOUSING**

- Affordable housing is of great concern and many are convinced NYC gentrification is contributing to great anxiety within families who have lived in Harlem for generations and the process is contributing to homelessness. Also, guidelines for supportive housing discriminate in the application of regulations by not acknowledging grandchildren in the headcount.
- Delays and bureaucratic processes within NYC Housing and housing-related agencies are cumbersome. Greater coordination within and among city agencies is needed. It was
- suggested that a problem center (an advocacy agency) for all aged and aging issues be established. Harassment from landlords and managers needs attention.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

- **ACCESS-A-RIDE:** not attentive to the time-needs of customers particularly those who are trying to arrive on time for necessary medical appointments; e.g., dialysis and physical therapy. Some clients wait a long while and then are abandoned without a cell phone to call for help. Drivers need more education about how to get around the city; they sometimes don't know the city. They are "insensitive and unreliable". There is a need for continuous education of these personnel that their profession is to be of service to the elderly, the frail, the needy.

## **SAFETY**

- "The predatory nature of our youth" needs attention; suggesting that intergenerational activities be increased and promoted. "Anxiety, depression, and panic result from the feeling that they have been abandoned by their community" – a hotline just for the depressed and lonely aged was suggested. The desire to talk with a human being - not a 311-type communication. "We are forgotten here in Harlem – EMS services are not timely and 5 hours of waiting in an emergency room is common."
- "Elder abuse is alive and active." Police protection would be enhanced by returning to visible patrolmen who extend courtesy, kindness and justice to the elderly who feel both threatened and ignored.

## **HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**

- Mental health as well as services to the disabled aged were expressed needs.
- Promotion, prevention and education for the elderly was advanced as a need; e.g.,
- nutrition and healthy foods, adequate diet, fresh vegetables and fruits (difficult to find and to afford), outdated and overpriced items need to be eliminated. Income restrictions within Meals-on-Wheels need to be re-examined.
- Home health care and particularly home health care aids need training in attitude and behavior. There should be mobile services for the aged.

## **CIVIC PARTICIPATION**

- These seniors expressed great disenchantment with their earlier experiences with outsiders who sought their input on the status and future planning of Harlem; they are reluctant to have their participation only be a forum but demanded they should be an active partner with those who will be developing the blueprint.



# The New York Academy of Medicine

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**Age-friendly New York City Community Forum Notes  
Rochdale Village Community Center  
Council Member Thomas White  
April 16, 2008**

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Approximate number of attendees: 160

Over half the groups indicated being in the community 30+ years

- Several had been in the area since before the Village was built or moved in when it opened

## **What they like**

- Several said they loved the area, especially the convenience and good services available
- Easy to get around
  - Everything within walking distance
  - Can walk to the community center
  - When it snows, they can still get around
- “it’s a wonderful palce.”
- “A great place to live.”
- “If there are any real estate people here, don’t come to 161 because I’m not selling.”
- RV is wheelchair accessible
- RV has a van service
- Like the NORC
- Lots of things here for seniors
- Friendly, neighborly environment: “People say hello to me on the street.”
- People ask about and check up on each other if someone is missing for a few days

## **Communication and Information**

- Community has its own newspaper and the community center has a weekly information sheet, but still people don't always know about services
- Not everyone is aware of what's going on
- More information about long term care and home health services is needed

## **Transportation**

- A handful use access-a-ride
  - Doesn't take you where you want to go within the borough; will take you to other boroughs but hard to get them to take you some place in Queens.
  - One person was told by access-a-ride to find a doctor somewhere else
  - Need seats and shelter at access-a-ride transfer points
  - Need driver to pick people up at actual store (not just one pick up spot in the mall); too difficult for many to carry packages
- About 30-50% indicate they use buses
- Good bus service - frequent
  - One exception is M85 service is limited on Saturdays
  - Bus drivers sometimes make you wait outside in all weather
- Access to LIRR

## **Housing**

- Need more senior housing -- wait lists are too long
- Need more affordable housing: rent is too high for limited income

