

Brookline Community Aging Network

Livable Community Advocacy Committee

Notes

December 5, 2016

Attendance: Joan McCabe, Matt Weiss, Henry Winkelman, Alexandra Beck, Jackie Wright, Asya Zimbov, Roberta Winitzer, Palma Spunt (guest), David Kroop (guest), Susan Granoff, John Harris, Irv Kurki (guest) , and Frank Caro

On-street parking issues for seniors in Brookline. Alex Beck and Palma Spunt spoke about their interest in extended day-time guest parking on Brookline streets near their homes. Their complaint is with Brookline's two-hour limit for on-street parking. Both have guests whose visits exceed two hours. They want their guests to be able to stay for more than two hours without having to worry about getting a ticket. For Alex the issue is new since she moved not long ago from South Brookline to North Brookline. Alex now lives on Babcock Street. For Palma the issue is new because she recently retired and now has time for extended daytime visits from friends. Palma is sensitive to the on-street parking limits both near her home and near the Senior Center.

David Kroop reported that Cambridge has a visitor parking program. The program is described on the Cambridge website. Each Cambridge household that participates in the resident parking program is eligible to obtain one visitor parking permit. The visitor permits are displayed on the dashboard of visitor automobiles.

Frank provided a report on how BrooklineCAN supported the Senior Center in attempting to develop extended on-street parking for Senior Center users. He explained how the multi-year effort has reached an impasse because of uncertainties about how the program might be administered without drawing complaints from neighbors whose access to on-street parking would be compromised. He also provided basic information on the roles of the Transportation Department and the Transportation Board.

A number of participants in the discussion spoke about their preference for modes of transportation to the Senior Center that do not involve driving in private automobiles. Roberta Winitzer presented information about both the van service offered by the Senior Center and the Elder Bus. Residents may make reservations at least a day in advance for the van to provide them with transportation to the Center. The number to call for reservation is 617 730 2750. The

Elder Bus runs on a fixed route that includes the Senior Center. The bus runs every 90 minutes during day-time hours.

We spoke about the process through which advocates for a visitor parking program could approach the Transportation Board for a program like that in Cambridge. We also discussed a warrant article for Town Meeting as an option. Our message was that a warrant article for Town Meeting is difficult and time demanding.

Study committee on property tax relief for seniors. Susan Granoff's proposal received near unanimous support from Town Meeting. Ben Franco is the Selectman who will chair the study committee. Susan has been asking to nominate committee members.

Station Street Senior Housing proposal. The proposal by Henry Winkelman and Ken Goldstein for development of a plan for affordable senior housing above the Kent-Station Street parking lot received a favorable vote from Town Meeting by a wide margin. The next step is for the Board of Selectmen to appoint an oversight committee for the planning effort. The proponents are identifying candidates for the committee.

Street lighting for pedestrian safety project. The problems identified through field work in October and November have been reported to the responsible Town departments, that is, Engineering, Highway, and Parks and Open Space. Frank is in communication with Town Engineer Peter Ditto and Arborist Tom Brady about street trees that interfere with street lighting. An important future step will be public discussion of a new street lighting approach that involves poles that are placed closer to one another and at heights low enough to so that the lights are at a height below tree limbs.

Proposed route 51 bus stop at Dudley Triangle. BrooklineCAN has been seeking a stop of the north-bound Route 51 bus at the Dudley Triangle on Lee Street to provide improved access to Brookline Reservoir Park. The park offers a walk of nearly a mile around the reservoir. The Dudley Triangle is near the park entrance. During the summer, DPW installed the cement "pad" required by the MBTA. The next step is the placement of a bus stop sign at the location. The MBTA has stopped installing signs for the season. The MBTA will resume placing signs in March. We hope that the stop will be activated in March.

Update on Pedestrian Advisory Committee. The Transportation Department continues to take applications from people who are interested in serving on the new pedestrian advisory committee. We do not know how many people have applied. We do not know when the committee will be appointed.

Proposed new benches on Beacon Street. Peter Ditto informed Frank recently that no progress was made this summer in identifying spots for new benches on Beacon Street between

Coolidge Corner and St. Mary's. A massive development has been proposed for the Holiday Inn site, a prime location for benches. Frank intends to advocate for benches as part of the redevelopment plan. Jackie Wright asked about benches that have disappeared from the front of Trader Joe's on Beacon Street.

Winter Sidewalk monitoring. The sidewalk monitoring team is seeking new members. The team goes out into commercial areas after snowstorms to determine whether sidewalks are in a "non-slippery" condition. Troublesome sidewalks are reported via BrookOnLine. Alex expressed interest in joining the team.

Next meeting: Monday, January 23

Notes prepared by Frank Caro