

# Cazenovia Study Finalized for Senior Housing

By Jim J, on October 14th, 2009

It has been over a year since the Greater Cazenovia Area Chamber of Commerce formed a steering committee to address the economic leakage and gaps in the community concerning its aging population. In step with a nationwide trend of a growing older population and its related issues of adequate housing stock, Cazenovia has been losing senior members to other communities.

In partnership with Cazenovia Area Senior Association, funds were raised from local residents and organizations to commission Asterhill, Inc. to conduct a Market and Feasibility Study for “Addressing the Need for Senior Housing and Services in the Greater Cazenovia Community”. After an in depth study, two workshops involving local seniors and community leaders, a public forum, and a community-wide survey, the study has been finalized. The results were presented by James Carroll of Asterhill at a public presentation on September 15th, 2009.

The major findings of the study-

\* There is a need for senior housing in the Cazenovia community, particularly affordable and market rate housing. The survey showed that over 85% would support a new senior housing project.

\* Services needed in the community were identified as transportation to access medical services, shopping and other local resources; greater access to shopping opportunities; and more services to enable aging in place. 48% of survey respondents felt that the greatest need in the community for seniors was supportive services.

Trends that are impacting the Cazenovia community and its future were cited. The population segment of 55 years and older has increased by 29%; the population segment of 54 years and younger has declined by 25%. The increase in the number of seniors is driving a shortage of suitable housing units. As the mean income rises, more seniors will qualify for low income housing.

In an effort to address one of the study’s findings, a need for more supportive services in the community, a “NORC” (Naturally Occurring Retirement Community) is being established. The name is CRIS- Community Resources for Independent Seniors. Having “naturally” evolved from the GCACC and CASA Senior Housing Initiative, like other NORCs, its purpose will be to provide services that will help seniors remain in their community, as well as build community partnerships. The intention of CRIS is to supplement and not replace existing services offered by aging councils and similar programs.

Copies of the Market and Feasibility Study can be found at the Cazenovia Public Library and the GCACC office. A **copy is available online at the Asterhill website** (in PDF format) or through <http://www.cazenoviachamber.com/>.



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