## **Senior Centers & Community Center**

- Like the programs: jazzercise, dance, yoga
- Lunch program is good
- Staff are helpful and able to answer questions
- RV Sr center "fills a void... keeps mind, body and spirit active."
- Many people live alone and need the assistance provided by the RV Sr center
- Don't close down RV Sr Center or make cuts: "if it's not broken, don't fix it."
- No frozen meals. Microwave could affect pacemakers.
- Need somewhere to go during the day
- Services at Hindu Sr center are critical
  - Culturally appropriate food (e.g., vegetarian)

- Activities and education
- Transportation
- health services based in senior center are important and easier to access than traditional medical services (less wait time, more sensitive and caring providers): “I’m 77 but I feel 10 or 12 years old.” – in reference to getting health care at sr center
- No frozen food: “we are already old. Frozen food will make us older.”
- “God bless our senior center; it saved my life.”
- “It makes everyone happy.”
- “It’s a heaven that God provided. ... if it closes, there is no more heaven.”

### **What needs improvement**

- Neighbors are too noisy; hold loud parties that prevent residents from sleeping (especially a problem on Saturday nights, which impacts ability to feel rested for Sunday church services)
- One man very concerned about long term care (LTC)
  - Need more information about insurance and other options
  - Want choices besides nursing homes; assistance programs so people can stay in their homes
  - “I see family friends trying to assist their family members, but they don’t know where to get help.”
  - Need affordable home help
- Need to equip more seniors with alert buttons; especially people who live alone
- Emergency preparedness: some of the buildings in the complex use electronic-opening doors which could trap people inside; also an elevator malfunction could trap homebound people in their homes if an emergency were to take place

### **Outdoor spaces**

- One part of street doesn’t have any sidewalks
- A few intersections that need traffic lights – in absence of traffic lights, people are drag racing
- Need longer time on cross walks on major streets -- “I’d have to be wearing roller skates to get across in time.”
- 111<sup>th</sup> Avenue has a lot of loud commercial truck noise early in the morning; even worse since repair of a water main break



# The New York Academy of Medicine

*At the heart of urban health since 1847*

**Age-friendly New York City Community Forum Notes  
LGBT Community Center  
Speaker of the City Council Christine Quinn  
March 20, 2008**

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Approximate number of attendees: 40

## **Outdoor spaces**

- In Jackson Heights, Queens park benches were removed from around post office (zip 11372) because homeless people were sleeping there. Instead of police simply clearing the benches, they were removed altogether and seniors are now forced to sit on dirty post office steps if at all
- Streets are unbelievably dirty in the city

## **Respect and social inclusion**

- LGBT seniors are an unaccepted minority
- Social isolation and a lack of available caregivers are major problems for this population in NYC, as LGBT seniors often have fewer children who could act as caregivers and they often do not feel welcome at mainstream service providers and therefore underutilize the services they need
- Need to focus on what's general versus what's specific to the LGBT community
- Why don't LGBT seniors have more spaces to themselves such as senior centers?
- One older gentleman said of his senior center, "Instead of gay people always going to a straight place, straight people should come to a gay place sometimes."
- Need to open up a dialogue about sexuality in the older generation; Greenwich House (a senior center in Greenwich Village) could be a model in terms of its welcoming environment and information exchange between straight and gay seniors

- Homophobia is frightening and there is a need for change; it is widespread among the older population overall
- LGBT seniors need their own space in every local community so they don't have to travel so far
- Ageism exists in the LGBT community and self-examination is need within the community to confront this problem
- The transgender community is especially isolated because they do not even utilize the few services now targeting the LGBT community and are often missed in outreach

## **Housing**

- Many LGBT seniors are left vulnerable when their partners die as current laws hinder the transfer of inheritance and the continuation of shared housing arrangements; changes are needed
- Need for more affordable housing, perhaps senior supportive housing/Section 202 for the LGBT community (although this is legally complicated)
- Need to explore how the Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act (SONDA) relates to specific housing for public accommodation
- One gentleman now in a walk-up apartment said he can now work but feels he will need to move upon retirement even though he doesn't want to. He will need something more affordable that is either on a lower floor or has an elevator because of his increasing health problems and issues of affordability.

