

Age-Friendly Shepherdstown

Minutes

January 21, 2026

Attending: Marty Amerikaner, Leigh Ann Evanson, Linda Spatig

The meeting was called to order by Linda at 1:40.

We unanimously approved the minutes from the December meeting.

Old Business

1. Community Challenge Grant. Leigh Ann presented information she had obtained from her research on how to apply for the grants as well as ideas about what we might successfully propose.
 - a. Three types of grants:
 - i. Flagship grants support projects that improve public places; transportation, housing; digital connections; and disaster resilience. Awards range from a few hundred dollars to \$15,000.
 - ii. Capacity-Building microgrants are paired with expert support, webinars, and cohort learning for projects to improve walkability and bikeability; implement safe, accessible home modifications; and disaster preparedness training. Awards are \$2500.
 - iii. Demonstration grants fund projects that encourage replication of exemplary local efforts. This year's focus is on improving pedestrian safety, with funding support from Toyota Motor North America; expanding high-speed internet access and adoption, with funding support from Microsoft; and housing choice design competitions. Awards range from \$10,000 to \$20,000, not to exceed \$25,000.
 - b. Ideas for projects to propose:
 - i. Library Path. Connecting the space along Lowe Drive (near the old Clarion) to the back side of the Shepherdstown Public Library. The

path would be constructed with materials that allow people of all ages and abilities to use it.

Considerations: Largely contingent on whether Lowe family will allow it to proceed. Also worth noting is that the proposed path is not within the town's corporate limits, so we likely would not need approval from Town Council, unless we request financial support from the town for the project.

- ii. Pop-up Pedestrian Plaza around Markethouse. Temporarily (during late spring, summer, and early fall) block off King Street around/behind the markethouse (aka old library) as a demonstration project to give the community a hance to experience a pedestrian plaza in this central location. The project could show how temporary installations can promote community change and might suggest ways to overcome any objections that emerge.

Considerations: This is already mentioned in several town plans. Doing it for even a short period of time requires securing approvals in advance so it can be installed and uninstalled within the grant period.

- iii. Shepherdstown Public Transportation Pilot. Pilot a shuttle bus route through Shepherdstown by leasing a small, but fully accessible, van or bus. Such a pilot would enable us to assess the feasibility of this way of addressing the already-demonstrated high level of community interest in such a model of public transport.

Consideration: We already have survey data showing a high level of community support and willingness to pay for such a service. We don't know if the cost would be within grants' limits. One limitation might be a lack of time to advertise/market the service enough to get good ridership.

Leigh Ann generously offered to work on applications for two projects. After considerable discussion, we agreed that the library path would be a solid opportunity, but we would need to choose between the pop-up downtown pedestrian plaza and the pilot public shuttle bus. We decided to take an e-vote of the full Age-Friendly committee before proceeding. We discussed working with the Grants Committee as well. Leigh Ann has already been in touch with Grants Committee chair, Shannon Thomas and will continue to seek her guidance in how to proceed.

2. Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 18, 1:30, at Town Hall.

In order to submit the two applications by the March 4 deadline, we need to decide on which one/s by February 6.