

Brookline Community Aging Network

Livable Community Advocacy Committee

Notes

February 5, 2018

Attendance: Alex Beck, Frank Caro, Harvey Cohen, Jerry Feuer, Susan Granoff, John Harris, Joan McCabe, Carol Seibert, Vera Sharma, Ruthann Snyder, Ann Stitt, Melissa Trevvett, and Jackie Wright, and Asya Zimbov.

1. Frank Caro made a presentation on financial insecurity among Brookline seniors. According to the Elder Economic Security Standard, Massachusetts has the second most widespread elder economic insecurity in the U.S. Norfolk County has the second greatest concentration of elder economic insecurity in MA. Housing costs drive the economic security standard index. Very high housing costs account for most of the financial distress experienced by seniors in Massachusetts. Most distressed are seniors with mortgages follow by senior renters. Among Massachusetts **senior singles** living alone, **61%** have incomes **below** the Elder Index for single renters. The greatest distress is among unmarried older women. Market-rate rental units are out-of-reach financially for seniors with modest incomes. Frank also presented information about various means-tested assistance that are available to low-income seniors. Only a few are financed by the Town and are potentially influenced by our local advocacy. Brookline has about 500 subsidized senior housing units; most are provided by the Brookline Housing Authority. The waiting list for these units is very long. We discussed the possibility of more widespread dissemination of information about senior financial distress in Massachusetts generally and Brookline specifically. Frank will circulate the slides that he presented as the basis for the presentation.
2. We will hold an election forum in late April prior to the annual Town Election. We anticipate a contested election. Carol Seibert, Alex Beck, Susan Granoff, and Melissa Trevvett volunteered to serve on the committee that will plan the election forum.
3. Asya Zimbov volunteered to help with the Age-Friendly Business initiative.
4. Members are encouraged to attend the presentation on mixed-use and mixed-income housing development in the Town's commercial corridors by Barry Bluestone on February 15 at 7 PM at Town Hall.
5. Sara Nelson of the Recreation Department staff informed Frank recently that pickleball is currently available in Brookline at the Soule Recreation Center. After the meeting, Jerry Feuer obtained the following information. Pickleball is offered 10-12 AM Monday

through Friday and, in addition, between 6:30-8:30pm on Wednesdays. No registration is required. Racquets are provided. The fee is \$5. In the spring, pickleball will be offered outdoors. We discussed briefly the desirability of having pickleball available at a location convenient to public transportation.

6. Next meeting Monday, February 26, speaker: Susan Gittleman, B'nai B'rith Housing, topic: Facing Brookline's Need for Senior Housing Together: Sharing Approaches and Ideas.

Notes prepared by Frank Caro