## **Health and community services**

- Senior center budget cuts are of urgent concern
- Need for more NORCs; SAGE has a unique NORC model that is not geographically based but instead works to meet the needs of LGBT seniors across the city
- Seniors need more self-empowerment in health matters/guidance in how to care for ourselves
- Need to create a network of LGBT professionals in the aging field
- Organizations should receive guidance in how to create a welcoming environment for LGBT seniors, including: having gay-friendly magazines in wait rooms, posted signs saying the organization does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, sexual orientation, etc.
- Most seniors centers are not gay-friendly and don't focus on the special needs of LGBT seniors; the modernization process might be good for this

- as providers should re-evaluate their services to make them better and show how they will cater to the LGBT community
- Most service programming geared toward the LGBT community focuses on HIV or similar social issues, but LGBT seniors have many other interests as well
  - Need to engage with faith communities; many gay-friendly religious institutions are geographically located in the West Village but members come from all over the city because there is a lack of such resources in their communities; there is a need to bridge this divide and link faith communities with social service providers (esp. those who can provide transportation services); Riverside Church is gay-friendly and a model for others
  - A provider said they have done sensitivity training for care workers and senior center staff in the city with good results, but that such training is not well funded and ought to be expanded; peer training is also needed for non-LGBT seniors
  - Several service providers are struggling with how to reach and better serve LGBT seniors; they want to do it but lack the structure or capacity to do that now and are in dire need of help
  - Staff training in how to be welcome and serve LGBT seniors is needed by home health aides
  - Aging LGBT veterans need help. A representative from American Vets for Equal Rights presented various issues including the high rate of post-traumatic stress disorder prevalent among this population and lower rates of employment; LGBT vets are especially in need of help as other Vet groups and advocacy orgs are often not as accepting or welcoming
  - The Vintage Pride program is a good LGBT intergenerational model that needs to be expanded
  - Rainbow Heights Club has a pilot model that trains care providers in how to best serve LGBT seniors with mental illness; the model includes
    - greater inclusion of older people in decision-making
    - training for service providers in meeting the needs of LGBT seniors

### **Civic engagement and Employment**

- Need for more life-long learning opportunities; perhaps by matching people up to go do one-time cultural events together
- If no longer employed it's easy to fall into isolation so additional attention must be paid to retired LGBT seniors

## **Communication and Information**

- More outreach must be done to get the word out about the new SAGE program site in Harlem, as many people did not know about it
- More work is needed to reach transgender elders and assure their voices are heard in this process
- Need to train service providers in how to do comprehensive outreach and support those ongoing efforts

## **Transportation**

- More transportation options are needed to local VA hospitals
- Need more transportation options to take LGBT seniors to and from the health and community services that are most welcoming/specifically targeted to LGBT seniors because they are often not in local communities
- Issues with Access-a-Ride:
  - new rules limit the ability of some seniors to travel in their boroughs (this rule seems to be tied to Access-a-Ride's evaluation of each individual's physical functioning)
  - not timely, many people miss appointments because bus drivers didn't get them there on time (in some cases appointments have to be rescheduled for six months later)
- Seniors with disabilities are often uncomfortable on mass transit
- Training is needed for mass transit drivers



# The New York Academy of Medicine

*At the heart of urban health since 1847*

**Age-friendly New York City Community Forum Notes  
Lincoln Hospital  
Council Member Carmen Arroyo  
April 22, 2008**

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*Note: Most of this forum was conducted in Spanish.*

Approximate number of attendees: 120

## Barriers to NYC's Age-friendliness

- Too much red tape.
- “I’m with Harlem Hospital. We need more housing. But even more, the problem is the lack of monitoring of home attendants. Also, banks need officers to ensure people are putting money in their accounts.” [underlying idea seemed to be someone at the bank who would help seniors keep track of their funds]
- Safety. “We need senior safety zones like school safety zones to protect seniors outside of senior centers, and provide benches.”
- APS is not effective.
- “The costs of applying for citizenship are unaffordable, but we need to work things out to get entitlements.”
- “We can’t make the city friendlier without fixing the problems of today. .... If you can’t to make the city friendly, housing cultural sensitivity—look at what’s not working now. That will improve the city.”

## Communication

- People don’t like to read. They like to watch TV. We need communication for seniors that they like.
- “I can no longer work because I need help. We need materials in Spanish. We came to this country late and it is difficult to communicate. We can’t give any more. We gave in our youth. We need translation for those who are older.”

