

From: Li Li
Sent: Tue 6/9/2020 11:06 AM
To: Clerks Richmondhill <clerks@richmondhill.ca>
Subject: How can we actively engage our seniors in Richmond Hill without having a Senior's Advisory Committee?

How can we actively engage our seniors in Richmond Hill without having a Senior's Advisory Committee?

Dear Council members of Richmond Hill,

My name is Li Li, and I am a resident of Ward 6 in the city of Richmond Hill. I am also a social worker in the community, who is deeply concerned about the wellbeing of our seniors.

I am writing regarding the council meeting on June 10th, 2020. I wish I could make a delegation during the meeting but I will be working during the time. Please accept this email as my comments for the council meeting.

I appreciate the Staff Report regarding Age-Friendly Communities (AFC) is making sure that the city is thinking about our aging population.

While the adoption to the AFC in Richmond Hill shows that seniors can not be neglected, we need a concrete action plan to move this strategy forward. I am particularly interested in hearing the action plan and timeline for the city to develop a Senior's Advisory Committee.

First of all, our seniors need to have a say in the entire process in developing the AFC strategy. Secondly, our city has a wide range of intelligent older adults who could actively participate in the committee. Lastly, without a committee to build an action plan or do the follow-up, many of the other recommendations will remain an unfunded paper proposal.

If the government is on top of this plan, we need concrete steps with a timeline for us to move forward. I have two recommendations:

1. The city needs to act and establish a Senior's Advisory Committee as a committee of the municipal council. A resolution and terms of reference need to be passed by the city council to announce the formation of the committee by the end of 2020. To do that, the city could host a public engagement meeting, and invite seniors and stakeholders to get a sense of what seniors want to see in this committee.

2. The city needs to form a task force in collaboration with the Senior's Advisory Committee and other community partners, to establish an Action Plan for developing the AFC strategy in Richmond Hill by the first quarter of 2021.

During the COVID-19 outbreak, death tolls, heart-breaking stories, and military reports in long-term care facilities have clearly shown that the system has been failing our older adults. Ageism has been negatively impacting our society as a whole. We need to take action, and the time is now!

By collaborating with our older adults, we can build a city that's not only great to grow old in, but also great for our children to grow up in. Together, we can build a place enriched by the incredible wisdom and talents of our older adults in Richmond Hill.

Thank you for your time reviewing my comments.

Sincerely yours,

Li Li

A resident of Ward 6, Richmond Hill