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For immediate release, please

Brookline Selected To International Network of Age-Friendly Cities

Brookline, Massachusetts, has been accepted as a member of the World Health Organization's (WHO) network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. The WHO network includes over 100 cities in 18 countries. To date, only eight other cities in the United States have joined the network. Participating U.S. cities include Portland (Oregon), Philadelphia, New York, and Chicago. Brookline is the first municipality in New England invited to join.

Participating municipalities aim to encourage full involvement of people in community activities regardless of age. Age-friendly communities strengthen opportunities for participation through attention to barriers in diverse sectors such as housing, transportation, and health.

Brookline's application reflects collaboration between the Board of Selectmen, the Council on Aging, and BrooklineCAN (Brookline Community Aging Network). Brookline's plan emphasizes the Town's many existing age-friendly features, including its housing stock, transportation, municipal services, health and social services, educational and cultural resources, opportunities for residents to participate in community life, and its well educated population.

Betsy DeWitt, Chair of Brookline's Board of Selectmen, commented "We are excited to be recognized by the World Health Organization. Brookline is a great place to live for people of all ages. The Town welcomes this chance to highlight what it offers to older residents and to look for ways to serve our older population even more effectively."

Brookline's action plan emphasizes the expansion of more effective communication to residents about its resources and currently available opportunities. The initiative also will examine the potential need for improvements in such areas as sidewalks and street crossing safety, stronger specialized transportation for those who do not drive, expanded supply of senior-friendly housing, parks that are more attractive to seniors, and elimination of barriers in public buildings for elders with low vision.

Brookline's plan was prepared by a committee chaired by Selectman Nancy Daly, Council on Aging Director Ruthann Dobek, and BrooklineCAN representative Frank Caro.

BrooklineCAN is a member-driven, volunteer organization primarily for older Brookline residents that advocates and promotes services and activities to enable independent living and improved quality of life. Its principal purpose is to ensure that older Brookline residents remain a vital part of the town's social, cultural, and civic life.

BrooklineCAN works with town departments, businesses, and other organizations to make the town a better place to live for all Brookline residents.

Other age-friendly cities in the United States:

Bowling Green, OH

Chicago, IL

Des Moines, IA

Los Altos, CA

New York City

Philadelphia, PA

Portland, OR

Town of Los Altos Hills, CA