

BrooklineCAN Membership Committee

February 10, 2016

Notes

Attending: Peter Ames, Lance Chapman, Linda Cheren, Ruthann Dobek, Judith Kidd, Andrea Meyers, Shirley Partoll, David Trevvett, Melissa Trevvett, Molly Turlish, and Ellen Young.

Guest: Linda Pelke

Brookline demographics: Jude introduced Linda Pelke, who is involved in a number of local projects and committees and who is the primary author of two studies of Brookline published by the Community Foundation. Linda distributed copies of those reports: “Understanding Brookline: Emerging Trends and Changing Needs” and a follow-up “Report on Poverty.” Charts she distributed highlight changing patterns in age, gender, household type, and income in the population of Brookline. Statistics reflect the fact that seniors who rent are especially burdened, with nearly 62 percent devoting 30 percent or more of income to housing costs. For all households, the portion that spends a comparable share of income for rent is less than half. It was generally thought by the group that the median gross rent figures seem low. At the conclusion of Linda’s presentation, we discussed what we might think about as we strive to have our membership reflect the broad population of the Town. Posters in Housing Authority buildings, printed materials in public libraries, and opportunities to access resources were among ways mentioned that offer the potential to reach larger numbers of lower-income seniors. Our committee will continue to work with Livable Community Advocacy Committee (LCAC) to attract and retain members who live in public housing.

Membership numbers: Today, we have 387 active members, compared to 380 at the time of the January meeting. We are still significantly ahead of last year at this time. Letters to members with renewal dates in October 2015 and earlier have gone out. We will track the results at our March committee meeting.

Announcements and topics to think about: Since time was short, Molly highlighted some announcements and topics for consideration at future meetings:

- BrooklineCAN is searching again for a part-time (long-term) Membership Assistant. Jude promised to find out where to send the notice so that residents of Housing Authority buildings know about the opening.
- Sponsoring a shredding day: Records from 2011 suggest that recruitment of new members as a result of the shredding day was minimal, but we could sponsor such an event as a service to members.
- The membership brochure needs to be updated, and members of the committee are asked to review it and email Molly with edits, thoughts, and suggestions. Thinking about topics not in the current version that might attract new members is at the top of the list of needs. Perforating the membership form so that it is easily separated from the brochure was suggested, and Molly promised to find out the cost.

- A business inquired about BrooklineCAN membership (not a potential participant in the Professional Service Providers Group). Our committee is charged with considering appropriate donation level(s), benefits, etc.

Next meeting: Wednesday, March 16, 3-4:30 at the Senior Center. In addition to the topics above, we will review scripts for welcome calls to new and newly renewed members.

Submitted by Molly Turlish
2/16/16