

September 12, 2023

Present: Carol Caro, Ruthann Dobek, Darlene Johnson, Kelley Pope, Yolanda Rodriguez, John Seay, John VanScoyoc, Matthew Weiss, Henry Winkelman. Guests: Maria Foster, Perry Grossman. Absent: Sarah Kaplan, Guy Harris, James Lee. Staff: Jessica Milley-Gee.

1. Welcome to new participants
  - a. Darlene Johnson – Community Health Manager
    - i. Replacing Lynn Karsten on the AFCC.
    - ii. Conducting the Community Health survey.
    - iii. BrooklineCAN Newsletter will promote the survey.
2. Review of minutes of July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023 meeting
  - a. Minutes approved (8-0-1).
3. Designate note taker
  - a. Matt Weiss
4. Intro to Maria Foster, Council on Aging's (CoA) Transportation Coordinator, to provide an update on transportation issues.
  - a. Transportation for older adult community (TRIPPS).
    - i. All handled by Maria and we are grateful and will continue advocacy.
  - b. Received a small grant from AARP to conduct a survey online and paper.
    - i. How to improve transportation services in Brookline for the community.
    - ii. Spread survey through networks including flyer that is shared.
    - iii. 100 responses so far.
    - iv. Sent to current participants in Senior Center transportation programs.
    - v. Smaller targeted mailing to folks in South Brookline.
    - vi. Targeted people who received Farmer's Market coupons.
  - c. Applied for funding from Massachusetts Transportation Dept. for next year.
  - d. TNC money – Tax on Uber and Lyft rides.
    - i. Applied for \$100K – will receive if approved by November Town Meeting.
  - e. Transportation crosses all ages (age-friendly issue).
    - i. Farmer's Market covered people of all ages with low income.
    - ii. 2 bus trips using Senior Center bus and provided surveys.
    - iii. Morphed into monthly groceries bus trip for Housing Authority residents.
    - iv. Getting feedback from Housing Authority needs.
  - f. General programs – four services
    - i. Bus and van – to and from Senior Center and special occasions, e.g., Farmer's Market, grocery stores, special trips.
    - ii. Medical transportation service – curb-to-curb local licensed taxis to medical appointments for anyone 60+ in community.
    - iii. Lyft and GoGo – low to moderate income sign up for discounted rides with Lyft for users of smartphones and GoGo for others.
    - iv. These programs provided 7,666 rides and a fourth program (to and from Senior Center) were 3,721 rides.
    - v. Maria is info resource re MBTA services – The Ride, CharlieCard, blind and disability services.
    - vi. Plan in advance to work with busy drivers and complicated scheduling.
    - vii. Backup programs available to get people to and from Senior Center.
    - viii. Use Lyft Concierge to supplement rides as needed.

- ix. Need to get medical transportation info out.
- x. Need service at Senior Center to put money on CharlieCard, but is complicated.
- xi. Similar services to what is now provided by Senior Center.
- xii. 3 responses – Via (program used by Newton), Uber, Lyft.
- xiii. Via – Shared rides, transition to electric vehicles, wheel-chair vehicles.
- xiv. Budgetary limitations barred Via for now and is affecting Newton too.
- xv. Funding from many source some of which is grants.
- xvi. Stay with current providers and explore wheelchair accessible options.
- g. Micro-mobility – Involved in the conversation with TRIPPS volunteer group.
  - i. Reviewed draft regulations and liked change to vulnerable road users.
  - ii. Brian Kane at next CoA meeting (Open in Zoom and in person)
- 5. Pedestrian safety (see Brian Kane’s material on micro-mobility regulations)
  - a. See comments under Commission on Disability.
  - b. Perry Grossman – Summarized status re change to vulnerable users of streets.
  - c. Possible vote in October but not likely.
  - d. No warrant article listed related to micro-mobility.
- 6. Review of Town Meeting
  - a. Starts November 14<sup>th</sup> with a short warrant.
  - b. 18 warrant articles.
  - c. Three relevant articles
    - i. Increase amount of Property Tax Workoff to keep up with minimum wage.
    - ii. Water and sewer discount for low income residents.
    - iii. Brookline plan to comply with MBTA Communities Act – Two-pronged approach: 1. Multi-unit Permitting Committee which looks at M-Districts which have multi-unit buildings in them now by adding 100s of additional units to those districts to comply; 2. Form-based zoning for Harvard St.
    - iv. Concern is impact on Harvard retail.
  - d. Attend to activities re change to Town charter.
- 7. Update on Age-Friendly Committee composition
  - a. Need to ensure Kelley Pope is added to roster on Town website and correct dates for all others.
  - b. Matt will contact Devon Fields.
- 8. Age-Friendly AARP application process update
  - a. Completed – Brookline is now an AARP age-friendly community.
  - b. Opportunity to re-energize the age-friendly aspects of Brookline.
  - c. Need press release to Brookline.News and others.
- 9. AARP Grant Award
  - a. Select Board voted on 5/23. See below for vote:

