

Brookline Community Aging Network

Livable Community Advocacy Committee

Notes

March 26, 2018

Attendance: Alex Beck, Frank Caro, Harvey Cohen, Susan Cohen, Susan Granoff, Carol Seibert, Ruthann Sneider, Ann Stitt, Melissa Trevvett. Guests: Yolanda Rodriguez and Rhoda Goodwin.

1. Our election forum is scheduled for Thursday, April 26 from 4 PM to 6 PM. We have invited candidates for Select Board and the School Committee. (The Library Board race is uncontested.) We will also cover the Override and Debt Exclusion. In the segment for the Select Board, we will start with 3 or 4 questions on senior issues. We will send a message in advance to BrooklineCAN members encouraging them to come and bring questions. We will inform Select Board candidates of our high priority concerns: affordability of living in Brookline for seniors, need for expanded affordable senior housing, need for stronger subsidized transportation for seniors who do not drive, and need for expansion of the Senior Center.
2. Warrant Article 25 Proposal for Brookline Circuit breaker for senior homeowners. Susan Granoff explained her warrant article. The proposal is patterned after the State circuit breaker program for seniors. The difference is that the Brookline program would be based on average home prices in Brookline rather than state averages. Brookline would provide financial relief (currently just over \$1,000 per year) to those who are not covered by the state program solely because the assessed value of their home is too high (currently \$747,000) . Susan estimates that 50 households headed by seniors might qualify.
3. Warrant Article 26 Proposal for low-and-moderate-income, senior home owner property exemption from overrides and debt exclusions. Yolanda Rodriguez and Rhoda Goodwin explained their proposal. They are concerned that Brookline is becoming too expensive for many seniors. They want to be exempt from the cost of overrides and debt exclusions. Not only are the costs a burden for seniors with modest incomes but the increased taxes largely benefit of families with children in the public schools. Yolanda and Rhoda want to continue living in their homes. They do not want a lien on their homes that would come with participation in the tax deferral program. They are long-time residents who have provided service to the Town. They are not able to estimate the number of senior households that would apply and be eligible for the program.

4. Other warrant articles of special interest to seniors. We discussed very briefly Article 24, a proposal to tax real estate transactions to establish a fund that would be used for various purposes including affordable housing. If the fund led to expansion of affordable senior housing, it would be pertinent to our interests.
5. Next meeting: Monday, April 23.