

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
COMMITTEE ON AGING
Wednesday, July 23, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.
Killingworth Town Hall

Members in Attendance: Bill Joyce (Chair), Cheryl Fine (Arrived at 6:06 p.m.), Ellen Oppenheimer, Amy Roberts-Perry, Margaret Tobelman, and Ex-officio Member, Mercedes Ricciuti (Municipal Agent for the Elderly)

Members Absent: None.

Staff in Attendance: Jamie Sciascia (Clerk/Via Remote)

Visitors: None.

Called to Order: The meeting was Called to Order at 6:01 p.m. by Bill Joyce, Chair

Roll Call and Introduction of 2 New Members to the Organization:

Bill Joyce conducted a roll call of members in attendance. He then introduced and welcomed two new members of the Committee on Aging: Amy Roberts-Perry and Ellen Oppenheimer, noting that both have been officially sworn in at Town Hall.

Elect and Vote for New Chairman of the Killingworth Committee on Aging:

The next order of business was to elect and vote on a new chairman for the Committee on Aging, and a motion was brought forth to nominate Bill Joyce.

Motion #1 - Amy Roberts-Perry *Moved* and Margaret Tobelman *Seconded* a motion to nominate Bill Joyce as the New Chairman of the Killingworth Committee on Aging.

Voting to Approve: B. Joyce, E. Oppenheimer, A. Roberts-Perry, M. Tobelman

Motion unanimously passed (4-0-0).

Committee on Aging Member Cheryl Fine arrived at approximately 6:06 p.m.

Approval of the April 30, 2025 Special Minutes:

This Agenda Item was *Tabled* until the next meeting in August.

Approval of Clerk's Invoice:

This Agenda Item was *Tabled* until the next meeting in August.

Old Business:

A. Discussion on Affordable Senior Housing

- **Outreach to builders & developers specializing in affordable senior housing in Connecticut towns to attend upcoming meetings.**
- **Engaging attorneys/consultants to assist with process to make things operate smoothly**
- **Discussion on identifying and discussing potential locations in Killingworth for development.**

Chair Joyce, following a visit to Living Rock Church in Killingworth and conversations with local residents, emphasized the urgent need for affordable senior housing in the community. He noted that many seniors are struggling to remain in town due to rising housing costs, and that the Committee on Aging is seeking to develop a long-term, accessible solution. Chair Joyce referenced other towns that have had successful affordable senior housing models: 1) Bethlehem with 26 units, 7 acres, shared septic, one-level homes; 2) Chester, a piano factory converted into affordable senior housing, with multi-units, 2-stories, with four units per building, and a clubhouse; 3) Old Lyme, with mixed units, one-story and two-story homes; 4) Westbrook, multi-story, 2–3 floors, sewer system access.

Chair Joyce further shared that he previously lived in Bethlehem, CT, and referenced conversations with Joan Gay, former chairperson, who has deep knowledge of regional senior housing initiatives. He also spoke about his visit to the Chester project, which he found impressive in both design and livability. Additionally, he spoke of Nancy Johnson who was recognized for her role in launching an affordable senior housing project in Litchfield. These examples have inspired Chair Joyce to pivot the committee’s focus toward creating similar housing options in Killingworth.

Chair Joyce informed the Committee that HUD may fund up to 50% of the total project cost, but any proposal will still require formal approval from the town. Hope Builders, a regional developer with experience in HUD-compliant affordable senior housing, has expressed interest in the project and is prepared to follow HUD’s competitive bidding requirements which include: 1) A minimum of three quotes; 2) Income qualifications, such as annual income under \$50,000; 3) Compliance with all building, accessibility, and zoning standards.

Chair Joyce informed the Committee that the Planning and Zoning Commission recently passed an Active Adult Community Regulation. He noted that he will follow up with First Selectman Couture to confirm and clarify whether affordable senior housing qualifies under the scope of this new regulation.

The Committee on Aging held a detailed discussion about potential locations in Killingworth for the development of affordable senior housing, focusing particularly on two possible 10-acre parcels behind Living Rock Church, which may be available through donation. Members emphasized the importance of evaluating the land for factors such as ledge or rocky ground, accessibility and road entry, and the feasibility of installing septic or sewer systems. Without

sewer access, it was noted that the number of units could be limited to 12–15. The Committee also briefly discussed the possibility of land on Lovers Lane as potential alternatives.

Margaret Tobelman proposed the use of small modular or “tiny homes” (approximately 400 square feet) as a cost-effective, flexible, and self-contained housing option for seniors. These units could be strategically placed on available parcels to support independence and accessibility. Amy Roberts-Perry and other Committee members stressed the importance of identifying key planning requirements early in the process, particularly square footage, mobility, and site layout, as critical factors in designing functional and effective affordable senior housing.

Chair Joyce suggested to the Committee to invite the HUD representatives (Suzanne or equivalent) to the August or September meeting to review requirements and process. The Committee also discussed the possibility of involving a local known realtor, who may be able to assist with identifying foreclosures and sourcing potential properties for the affordable senior housing project.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the Committee to formally pivot the Committee on Aging’s focus toward Affordable Senior Housing as a primary objective moving forward.

Next Steps:

- Chair Joyce will contact First Selectman Couture regarding clarification of the Active Adult Regulation recently passed by the Planning & Zoning Commission;
- Chair Joyce will reach out to Hope Builders to confirm their interest before the next meeting;
- Chair Joyce and Amy Roberts-Perry will work together and reach out to the Living Rock Church regarding the possible donation of the two parcels of land and also contact HUD for the square footage requirements;
- Invite HUD Representative (Suzanne or equivalent), Hope Builders, Living Rock Church representatives to the August or September Committee on Aging meeting;
- Create Site Evaluation Checklist, Schedule Site Visits and Prepare land presentations.

The Committee briefly discussed continuing the Fraud Informational Sessions and considered holding them during a Saturday or Sunday session to boost community awareness and provide more opportunities for seniors to attend.

New Business: No Report.

Next Meeting: The next Committee on Aging meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 20, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Hall.

Adjournment:

Motion #2 - Amy Roberts-Perry *Moved* and Margaret Tobelman *Seconded* a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 6:51 p.m.

Voting to Approve: C. Fine, B. Joyce, E. Oppenheimer, A. Roberts-Perry, M. Tobelman

Motion unanimously passed (5-0-0).

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie Sciascia
Clerk