Services for Senior Citizens in the Town of Rotterdam
The Town of Rotterdam, NY currently lacks sufficient services to accommodate the needs of an increasing senior population.
Impact On Our Seniors

There are currently long waiting lists for senior housing.

Seniors have to leave our town in order to receive the care they need.

Many senior citizens have no other option, but to live alone in homes that do not have appropriate safety features.

As a person ages it also becomes very difficult to take care of a home.
Evidence

In 2012, Seniors (65+) made up 15% of Schenectady County and that is on average 2% higher than the national percentage.

-U.S. Census Bureau

“Rotterdam has the highest percentage of seniors of any other town in the county, so chances are we don't have enough housing.”

-Mrs. Mollie Collins, former Project Coordinator for the Rotterdam Senior Center
Evidence

In 2010, one third of the seniors in Schenectady County, which contains the township of Rotterdam, were living alone.
- U.S. Census Bureau

“When seniors do not have human contact they are putting their mental wellbeing into jeopardy.”
- Mrs. Mollie Collins, former Project Coordinator for the Rotterdam Senior Center

A study found citizens over the age of 60 to be less likely to conduct necessary home repairs.
- Journal of Housing Studies

Percentage of Elderly Living Alone in Schenectady County

Source: U.S. Census Bureau
Demographers project that by 2040, the U.S. population aged 65 and older will **double to 80 million** and their share of the total population will **rise from 13 to 20 percent.**

-U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

The rising population of seniors coupled with a reduced birth rate is completely changing the age composition of the United States.
Causes

Senior citizens wish to maintain their *independence* for as long as possible.

-Mrs. Mollie Collins, former Project Coordinator for the Rotterdam Senior Center

“Seniors are from the *giving generation* and do not want to ask for assistance because they believe they aren’t old enough for it.”

-Mrs. Mollie Collins, former Project Coordinator for the Rotterdam Senior Center

Many senior citizens simply *cannot afford* private housing or cannot find housing that is not completely full.

-Mrs. Mollie Collins, former Project Coordinator for the Rotterdam Senior Center
Policy Proposal

The Rotterdam Town Board will pass a policy to build a senior community in the Town of Rotterdam with the use of private builders to be approved by the Rotterdam Zoning and Planning Departments.
Policy Proposal

Benefits

Safe Environment
Seniors will have a safe and affordable place to live.

Socialization
Seniors will live near others like themselves, and keep their minds sharp while socializing with peers.

Tax Revenue
The increase in homeowners will raise the town’s tax revenue and Mohonasen tax revenue.

Costs

Traffic
There will be more traffic on Helderberg Ave.

Utilities
There will be a strain on public utilities.

Freedom of Ownership
Since the style of homes will be condominiums, residents will have to follow certain regulations.
Effectiveness

As a result of our policy, more seniors will be able to live independently in a housing complex where necessary safety precautions have been taken.

The community is expected to be completed by the year 2020 and there will be an estimated 490 independent living facilities and cottage homes.

—Mr. Luigi Lecce, real estate attorney and developer
Feasibility

There will be **no significant funding from the Town of Rotterdam**, as the Community will be owned by a private company.

It is a good option for our town in order to alleviate the negative effects of the problem on our high population of senior citizens.

Therefore, the Town Board should consider the **approval of a senior community**.
Thank You

- Mr. Tommasone for presenting us with this problem and listening to our presentation.
- The Rotterdam Town Board for listening to our presentation.
- Mrs. Mollie Collins for providing us with valuable insight into the lives of the senior citizens in our town.

- Mrs. Ryder’s Syracuse University Public Affairs 101 class at Schalmont High School
Welcome

Policy regarding the senior citizens of Rotterdam, New York
The Problem

The Town of Rotterdam, N.Y. currently lacks sufficient services to accommodate the needs of the increasing senior population.
Impact on the Town and Citizens

A feeling of loss of community can come with more seniors being home bound and not able to access any services.

The lack of services can both physically and mentally harm the elderly in Rotterdam.
Evidence of the Problem

Strong social connections are essential to physical and mental well being, but when the elderly experience setbacks they can become isolated.

AARP

Elderly dependency is growing in America.

Bulletin of World Health Association

The elderly in car accidents are 50% more likely to have crash related injuries.

Elderly are not able to drive as frequently because of hearing and vision loss.

American Journal of Occupational Therapy
The Percentage of elderly living alone in Schenectady County is increasing.

U.S. Census Bureau

The elderly are not fully aware of the medications they take.

American Association of Nurse Practitioners

Elderly who live alone are more likely to have poor nutritional status.

Journal of American Dietetic Association

“Seniors who live alone are more likely to have a poor diet because they lack someone to share a meal with”.

Mollie Collins (former Rotterdam Senior Center Project Coordinator)
Causes of the Problem

The number of seniors living alone in Rotterdam is increasing.

U.S. Census Bureau

People born or that lived during the Great Depression and WWII are the “giving generation” and are less likely to ask for assistance.

“Privately owned senior assisted living is expensive”.

Additionally, there is a waiting list for senior living in Rotterdam.

Mollie Collins (former Rotterdam Senior Center Project Coordinator)
Causes of the Problem

Living alone as well as low income can lead to seniors having poor diets.

Journal of American Dietetic Association

Senior citizens overestimate their physical capabilities, assuming they don’t need help with transportation and other daily activities.

Mollie Collins (former Rotterdam Senior Center Project Coordinator)
Proposed Policy

This policy requires the Rotterdam Town Board to allow the comptroller to provide funding for the Director of the Rotterdam Senior Center to purchase a new bus.
The Bus

The Rotterdam Senior Center would be purchasing a 14 passenger charter bus which would cost around $50,000 to purchase, insurance and bus maintenance would also have to be considered for cost.

The driver does not need to have a commercial license, so the Senior Center can continue using volunteer, retired drivers.

Mollie Collins
Effectiveness

Benefits:
- Increased transportation opportunities for senior citizens
- Safer transportation for seniors/ safer roads for everyone in Rotterdam, New York
- Gives seniors more of an opportunity to socialize and increase their mobility
- Less pressure on family members of seniors to help with care & transportation

Costs:
- Purchasing and maintaining the bus (and insurance)
- Senior citizens using the bus would need to follow the bus schedule
Number of Trips Made by the Rotterdam Senior Center Bus Per Year

Feasibility

The Rotterdam Town Board should consider passing this policy because it will be very effective in helping to increase the number of services provided to the seniors of Rotterdam, this policy will prevent injuries caused by car collisions to the elderly, it will increase socialization among seniors, and will combat elderly isolation.
Thank You!

Thank you, Mr. Steve Tommasone for providing us with this opportunity to create a policy and giving us our societal category.

Thank you, Mollie Collins for giving us a tour of the Rotterdam Senior Center and providing us with useful information for our policy.

Thank you, Rotterdam Town Board for giving us your time to present this policy and for your feedback.