

# Brookline Community Aging Network

## *Livable Community Advocacy Committee*

### **Notes**

May 1, 2017

Attendance: Roberta Winitzer, Elaine Mountleigh, Marion Freedman-Gurspan, Melissa Trevvett, Jacqueline Wright, Irving Kurkoff, John Harris, Asaya Zimboff, Carol Seibert, Susan Granoff, Frank Caro, Lily Bermel (guest) and Todd Kirrane (guest)

#### 1. Review of Warrant Articles

- a. Article 23 Gas Tax Resolution to support local pedestrian, bicycle, and mass transportation infrastructure. Guest Lily Bermel presented the proposal. Ms. Bermel is a senior at Brookline High School. The resolution has been divided into two parts. The first is concerned with support for a legislative proposal to allow local options for taxes to support these forms of transportation infrastructure. The second is concerned with Brookline receptivity to some form of tax for these purposes. We identified improved street lighting for pedestrians as an example of infrastructure improvements that we would welcome. We also support bicycle improvements that keep bikes off the sidewalks. We voted to endorse both proposals.
- b. Article 18 speed limits in "thickly settled or business districts and Article 19. Speed limits "Safety zones." Todd Kirrane explained both proposals. The aim is to promote safety by reducing motor vehicle speeds on streets that the Town controls. The measures will allow the Transportation Board to move more quickly to lower speed limits. They will also provide the Board with more discretion in identifying safety zones. Potential safety zones include the Senior Center, playgrounds, and the high school. We voted unanimously to support both proposals.
- c. Article 12 Create an article in the Town's by-laws concerning the Commission on Disability. We voted unanimously to support this effort by the Commission to formalize its role in Town government.
- d. Article 20. Upholding and adhering to the Paris Climate Change Agreement of 2015. Irving Kurki explained the proposal with assistance from John Harris. Irving explained that the Paris agreement allows for non-state actors to support the agreement. Many municipalities have already agreed to do so. The Brookline Climate Action Committee is prepared to implement Brookline's participation. Seniors have a special interest in the agreement because of its implications for their children and grandchildren. We voted unanimously to support the proposal.

2. Issues with BETS program. Todd Kirrane explained that there was an incident in which a BETS participant sought to use a BETS voucher with a Boston taxi. The Boston driver refused to accept the voucher. BETS vouchers can be used only with Brookline taxis.
3. Feedback on election forum. We had an extensive discussion of our election forum held on April 24. The forum attracted a large audience (75) and flowed smoothly. Both Carol Seibert and Roberta Winitzer were very effective in the major roles that they played. Carol handled communication with candidates and Roberta served as moderator. We discussed whether we should have sought more attention to senior interests. We are divided on the topic. We also discussed whether the moderator should have selected from written questions submitted by the audience. Most prefer the open question format that we used. A number of members prefer a combination of questions asked by the moderator with unfiltered questions from the audience. We agreed that in the future we might ask selectmen candidates to address one or two explicit senior concerns in their opening statements. We agreed that audience members concerned with senior issues should be prepared to ask questions. Frank particularly encouraged members of our committee to come prepared to ask questions concerned with senior issues. Susan Granoff was prepared with multiple questions, but she was called on only once. We agreed that it was OK for absent candidates to send a proxy to read an opening statement; however, the proxy should not answer audience questions. We agreed that we should set a date for our forum far in advance and announce it widely. We also agreed to discuss next year's forum early in 2018.
4. Update on Route 51 bus stop at Dudley Triangle. For several years we have advocated for a bus stop at the Dudley Triangle to provide improved access to the Brookline Reservoir Park. The last step in adding a stop at the Dudley Triangle is the installation of signs by the MBTA. The signs were requested last fall. Installation was delayed because the sign installation season had ended. MBTA installation of signs was to resume in March. The signs have not yet been installed. The Brookline Transportation Department is reminding the MBTA to install the signs.
5. Educational program on creative use of extra space in homes on June 1. Frank circulated flyers promoting the program. LCAC is co-sponsoring the program. Housing is a major LCAC concern.
6. BrooklineCAN member event May 18. Melissa circulated a flyer for the BrooklineCAN membership event on May 18.
7. Next meeting: Monday, June 5 at 3 PM

Notes prepared by Frank Caro