AARP Question of approving the Council on Aging submitting an application to AARP to designate Brookline as an Age-Friendly Community.

Approved

Aye: Bernard Greene, John VanScoyoc, Michael Sandman, Paul Warren

Absent: Miriam Aschkenasy

- 10. Continued Discussion on Information Dissemination – the challenges of communicating in the information age
  - a. See document attached to agenda re: ADA regulations

- b. Great need to have open discussions and information re MBTA Communities Act and impact on Harvard Street and Town Charter discussions and implications.
  - c. September 27<sup>th</sup> at 7pm – combined forum on the Town Charter discussion in the Select Board Hearing Room and live-streamed on Cable.
  - d. Also discussed on All Politics is Local by John VanScoyoc.
  - e. Barbara Rabinovitz, Brookline Beacon journalist, died unexpectedly in August.
- 11. Guest speakers for Age-Friendly – potential guests to invite**
- a. Brian Kane – Chair of Transportation Board (Ruthann to invite)
  - b. Patty Sullivan – Dementia-Friendly MA
  - c. Charles “Chas” Carey – Town Administrator
  - d. Jen Paster – New Brookline Police Chief when hired. (ASAP)
  - e. New head of Brookline Climate Action Plan
  - f. Ben Kaufman – Town Clerk re Charter discussion
- 12. Subcommittee Reports**
- a. Transportation
    - i. See Item 4. Maria Foster.
  - b. Housing
    - i. Checkout Globe article on senior housing.
    - ii. Brookline was featured as an example of some very successful senior housing that have added 100s of units of senior housing.
    - iii. Result of work with and contributions of 2Life and Hebrew Senior Life and others with contributions from Brookline Housing Authority.
    - iv. Minimal information about Balfour on Fisher Hill thus far but they are going to have 40 units for Alzheimers
    - v. Very expensive, but Town received millions as part of the project.
    - vi. Balfour contributed to 50 more affordable units at Colonel Floyd housing.
    - vii. Property before was non-profit but Balfour will be paying taxes.
    - viii. Balfour move-in date is 2024.
  - c. Health
    - i. Community Health Assessment – Community Health Equity Survey.
    - ii. Encouraging people to take the survey.
    - iii. Flu clinic – Senior Center Thursday is full but contact Health Department for high dose and Public Health nurse can arrange appointment.
    - iv. November – Friends of Public Health Annual Meeting discussing AI and moderated by Chris Chanyasulkit (flyer to Carol Caro)
    - v. Panelists – Isaac Kohane, John Brownstein, Carey Goldberg
    - vi. Regular Dose – Ridley School and Brookline High School.
    - vii. 3 more in October – Ridley (10/17), Baker (10/4), signups required.
    - viii. COVID Clinics – Possibly in November.
  - d. Library
    - i. No report.
  - e. Council on Aging (CoA)
    - i. Tech Buddies program.
  - f. Recreation
    - i. Second in command at Recreation is leaving.
  - g. Commission on Disabilities
    - i. Letter on micro-mobility to Brian Kane and meeting tomorrow.
    - ii. Note people with disabilities can use vehicles on sidewalk.

- iii. Signage re rules will allow all to share and be aware of the rules.
- iv. Need community effort on education as to rules.

h. Communications

- i. Age Friendly TV – Recent show is the Town Administrator Chas Carey and future shows are Jen Paster, Michael Sandman and Sam Mintz.
- ii. Age-Friendly web updates? <https://www.brooklinema.gov/657/Age-Friendly-Cities-Committee>

**13. Miscellaneous & new business**

- a. None.

**14. Next meeting October 10<sup>th</sup>, at 1pm**