

Draft
BrooklineCAN Steering Committee
Notes

December 18, 2013

Attendance: Molly Turlish, John Seay, Carol Caro, Ruthann Dobek, Frank Caro, Judith Kidd, Peter Ames, Elenore Parkers, Kathy Burnes, and Gail Gordon

- 1. Follow through on special meeting.** We were pleased with attendance which totaled 33.
 - a. We thanked **Kathy Burnes** for the excellent job that she did as facilitator. Kathy also assisted by writing up notes on the member recommendations that were made at the meeting. We are also grateful to **Centre Communities (Laura Baber)** and **Ellen Bick** for providing refreshments.
 - b. Recommendations from members. We reviewed the recommendations made at the special meeting. We will act on some of them:
 - i. Notes on Steering committee meeting. We will make notes on Steering committee meetings available our website. Frank will first send notes to Steering committee members. He will allow them 2 days for corrections before he makes the notes more widely available
 - ii. As recommended, we will prepare an annual report. The annual report will be issued roughly at the same time as our annual meeting. Our annual meeting will be held either in July or September.
 - iii. Newsletter. The Membership committee recommends that newsletter regularly include information about BrooklineCAN activities.
 - iv. Membership. At its next meeting (January 8 at 3:00 PM), the Membership committee will work on language for an “elevator speech” promoting BrooklineCAN. All Steering committee members are welcome.
 - v. The Membership committee will discuss offering multiyear memberships and bring a recommendation to the Steering Committee.
 - vi. Renewed attention will be given to possibilities for gift memberships.
 - vii. A new effort will be made to encourage all Town Meeting members to join BrooklineCAN.
 - viii. Volunteer opportunities. Working with REAP and Alberta Lipson, we hope to offer expanded information to members about volunteer opportunities with Brookline nonprofits. We also hope to be able to provide assistance to members

in finding attractive volunteer opportunities. Judith Kidd has agreed to help with the effort to strengthen volunteers opportunities.

2. **Progress with membership data base.** John reported that a great deal of progress has been made in developing a membership data base using the ACCESS program. John is less enthusiastic about Dropbox as a technology for sharing the data base. John is working closely with Sonia Wong and Molly Turlish in the development of the data base. We congratulated John for the excellent work that he has done on the membership data base.
3. **Date for election of officers.** Frank would like to have officers elected in late spring so that the officers will be in place on July 1 when our new fiscal year begins. He favors an election in May. The Steering committee will elect officers. Early in 2014 Frank and Ruthann will propose a nominating committee.

4. **Committee reports**

a. **Communications**

- i. We discussed the extent to which the newsletter should support our membership recruitment efforts. The newsletter editors hope to include two articles each month that feature BrooklineCAN events or accomplishments.
- ii. Media relations. Elenore is working with Matt Weiss on a press release concerning a new Livable Community Advocacy accomplishment, that is, identification of the automatic door openers on commercial properties in Brookline. The information has now been posted on the website in a map format (similar to our restroom and elevator residential building guides)

b. **Livable communities**

- i. We have learned informally that WalkBoston will receive a grant from the Tufts Health Plan Foundation for a collaborative project with our Livable Community Advocacy committee on sidewalk features that are important to seniors. WalkBoston will use Brookline as a case study in developing a toolkit for communities to use throughout MA. We hope that the grant will be announced publicly at the LCAC meeting in late January. When the grant is announced, Elenore will help with publicity.
- ii. LCAC has proposed creation of a district in North Brookline that is to receive enhanced pedestrian friendly features. The project will show the importance of good sidewalks for residents of the densely developed multifamily residential buildings in North Brookline. Attention will be given to access to commercial areas, public transportation, and neighborhood parks.

iii. Winter sidewalk monitoring. Our sidewalk monitoring team is active with some new members who were recruited through our newsletter article on the committee.

c. **Membership.** The committee is calling all former members to encourage renewals. The most important reason for not renewal is that lapsed members have no recollection of receiving a renewal notice.

d. **Discount.** Gail proposes that the Discount committee be closed out in favor of a Social committee. We discussed discounts and social activities separately. Our consensus is that information about senior discounts is valuable to our members. We would like to post information about these discounts on our website. Gail informed us that members of our Discount committee no longer want to go out business to ask about senior discounts. We agreed that letters will not be sufficient to obtain the information. Gail believes that members of her committee are willing to place phone calls to businesses to ask about any senior discounts they may offer. Our consensus is that the phone call strategy should be attempted. We will not list businesses as giving senior discounts if they give senior discounts in highly restricted ways.

e. **Social.** We had a wide-ranging discussion about the merits of adding a new committee with responsibility for organizing social events for members. Gail is concerned about the loneliness experienced by people who are over 85. Social events sponsored by Brookline CAN might be helpful. There is precedent for emphasis on social programs. JF&CS in its Aging Well at Home Program in Brookline offered warm houses held at the homes of members. The programs were well received but they required a good deal of coordination effort. We acknowledged the fact that Senior Center offers social programs. We want to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort. The discussion of a possible new committee dedicate to organizing social programs for members will continue.

f. **Finance.** Ruthann reported that we now have 307 members. Our income for the fiscal year is \$5,200. Our expenses have totaled \$4,800.

5. Next meeting: Wednesday, January 15

Notes prepared by Frank Caro