

# Brookline Community Aging Network

## *Livable Community Advocacy Committee*

### **Notes**

April 8, 2019

Attendance: Susan Cohen, Pat Ahlin, Carol Siebert, Judith Chasin, Maria Foster, John Harris, Henry Winkelman, & Frank Caro

1. Subsidized transportation for seniors in Brookline. Maria Foster provided an overview of the TRIPPS program. Plans for the year ahead include formation of a support group for those who are going through the driving retirement process. The program will continue to publish the Senior Transit Guide. More emphasis will be placed on reports of seniors on their own travel experiences. TRIPPS will continue to offer training in ride sharing. The TRIPPS training in ride sharing curriculum has been offered in a number of municipalities in the region. Maria also provided an overview of the TRIPPS report on the transportation experiences of a sample of over 100 Brookline older adults. Maria also provided some information on the funds that the Council on Aging is seeking from the Town' portion of the revenue from fees on ride-share services. (The Town receives \$.10 for every ride that originates in Brookline. Maria also announced that the Council on Aging has received a small grant from the National Council on Aging for documentation of its training of older adults on use ride-sharing services.  
Frank urged attendees to attend an upcoming Transportation Board meeting 8 to support the Council on Aging's funding request for TRIPPS and subsidized use of ride-share services.
2. Preparation for Election Forum on April 30. We identified several potential questions to ask of Select Board Candidates:
  - a. Do candidates support development of affordable senior housing using air rights above the Town-owned Kent-Station Street parking lot?
  - b. Do candidates support the Town's providing expanded programming space for seniors in view of the over-crowding at the Senior Center?
  - c. Do the candidates support stronger Town transportation subsidies for low and moderate income older residents?
  - d. What should the Town do to make it easier for long-time older residents with low-and-moderate incomes to continue to live in Brookline?
  - e. Should Brookline become a city?

Frank announced that the format has been modified to include School Committee and Housing Authority candidates because the races are competitive. The candidates for these offices will be given an opportunity to speak for several minutes. There will be no opportunity for questions. Candidates for constable will be introduced but not given an opportunity to speak.

Volunteer responsibilities on the day of the forum. No one present volunteered to serve as the time keeper for the forum.

3. Electric scooters on sidewalks. Frank reported concerns about the motorized scooter trial that began on April 1. Frank and others have reported seeing scooters operating on sidewalks. (John has seen many scooters operating in the streets but none on the sidewalk.) A condition of the trial is that the scooters are to be operated in the streets. There is a need for greater public education about rules for electric scooter operators and enforcement of traffic rules. We will continue to pay attention to motorized scooters on sidewalks throughout the trial.

Hugh Mattison has offered a demonstration on use of his electric scooter with a seat. This form of scooter provides reduced balance challenges for older riders. Frank will arrange a trial an hour before the May meeting.

4. Proposal for reporting of sidewalk injuries to the Town. Frank's interest in a reporting system for accidents on Brookline sidewalks that result in injuries has been revived by a recent accident experienced by an acquaintance. The proposed system would parallel the reporting system that is now in place for accidents that involve motor vehicles. The recent incident was a fall in Coolidge Corner that resulted in a severely broken wrist. The victim was treated at an emergency room. The victim will be out of work for several months. Frank obtained an account of the accident and retraced the victim's steps. The accident occurred as the victim was approaching the north-bound Route 66 bus stop. The victim was focused on catching an approaching bus. The victim did not see a sidewalk "flag" that was raised one inch because of tree roots. Frank reported the raised sidewalk to DPW. The offending sidewalk was ground down a few days later. If a reporting system were in place, falls of this kind would be followed up with site visits to determine whether a sidewalk defect was the probable cause of the accident.  
We will pursue this topic more thoroughly at a future meeting.
5. Update on Article 22, Pedestrian-friendly street lighting. The article has received a favorable recommendation from the Advisory Committee. The Select Board has reviewed the proposal and given it informal approval. The Select Board will take

- formal action when it sees the Advisory Committee's language. The Transportation Board has also voted to support the Article.
6. Other warrant Articles of interest to older people. This item was deferred until the next meeting.
  7. Update on Age-Friendly Business campaign. Carol Siebert and Frank met with Andrea Burns who is administering the Boston Age-Friendly initiative. Boston and Brookline plan to approach some large corporations with local retail outlets in both Boston and Brookline about joining the age-friendly business effort.
  8. Report on "Meet and Greet" with Representative Tommy Vitolo. The visit from Representative Vitolo attracted about a 15 people. Some of the discussion was focused on a bill the Representative Vitolo has filed that would extend and expand the tax deferral program. Rep. Vitolo also spoke about pending legislation that would make it easier for municipalities to pass accessory dwelling unit zoning provisions. In the past, the Committee has supported adoption of an Accessory Dwelling Unit section in the Town's zoning code. Brookline advocates for this provision are awaiting passage of the Legislature's housing bill.

Next Meeting: Monday, May 6