

TOWN OF BETHEL

19 Main Street
PO Box 1660
Bethel, ME 04217



Phone: 207-824-2669
Fax: 207-824-3355
www.bethelmaine.org

September 14, 2015

Lori Parham
State Director, AARP Maine
53 Baxter Blvd., Suite 202
Portland, ME 04101

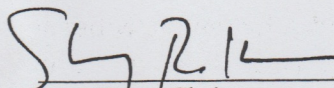
Dear Ms Parham,

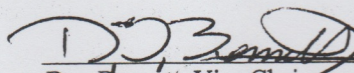
The Town of Bethel has prided itself in providing services and quality of life for all its residents, including its senior citizens. However, those who have grown up in or retired to Bethel are at risk of being forced to leave the community as they grow older because their need for personal services and medical care can't be met here. Here in Maine, surveys show that 9 out of 10 residents, ages 50 or over, want to stay in their own homes in their local communities as long as possible. To enable this to happen, the community is recognizing that initiatives must be undertaken to provide for a more age-friendly environment for its senior citizens (estimated to be 40% of Bethel's population.)

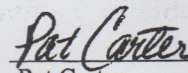
The Age-Friendly Community Project (AFCP) was initiated in June of this year as an off-shoot of the To Your Health program of Western Mountains Senior College in collaboration with the Bethel Family Health Center and MSAD44 Continuing Education. The project's goal is to develop a plan that will provide for a more age-friendly community for senior citizens. The AFCP team hopes to collaborate with other groups, such as the Healthy Oxford Hills Community Coalition, to share ideas on how to best meet the needs of our aging population. To complement county and state-wide programs, the on-going update of the Town's Comprehensive Plan represents an ideal vehicle in which sufficient, affordable, reliable and quality services to permit people to remain in their homes are identified. The Plan also represents an opportunity to offer a strategy for providing those services that are needed. The "livability domains," developed by the World Health Organization and supported by the AARP, offer an ideal framework for the Town's planning endeavors, such as the Comprehensive Plan.

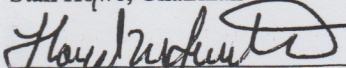
It is anticipated that the AFCP, under the auspices of the AARP's Network of Age-Friendly Communities, will draw upon the resources available to satisfy the needs of Bethel's aging population. The Town's leadership strongly supports this project. Therefore, the Town of Bethel seeks to join the AARP's Network of Age-Friendly Communities, and agrees to serve as the fiscal agent for the AFCP.

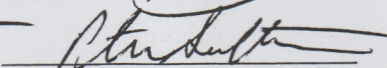
Bethel Board of Selectmen

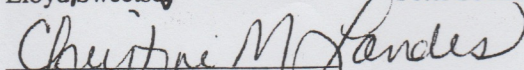

Stan Howe, Chairman


Don Bennett, Vice Chairman


Pat Carter


Lloyd Sweetser


Peter Southam


Christine M. Landes, Town Manager