



SOMERVISION2040

Sustainability • Diversity • Opportunity • Connectivity • Community

Elderly Brazilians Forum

Date of the event: April 11, 2019

How many people attended this event? 15

Target participants: Elderly Brazilian Immigrants (ages between 66 and 84)

In what language was this forum? Portuguese

Where was this event hosted? Cabot Hill Apartments

What do you love about the Somerville Community? What aspects of Somerville do we want SomerVision 2040 to enhance or preserve?

- Participants spoke highly of Cobble Hill apartments as an elderly living facility, many noted that it was clean and well maintained, and that it offered many spaces for them to socialize with one another, so they want it to be preserved.
- They spoke about how it's very important for the city to ensure there are affordable elderly residential community spaces that offer adequate support but are not too far removed from the rest of the city, so they don't feel isolated. Participants complimented the city government and said from their perspective it runs well and listens to people, and we should ensure that continues to be the case.
- They mentioned that cleanliness around the city is important, and that we need to make sure we are recycling as much as we can both to keep it off the streets and for the environment.
- Other participants mentioned that there are many beautiful historic homes and buildings in the city and that we need to make sure they are well maintained, and help owners maintain them otherwise they don't look so good and could become too hard to repair over time.
- They love SomerViva and their help and support, but think they're trying to do a lot with not enough staff.

What problems and challenges affect the Somerville community? Which are the most important to you personally?

- Multiple participants discussed concerns about road maintenance and the safety and hazard risks of too many potholes and uneven streets. Another common point was the lack of curb cuts for those with mobility issues.
- There were many complaints about excessive traffic for those who drive specially with all the construction.
- For the elderly who take buses they felt they often had to wait too long and specially in days of bad weather that was very difficult for them.
- Some complained about the lack of activities for the elderly and exercise facilities.

What are some ideas you would like the community to explore? These could be solutions to some of the problems we identified or other programs or initiatives?

- Multiple attendees suggested we need more facilities with heated indoor pools for the elderly to the water exercises, pointing out it is one of the best activities for the very elderly and has a great positive impact on their health.
- Attendees also suggested the elderly would benefit from more programming like art classes and exercise classes specifically for them and that the city would offer at no cost since they cannot afford to pay.
- Attendees mentioned that we have many immigrant elderly folks in the city who would like to learn English but have difficulty accessing free classes in existing programs and cannot pay for classes. They suggested city ESL programs could do English classes in elderly residential buildings specifically for them as there are more than enough folks in their own complex and other they believe, to fill out the classes if offered on site.