- “I happen to know you can get housing court services from Home Base but I only happen to know because I am involved with Community Board 6. Senior Centers should have that information. There are lawyers that will help with any issue, not just housing. They come through the community boards, but that information has to get out.”
- “Medicare letters are difficult to understand. And you get the runaround. Seniors don’t like talking to machines. You need one on one help.”

### Health care

- The whole US is not age-friendly. Medicine for old people is too expensive.

### Transportation

- Access-a-ride makes you wait 2 hours.
- Lack of transportation traps people at home. Sometimes seniors have to wait a long time on the street for a ride. Need regular transportation to help people stay active.
- We need transportation—a shuttle just for seniors. People try to avoid buses when the kids are on board.
- Its bad for people to have to be waiting in the cold outside for the bus
- After working for 60 years in New York we should get some things for free. The buses in Florida are free. Why not here?
- The parking spot for Access-a-ride by Hope of Israel is filled with cars from court officers and Yankee stadium. That makes it difficult for a person with a wheelchair to get in.

### Housing

- Not enough senior housing
- No legal services for seniors in housing court
- “I worked for Social Security for 15 years. I had Section 8. My rent was raised now. They are building so many things all around. The rents keep changing. It is hard to qualify for a program,—you overqualify, you underqualify.”

### Senior Centers

- Senior centers need more money
- Our senior center has been trying to get a lunch program for 10 years.
- “I’m with Morris Senior Center. I’m thankful for the senior centers we have. Don’t shut them down because it’s hard to get on a bus or a train. How will people get there?”

- “Baychester Senior Center is so hot. And in the winter its so cold. Seniors can’t stay there. I’m planning to cal Channel 12 next time. The centre has to be comfortable. Everyone should come. And you should have to leave at 2 or 3. But the youth come in and that makes it difficult to stay. Water comes into the auditorium. People pay there fare to come, but then they have to go home because its closed. Every senior center should have a representative. And make a council that will respond to our needs.”
- [director of the Gleeson Senior Center speaking] “I’ve been trying to get a social worker. Its so frustrating all the papers people come in with that they can’t understand. I try to help but I need social workers to be assigned. It takes away from my ability to work.”

### Respect

- “Everything is about youth. Clerks will just pass you by.”
- “We need to respect seniors. I caw how well seniors are treated in Canada. They can sit out at night 10, 11, 12 and feel safe. We need to revamp DFTA to make sure seniors get what they deserve. This country is what it is today because of seniors.”

### Cost of Living

- “I don’t have enough social security. Its hard to pay for medicine. I get about \$400 a month. My food coupons are just \$18. With that I have to pay \$209 rent and cleaning supplies, laundry. I don’t have anything left. I am having trouble with my wheelchair. I call Medicare and it’s back and forth with them. They aren’t paying for my chair. I have trouble with my vision. I can’t pay for my prescription. My rent—the landlord is asking me for more money. When I came out of the nursing home I paid for three months but he says I only paid for 2.”
- “I worked for 30 years. I’m not Medicaid eligible. Only Medicare. Once I pay for medicine, rent, utilities, I have nothing.”
- “Why did we work so hard? It would have been better if we hadn’t worked so hard and then we would Medicaid.”



# The New York Academy of Medicine

*At the heart of urban health since 1847*

**Age-friendly New York City Community Forum Notes  
Lincoln Hospital  
Council Member Carmen Arroyo  
March 24, 2008**

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## **Overall**

- Most people have lived in the neighborhood for 30+ years

## **Respect and Social Inclusion**

- Audience mixed on whether or not they feel respected
  - Some people are very courteous and offer to help; others will walk right by you even if it's clear you need help
- General consensus that people used to be raised to look out for one another and to respect adults; it was acceptable for adults discipline one another's kids
  - Now, if you try and correct a kid, the mother will come yell at you
- One person observed that kids who are polite to adults get ridiculed by their peers

## **Transportation**

- Access-a-ride generated the most conversation; referred to as “stress-a-ride”
  - Drivers say they stopped by when they haven't
  - Often late – customers has to wait 30 minutes past scheduled time to even call to check on ride
  - Penalize you if you are late or don't show even when it's their fault
  - Slow at reimbursing cab rides and they charge you \$2.00
  - Have to wait outside in all weather
  - Have predict time of your return trip which can be hard for things like doctor's appointments
  - Drivers are often rude and drive erratically; “They bounce you around like a rubber ball.”
  - If leaving the 5 boroughs, have to switch service at border (e.g., to visit friends in Westchester have to arrange for 2 different services)

