



The National “Village” Movement

and

WIDER HORIZONS

www.widerhorizonsvillage.org

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History

- “What to do, what to do” about all these old people?
- How can we help ourselves age in place?
- Community organizing model, rather than a social services model
- Most began by folks meeting with neighbors in their living rooms
- “Grandmother” was Beacon Hill Village in Boston in 2002

The Village Movement



Currently 190 Villages are operating across the United States, Canada, Australia and the Netherlands, with another 150 in development

Definition of a Village

- A “Village” is not a place but a strategy for aging in your home
- It’s a personal, central source that builds community and connects its members with each other and other parts of the community
- Connections happen through social, educational, volunteer, community, and service experiences
- Villages offer and refer to services (some by professionals/some by volunteers)
- For an annual membership fee

“If you’ve seen one village, you’ve seen one village....”

But here are some common features:

- Driven by members’ desires and needs
- Funded with membership fees and a variety of donations and grants
- Governance by, mostly, non-profit boards composed of community leaders who may also be active members
- Most have a small number of paid staff to provide organization and some structure; some are “all-volunteer”
- Social, educational, cultural, wellness and fitness programs
- Services like transportation, home repair, friendly visiting, pet care, de-cluttering, health care advocacy, technology help

Why a Village in Central Seattle?

- Horizon House impetus/funding
- Community interest on the part of activists, boomers and others
- A dense urban population with diversity of income, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc.
- Two successful villages to the north had opened in 2012

Who and Where?

- Target
 - People 65 and older, but anyone may join
 - Residents of six zip codes comprising many neighborhoods: the Central District, Capitol Hill, Eastlake, Leschi, Madison Park, Madrona, Montlake, Mount Baker
 - All income, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc.
 - People who can safely be at home

Wider Horizons Key Principles

- Give what you want; ask for what you need
- Community engagement
- We'll do our best to help with high-quality member services
- Inclusion and diversity
- Intergenerational relationships and participation

Other Organizational Features

- 2014 was a year of operational planning, partially funded by Horizon House
- Formed a 501C3 organization with a 10-member Board of Directors
- Opened in June, 2015 and we have 80 members, mid-50s to mid-90s
- Currently a staff of two and MSW grad students from UW
- Most services provided to members by members, with a handful of other volunteers
- Useful website and beefy on-line database

Finances

- Annual membership of \$600 for individual; \$900 for a couple – typical of villages
- We have varied sources of funds in addition to memberships: individual donations, grants, business sponsorships
- Some donors are encouraged to be “Friends,” and invited to our events and activities for \$200/year
- We offer discounted memberships based on declared need

Other Program Features

- New members interviewed by a member
- Regular friendly phone calls or visits if requested or needed
- All-member meetings, picnics, or parties every other month
- Friendly phone calls or visits to those who want that kind of contact
- Neighborhood-based events through “pods”
- Events, classes, group activities, including:
 - Health Care Advocacy
 - Planning for a Good Death
 - Warm for Winter (knitting hats/scarves for homeless people)
 - Book Group; Magazine Group
 - Jazz nights; Theater excursions
 - Community Garden
 - Wellness classes (yoga, and more)