

Blueprint Highlights May and June 2006

Jill Kind and Mike Scholl attended the first of a two part communications conference in Annapolis, Maryland sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. A follow-up conference will be held in October. The training facilitates a formal communications plan designed to market the program more effectively. The communications firm provides a coach to help guide and refine messages and materials. The development of these materials will help staff and Core Leadership address the community and legislators with a unified, clear voice representing area senior issues and the work of the Blueprint.

The Beacons workgroup (11 attendees) met regarding establishment of senior friendly communities. Community members suggested that the group be renamed Friendly Aging Neighborhood Group-FANG. Staff liked the change, appreciating the attitude: FANG-A concept you can sink your teeth into. It's grassroots confirmation of the Blueprint's new tag line-*Start a revolution: Aging with Attitude*. Community input led to a suggestion that the Blueprint develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) asking communities to submit proposals describing how they would use Blueprint expertise, resources, and pilot projects to create more support for senior to age in place. Minutes are posted on the Blueprint website.

The Senior Advocates of Washtenaw (SAW) met (15 attendees) to continue plans for the Saline Brecon Village community forum to be held August 28. Megan Torrance, Representative Byrne's legislative assistant will organize the panel with speakers addressing subjects decided upon by the SAW group. These include help for aging in place, area transportation developments and the cost of utilities as it affects quality of life for seniors. Minutes are posted on the Blueprint website.

Blueprint technology committee members met with executive directors of services to seniors to review and discuss key elements in authorizations for release of information. Larry Cohn has developed a database for Neighborhood Senior Services in QuickBase. Ready for implementation by September 1, NSS data will be housed in the Blueprint database. This service is the first example of collaborative partner support from the Blueprint for Aging. Larry introduced the idea of presenting the shared point of access as an e-referral system. This will help to more effectively communicate what the database will accomplish.

A committee of case management workers is formed and will meet in July to begin the senior resource decision tree process. Dale Fitch will assign a Social Work graduate student to the project for a doctoral thesis.

Martha Bloom facilitated a site visit with the RNR Foundation for a report on their support of Blueprint activities. Jill Kind and Virginia Boyce attended. Foundation members warmly received Jill's report, expressing much interest in and satisfaction with Blueprint mission and goals.