- Rides are not efficiently scheduled (drivers are going all over the place rather than using adjacent routes)
- Drivers wait far from entrances and won't move closer
- Despite problems, access-a-ride is really needed because for many it is the only financially viable option
- A few use mass transit
- Sometimes people will give up disabled seats but mostly riders pretend to be asleep
- Some are afraid to ask people to give up their seats
- Some bus drivers refuse to allow walkers on bus unless they are folded up (which is not always possible)

### **Outdoor Spaces**

- Some concerns about safety, especially after schools are let out; perception that it is dangerous to be out or use public transit when kids are on the street
- Concerns about coming to evening events because have to get home in the dark; "I don't want to be an easy target."

### **Housing**

- Senior center reports lots of concerns about affordable senior housing
- Concerns about the conversion of Mitchell Lama housing being converted to coops
- Big apartment buildings can be very impersonal and isolating
  - One person noted that when she sees strangers in the hall she "just hopes they live here" because the building is so big she's not sure who her neighbors are

### **Community Services**

- Senior Center on Webster Avenue is an important resource

### **Sources of Support**

- About half of the participants had family nearby
- Many rely on telephone conversations with friends and family to stay connected
- Friends and family are a major source of support
- General consensus that their social worlds have been shrinking as they age
- Regarding neighbors: "People just don't go out of their way" [to check on others]
  - People are more afraid than in the past to check up on one another

- “People used to be a good kind of nosey. Now people are just nosey but they aren’t there to help.”
- People need to connect with their neighbors and notice when mail or packages are piling up and check on them
- Maybe reinstitute tenant patrols

### **Sources of information**

- Some people use the computer for email and to look up information
  - But the library computers are dominated by the young people and are hard for the older people to access
- Most people get their information from t.v. news, newspapers, magazine (Bronx News, News 12)
- Bulletin boards in buildings, retail shops, and service organizations
- General agreement that they don’t always know about all the events and services going in the community; “It’s hard to know what’s going on.”

### **General Problems**

- Difficult to get mail or packages: postal workers won’t bring it up but just leave slips, which requires people to go to the post office
- Too few fresh produce options and too few supermarkets
- Need signs and materials in large print



# The New York Academy of Medicine

*At the heart of urban health since 1847*

**Age-friendly New York City Community Forum Notes  
Catholic Charities Community Services – CYO Senior Center  
Council Member McMahon  
April 30, 2008**

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Approximate number of attendees: 60

## **OUTDOOR SPACES, BUILDINGS, & TRANSPORTATION**

- Road conditions are a serious matter – repair and maintenance is in short supply - and, the sewage system does not handle flooding which makes movement difficult, cumbersome and dangerous.
- There is a need for more CYO buses – new ones – there is an acute shortage of parking at the centers (CYO has four on Staten Island).
- Bus drivers need further training in safety and security. Drivers are indifferent & afraid to encourage/insist that priority seating for the elderly be enforced. Schools should instruct the students about proper behavior and respect for elders. The youth and elder safety needs need to be discussed and attitudes/behaviors adjusted. Respect for the elderly is not evident.
- Access-A-Ride - “That’s a very long story”- Everybody uses the services. But there are problems.
  - Scheduling and maintaining schedules needs greater attention.
  - Communication between drivers, their offices, and riders is cumbersome. Intraboro travel can be a nightmare – one often spends the entire day on the bus because the outerboro customers are not a priority.
  - Tipping the drivers can make the travel more comfortable; the drivers need increases in salary.
  - MTA has been very attentive to improving the system; but more needs to be done.
- Parks are not safe and some are not accessible. Parks should not continue to be used for the homeless; their needs required greater, careful and constant

attention. There is one public park designated for the elderly but it has no parking and no bathroom facilities.

