

BROOKLINE COMMUNITY AGING NETWORK
Livable Community Advocacy Committee (LCAC)
June 7, 2021

Attending: Susan Granoff (Chair), Matt Weiss (Zoom Host), Carol Seibert (note-taker), Deidre Waxman (Speaker), Carol Caro, Melissa Trevvett, Linda Pehlke, John Seay, Roger Blood, Harvey Cohen, John Harris, Lou Crimmins, Marion Freedman-Gurspan, Diana Spiegel, David Trevvett, Susan Cohen, Henry Winkelman, Paula Friedman, Yolanda Rodriguez, Paul Yee, Monica Joffe, Ruth Seidman, Barbara Hauser, Janet Gelbart, Jean Doherty, Diane Abrams, Sally Guy

Summary of Pertinent 2021 Annual Town Meeting Actions

Susan Granoff, Town Meeting Member Precinct 7; Advisory Committee Member

With more than 40 Warrant Articles considered over eight nights, this year's annual meeting was the longest in memory. Most votes were lop-sidedly "yes" and not at all close. Articles promoting climate protection and town government transparency were passed as were Articles to expand green space, year-round outdoor dining, and regulate marijuana delivery. Also passed was an Article seeking permission of the State Legislature not to follow state bidding requirements in the construction of Colonel Floyd public housing for seniors so as to facilitate the use of highly energy efficient "passive house" construction techniques, which LCAC has endorsed. One set of Articles of interest to LCAC concerned short-term rentals (STR's). The outcome was an example of successful negotiation and compromise. In the end, opposing parties managed to come to agreement on one revised set of Articles. Of note, the final version, which includes a requirement for condominium documents expressly to allow STR's, passed with overwhelming support.

A controversial Article to expand the Lawrence Historic District that required a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote to pass lost by a single vote. A lively LCAC discussion ensued regarding ageism, the dangers of pitting age groups against each other, the value of age (whether in buildings or people), sensitivity to neighborhood concerns, and how to support progress while protecting the Town's character. There was also discussion about whether LCAC might consider writing its own warrant articles, an endeavour that would require a significant commitment of time and work.

A key accomplishment of Town Meeting was the passage of a budget of \$365.5 million, which included the full budget amount that the Council on Aging had requested plus additional funding to cover the costs of a part-time geriatric social worker and a full-time Senior Center custodian. It was suggested that we will need to start early to advocate if we hope to achieve goals for seniors such as development of a satellite senior center and support for senior transportation options.

Brookline's Lagging Vaccination Rates

Susan Granoff, Town Meeting Member Precinct 7; Advisory Committee Member

Even allowing for an anomaly in State-wide figures which assigns vaccinations of Brookline residents of Chestnut Hill as having been received by Newton residents, Brookline lags behind comparable communities in the number of residents vaccinated. There will be a vaccine clinic for seniors on June 12, at the Public Health Department and some efforts are being made to reach home-bound residents, but there is much room for improvement.

Brookline's Senior Tax Work-Off Program

Guest Presenter: Deidre Waxman, LICSW, Brookline Senior Center

Deidre Waxman, who has been working on this program for the past 13 years, is set to retire on July 1, 2021. She will hand the reins to Serena Johnson. Under this program, a taxpayer age 60 or older who owns and occupies their residence in Brookline and meets applicable income limits (currently no more than \$67,400) could be eligible to volunteer to work for a Town Department for 118 hours over one year in exchange for an abatement reducing the property tax by \$1500. Currently, 35 work-off assignments are being filled. More information and an application are available on the Town's Assessor's Office brooklinema.gov website or by calling the Brookline Senior Center at [617-730-2767](tel:617-730-2767) or the Assessor's Office at [617-730-2060](tel:617-730-2060).

Next Meeting: Monday, September 13, 2021 at 3:00 pm

We voted to pause over the summer unless a topic demands our immediate attention.

