

LIVING LONG IN THE DISTILLERY/NORC

At a public meeting for Distillery residents on May 23, a number of people volunteered for an organising committee to establish some guidelines and proposals to bring back to the membership. This includes Julie Beddoes, Diana Belshaw, Lester Brown (since stepped down), Lisa Droppo, Jack Lee, Catherine Schryer and Ute Lischke.

The organising committee has held two meetings and will be inviting a group of service providers and organisations that work with seniors to a meeting in November to talk about a strategy to build a support network to assist seniors to live at home longer. From that we hope to go back to the community to strategise next steps.

We are also encouraging each building in the Distillery that has a significant population of seniors or those soon to reach that definition to develop social strategies within their building to develop a sense of community. We believe that both the social and the medical/social elements of aging in place can be encouraged and supported with distinct but parallel activities.

Following is a draft letter from the committee to the service organisations which will be sent by the end of September.

On behalf of the Living Long in the Distillery/NORC Committee: Diana Belshaw

September 9, 2023

Invitation for GWNA Living Long in the Distillery Fall Meeting

Meeting Purpose

You are invited to a meeting on Wednesday, November 8, 2023, from 11:30 am to 2 pm hosted by the Gooderham & Worts Neighbourhood Association (GWNA) Living Long in the Distillery Sub-Committee (see below). The meeting will bring together like-minded organizations with a small liaison committee from the GWNA to consider an integrated approach to support individuals to live as long as possible in the community represented by the GWNA. Our hope is to facilitate an opportunity to learn about current programs and services, and explore future possibilities to work together to support living long in our community.

Who is the GWNA?

The GWNA is a unified voice that serves the interests and enhances the quality of life for all residents of the Historic Distillery District. The GWNA represents the neighbourhood bound on the south by the Toronto Terminal Railway, on the north by Front St., on the east by Cherry Street and on the west by Parliament Street.

Who lives in the GWNA?

There are currently 6 condominium buildings ranging in size from 95 to 385 units. Individuals of all ages live in the buildings with between 6 and 24% over the age of 65, many of whom are currently aging in place or plan to age in place. More condominiums and apartments are currently under construction in the neighbourhood including affordable rental units.

GWNA Aging in Place Sub-Committee

A sub-committee has recently been established to explore opportunities to support individuals to live as long as possible in the community. The group's membership includes three individuals from 39 Parliament St. who have participated in training related to Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORC)* with Open Lab, and are working with the NORC Innovation Centre at University Health Network, as well as representatives from the other local condominiums.

Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Brief presentations from invited organizations (see preparation request below)
3. Facilitated discussion regarding themes and opportunities
4. Discussion of next steps

*Please note that lunch will be provided.

Our Preparation Request

Please identify a maximum of 3 individuals from your organization to attend this meeting with one person to come prepared to speak for 5-7 minutes about the following topics where relevant to your organization:

- Brief introduction to your organization
- What health and/or social services does your organization currently provide in the Distillery District and neighbouring communities?
- What plans are in place for new services in the future? Service type, location, etc.
- What opportunities do you know of that may exist for community space in new or existing buildings to support individuals to live longer in the Distillery District?
- What opportunities do you see for collaboration to create a community of care to support individuals to live longer in the Distillery District?
- What else do you want/need to know to engage further?

Should you wish to prepare a presentation, we will have a laptop, projector and screen available.

RSVP

Please RSVP to president@gwna.ca including the names and role titles of the individuals who will be attending by Friday, October 13, 2023. Should you have any questions in advance of the meeting, please send them to president@gwna.ca.

* NORC stands for naturally occurring retirement community, an emerging concept to describe buildings that weren't planned as structures for older adults, and yet older adults have become the major, or a significant, demographic among residents. This trend is stronger in urban centres, where more people older than 65 are moving to condos, co-ops or apartment buildings than ever before.