## **ECONOMIC OBSERVATIONS**

- Costs: gas, bridge tokens, rent, utilities, cabs were observed as items which have a greater and greater impact on their comfort level. Some supportive housing is now being threatened by plans for coop or condo conversion; persons on fixed, retirement incomes cannot to afford purchase – and are not considered a good mortgage or credit risk.
- All Centers should be able to participate in the funding available through DFTA; there should be further development of cyber-centers for seniors. OATS-type computer education should be expanded.
- There was lukewarm reception to the notion of returning to work (full and part-time) and minimal willingness to be a volunteer – “I’ve retired from voluntary work.”

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

- Increasing out-of-pocket expenses; generic vs brand-name processes need to be communicated to the senior through doctors, pharmacists, and other community resources.
- Geriatric mental health initiatives are needed.
- Medicaid abuses, fraud, over-utilization need greater attention. Costs of medications – “even with insurance” - are excessive! “Choosing the appropriate health care plan is hard and difficult.”
- “Seniors need assistance in these matters, not just marketing and advertising.”
- Medicare Advantage and the prescription-drug benefit established in 2003 has been overly aggressive in its marketing tactics - enrolling seniors without explaining what seniors are getting into. Some senior lost their supplemental coverage or access to their physicians. (These observations were made by professional health workers in the community and were met with agreement by the seniors. Social worker and discharge planning professionals from the community had attended at the invitation of the Center, and were extremely forthright in their observations and suggestions.)



# The New York Academy of Medicine

*At the heart of urban health since 1847*

**Age-friendly New York City Community Forum Notes  
Carter Burden Center  
Council Members Garodnick and Lappin  
April 3, 2008**

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Approximate number of attendees: 100

## **Like about the Upper East**

- The Carter Burden Center is a good place for meeting others and stopping the problem of isolation. It has nutritious, whole wheat foods and is the best senior center in New York.
- Museums
- Central Park and East River park
- Convenient access to hospitals, parks, senior centers.
- 3 centers just in our area.
- libraries

## **Don't like**

- Construction, cranes and all then noise at night
- Double-parking
- Delivery bikes on the sidewalks
- Too many trucks
- “Age-friendly is a fine idea but we are on fixed incomes. The cost of living is impossible.”

## **Like to Do**

- Museums
- Libraries
- “There’s lots. But it’s harder now to get where you want to go.”
- “It’s complicated to go to the theater. When I was younger, I would just go a half hour early. Now, to get tickets, first you have to arrange transportation,

and to meet up with people, they have to get transportation. Its hard to know how you are going to do anything.”

### **What specific things should be done better?**

- Pollution
- Air quality
- Don't like the frozen meals idea

### **How do you find out about events?**

- PSAs
- Word of mouth
- Go on the computer and all the events are there
- I go to my community board
- I got the email from Quinn.
- We need more computers to find out about things.

### **Outdoor Spaces**

- Every bus stop need to have a fully enclosed shelter and a place to sit
- There are potholes and cracks on the sidewalk. Woman with crutches: “I broke my femur.”
- “I love the accessibility of everything in our area.”
- “Need more benches people can grab onto as they walk down the street. You can see people gripping the storefronts for stability.”
- Need more bathrooms.
- “Albany has talking signals at the crosswalks. We should get those. We have lots of blind people.”
- “The street signs are often turned the wrong way. There used to be numbers visible on all the corners but now there are those signs with names instead. It's disorienting.”
- We should have talking signs.
- We should promote universal design (young woman speaking).
- Bicycles should have horns and lights at night.

### **Safety/Respect**

- Young people do give up their seats on the buses. (about half agreed, half disagreed)
- “There are high school students who need to be more respectful. My friend who has Parkinsons has been knocked down on the street twice by kids rushing

by in groups. There should be seminars or some kind of education in the schools. I don't think they even realize they have knocked people down."

- "You get no help from the 19<sup>th</sup> precinct."
  - We need more police on the streets
  - "The police are not user-friendly." They are disrespectful at the precinct house.
  - The aides in nursing homes should be trained to be more respectful.
- (Alex raised the idea of sensitizing training. People liked this)

## **Transportation**

- "It's easy to get around. It would be better if the buses came on time."
- "People should be more prepared when they get in line. They should have their bus pass out before they get on the bus."
- Bus drivers are rude.
- "We need express buses to Brooklyn so we can get to the Botanical Garden, Brooklyn Museum, Brighton Beach."
- The trucks are always unloading at the bus stops.
- Need lower straps for short people to hang onto on the bus and subway.
- Buses need ramps. "I could get out more with my arthritis if they came down lower."
- The hybrid buses have a lower step.
- "This city has the best transportation system in the country." (applause)
- The sound system on the M15 with audible stops is noisy and adds to noise pollution.
- "I had a bus trip that normally takes one hour take 3 hours the other day because there were people with wheelchairs getting on and off at every stop."
- Eliminate taxis
- Eliminate trucks
- Have taxi stands
- The taxi drivers don't speak English. And they go the wrong way.

## **Housing**

- People are taking on roommates and housemates to deal with the cost of living and rent. This is exposing people to some potentially dangerous situations. "I was attacked by my room-mate and the police said she had every right to stay." Bill Daines? added "There is a law that allows people to maintain residence after 30 days. This should be looked into because it puts older people in a vulnerable situation. They need to be able to test out whether the relationship is going to work and not get stuck."

- Tenants have to pay the court fees for landlords if they lose, but landlords don't have to pay the fees of the tenant if the landlord loses. "That's an uneven playing field."
- Need elevators
- The housing authority should subsidize moves to lower floors
- "We need more medium and low income housing. There are too many condos going up. And who are they for?"
- "I moved here from New Jersey, and to get an apartment, because I don't work, I had to use my son's name." (loss of autonomy, disempowering situation)
- Is it OK for my landlord to raise my rent in the middle of a lease?
- Increase the eligibility threshold for SCRIE and DRIE.
- Something about the community service requirement in public housing....
- Need affordable housing that isn't so high. "Older people just want something nice and quiet."

### **Health Care**

- "I have Medicare. I've been double-billed and improperly billed. And they bill me for things I don't need."
- Pharmacy prices are higher in New York City than anywhere else.
- Make generic medications more available.
- Need insurance coverage for alternative therapies

### **Volunteering**

- "We are all guilty of letting people get isolated. The Carter Burden Center has a program where you call homebound people. We all should volunteer. I call three people who are homebound and we talked so much I now visit them one hour a week."
- "I volunteer for the parks department. They do a 10-year survey of trees."



# The New York Academy of Medicine

*At the heart of urban health since 1847*

**Age-friendly New York City Community Forum Notes**  
**American Bible Society**  
**Council Member Gale Brewer**  
**Co-sponsored by One Stop Senior Services**  
**March 25, 2008**

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Approximate number of attendees: 260

## **What to be Called**

- Seniors is OK
- Elders
- Mature adults
- Who cares?
- “Call me what you want, just do things for me.”

## **Civic Participation and Employment**

- Baltimore example – “Experience Corps”
- Need an employment agency specifically tailored for older adults
- Affirmative action for older workers – require companies to hire a certain number of older workers
- “We can all participate in cleaning up the streets. If you can walk, you can bend. Bend down and pick up the garbage.”
- Neighborhood too expensive now for people that want to run small businesses
- Want jobs for well educated older workers, like in business or education (vs. minimum wage, non-skilled jobs)
- Lots of people volunteer but also want paid opportunities

## **Social Participation**

- Need evening events for seniors. 5pm closing of senior centers is too early
- UWS has a lot of great assets. Let’s make sure they are accessible.

- Need a list of exercise programs for seniors
- Create special walking programs for seniors in Central Park

### **Respect and Social Inclusion**

- Cross-town bus driver is rude to disabled
- Need affordable retail and services for older people. Everything is aimed at younger people.
- Noise level in restaurants is too loud. Ask owners to turn down music

### **Transportation**

- Cross-town buses refuse to lower for person with a walker
- Need more stops on the M20 near CPW
- M10 not running as often as needed
- Put a video camera in the front of every bus to monitor bus drivers
- How will congestion pricing affect us? Disabled drivers should be exempt.
- Important to insure that congestion pricing revenue goes to mass transit
- People who have difficulty speaking need a way to be able to communicate with the access-a-ride service. Need an internet-based system. Gale Brewer said she would pursue.
- In-person interview required for Access-A-Ride is bad idea, since the only way to get there is on public transportation
- “We moved back to the city from Suffolk county when we couldn’t drive anymore.”

### **Outdoor Spaces**

- Restaurants that dump dirty water in the gutter on 84<sup>th</sup> and Broadway
- Gutters are dirty
- Broken sidewalks
- Sloping sidewalks are a hazard.
- People should curb their dogs. Mess is a hazard.
- Need people to clean the grates so water and snow can drain; puddles at intersections are a hazard
- Need more time to cross the streets, esp Broadway; “I get old every time I cross the street.”
- Need better pedestrian control, especially at intersections (consider New Zealand plans which prevent cars and people in intersections at the same time)
- Benches needed

- People in scooters have a hard time with the curbs. There is no continuity in the curb cuts.
- Homeless people on 97<sup>th</sup> street
- Rats
- Develop a task force that inspects sidewalks, curb cuts and accessibility
- Get the City to open up school yards after school and on the weekends so older people can use them for exercise and recreation

## **Housing**

- More money for NORCS
- SCRIE upper limit is unrealistic
- Combine NORCS with horizontal residences and services - see if NORC's could work together with Business Improvement District
- Put nursing homes within NORCS or in community setting that includes Co-ops
- See if City could partially support NORCs in privately owned buildings
- Create mixed developments that include elderly and supported housing (with services like gyms, physical therapy, community rooms) - but are not exclusively for old people
- City should use eminent domain powers to punish landlords with too many violations and reclaim properties to build housing for older adults
- Lots of recognition that older adults who have been in rent stabilized or rent controlled apartments are a "landlord's worst nightmare"
- Preventing the conversion of Mitchell Lama housing is a big concern
- Number of affordable apartments is rapidly declining; older people are being pushed out of Manhattan
- Reform rent stabilization laws to protect older people from eviction

## **Community Services**

- MCOs that oversee home attendants should make sure they are fluent in English and that they receive appropriate training. Need more oversight of home care attendants.
- Need educational opportunities for people of all ages
- Need well trained and compassionate caregivers
- Need respite services for caregivers

## **Sources of Support**

- Less than half the room had family in the neighborhood or city

- “We rely on our girlfriends”
- Family, friends
- Local religious institutions – provided assistance in ways that are less bureaucratic than government services
- Neighbors – story about an older woman who a neighbor hadn’t seen in a few days and called landlord. Woman was found too sick to call for help and rescued just in time.
- Buddy system where neighbors are assigned to check in on one another
- Local elected officials accessible and helpful

### **Cost of Living**

- SSI, pensions are tough to live on
- Need grocery stores to offer discounts for seniors
- Rising cost of living are straining fixed incomes
- Need more affordable retail and restaurant options

### **General Problems**

- Homelessness/eviction is a problem
- Officials don’t listen to us

### **UWS Assets**

- Gale Brewer
- UWS political officials are accessible
- Goddard Riverside Community Center
- Westside Federation
- Lost of cultural institutions - need to make sure they are accessible to older adults



# The New York Academy of Medicine

*At the heart of urban health since 1847*

**Age-friendly New York City Community Forum Notes**  
**VISIONS at Selis Manor – Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired**  
**Speaker of the City Council Christine Quinn**  
**April 21, 2008**

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VISIONS at Selis Manor is an adapted learning environment and meeting place for youth, adults and seniors who are blind or visually impaired.

## **OUTDOOR SPACES**

- Difficulties with the condition of streets and sidewalks - :”I cannot go for a walk in my neighborhood” – because repairs are needed on sidewalks and streets, and need for more time to cross the streets. (Timing on traffic lights needs to be extended.) “I age every time I have to cross the street.”

## **SAFETY**

- “Where are the police officers to assist us?”

## **PUBLIC EDUCATION**

- Public education on behalf of the blind, the deaf, and handicapped is needed.
- “ How to help and to assist seems unknown .”
- Education of service people through their unions - ongoing , continuing education - education should include representation from the impaired community itself on “What is it is like to be blind and handicapped.”
- It is a question of attitude and behavior on the part of service personnel.

## **HOUSING**

- Need for ramps.
- Special Section 8 for the aged, blind and disabled should be established and available. Special housing facilities for the blind should be planned .
- Expanded and more visible NORC services for the frail elderly who are both disabled, blind and poor.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

- “ 75% of the blind population is not working”; this could be changed through careful planning and resources.

## **HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE**

- Some action requested on containing the ever-increasing cost of care; seniors fear bankruptcy.