

BROOKLINE COMMUNITY AGING NETWORK  
Livable Community Advocacy Committee  
January 13, 2025

Attending: Susan Granoff (Chair), Janet Gelbart (Notetaker), Dan Martin (Guest Presenter), Carol Caro (Presenter), Susan Cohen, Marion Freedman-Gurspan, Leslie Friedman, Kristel Heinemann, Katie Hope, Maureen Mayotte, Fran Perler, Yolanda Rodriguez, John Seay, Ruth Seidman, David Trevvett

**I. Presentation and Discussion: Brookline's "Near Miss Portal"**

Guest Presenter: Dan Martin, DPW Sustainable Transportation Engineer

At the LCAC June 6 Conversation about Complete Streets with DPW Traffic Administrator Amy Ingles, a participant suggested that the Town website have a place to report transportation incidents which do not result in injury or property damage. Under Ms. Ingles' direction, DPW created a "Near Miss Portal" which DPW Sustainable Traffic Engineer Dan Martin debuted in this presentation (see attached slides).

The purpose of the portal is to collect information about near miss incidents. A near miss is a crash that nearly occurs (but doesn't). Examples include a vehicle nearly hits a pedestrian crossing the street, or one vehicle is nearly hit while another makes a turn, or a bicycle nearly hits an obstruction on a shared use path. It covers all modes of traffic -- cars, bicycles, micro-mobility devices (e-scooters, e-bikes, skateboards, etc.), and foot -- on both roadways and sidewalks. It was noted that pedestrians and joggers can create near misses, not just cars or micromobility devices.

There is an interactive map to pinpoint the location of the incident, a series of check boxes to record the forms of transportation involved, and a text box for entering a description of what happened. The portal is in beta test mode, and LCAC participants are encouraged to try out the site (<https://arcg.is/oTDC9Oo>) and provide feedback before it is widely publicized. If not recording an actual incident, enter "Test" in the description.

Mr. Martin made note of several suggestions from participants in the discussion:

- add "pedestrian" as an option for the person reporting the incident
- create separate categories for motorized and non-motorized bikes and scooters
- add an option to upload a photograph
- add a heat map of Brookline Police crash data to the near-miss portal to help identify hot spots.
- add a category for joggers
- add a category for jaywalkers

The portal is separate from BrookONline and will primarily be used by Town staff to help identify trouble spots. Users will not receive a response to their submissions. It was suggested that there be a prominent link to the site from the Transportation Department's page or under the "Report a Problem" link on the Town website. No decisions have been made as to when the portal will be widely publicized or how the information that is

gathered will be shared. Dan was encouraged to make a presentation to each of the transportation advisory committees and the Transportation Board.

## **II. Presentation and Discussion: Proposed MBTA Consolidation of Fairbanks & Brandon Hall C-Line T Stops**

Guest Presenter: Carol Caro (Age-Friendly Cities Committee Member)

Ms. Caro discussed the MBTA's plan to consolidate the Brandon Hall and Fairbanks T stops on the C line as part of a \$51 million project to improve accessibility on the Green Line. Currently, because the eastbound and westbound lanes of Beacon Street are at different heights, there are stairways from one side of the tracks to the other with lifts to assist passengers with mobility issues. The lifts have been out of order for many years and riders use the Washington Square or Summit Avenue stops to cross the tracks on an even level. Residents of the senior living facility at 1550 Beacon Street have to walk uphill from those stops to get home.

The MBTA proposes replacing the two stops with one stop halfway between them with a covered ramp instead of the stairways between the two levels of the roadway (see diagram in attached slide presentation). Ms. Caro had two concerns about the proposal:

- Seniors exiting at the new stop and heading west will still have an uphill climb to get home.
- The crosswalk at the new stop will have flashing lights instead of a traffic light presenting a safety issue for seniors crossing the street.

She urged seniors to attend the MBTA's public meeting on January 15 at Town Hall to voice their concerns. Also on the agenda is a proposal to eliminate the Kent Street stop between Hawes and Saint Paul Streets. In addition to attending the meeting, seniors are encouraged to contact the Select Board, DPW Commissioner Erin Chute, Traffic Administrator Amy Ingles, and Transportation Board Chair, Brian Kane. Updates to the planning process can be tracked on the MBTA website. (Note: The MBTA presented a new design at the January 15 meeting which addresses Ms. Caro's reservations.)

## **III. Updates and Announcements**

### *New COA Director Search*

The search for a new Director of the Council on Aging/Senior Center experienced a setback when the recommended candidate accepted another position. One of the new resumes for the position received in December looks very promising, but interviews will not resume until the end of January. Ruthann has agreed to stay on as a consultant to ensure a smooth transition, and is waiting for the contract authorizing her to do so. Yolanda has requested that the COA have the opportunity to meet the new finalist but not vote on its recommendation until members have some time to reflect on the applicant. After the COA vote, the Select Board will make the final decision.

Center Street Parking Lots Committee

The Select Board has authorized use of remaining ARPA funds for a consultancy to study development and use of the two Center Street parking lots. Once they finalize the committee charge, the Select Board will appoint a community group to work with the consultants. Applications and a website for the committee have not yet been posted.

**IV. Date of Next Meeting: February 10, 2025**

The Livable Community Advocacy Committee is one of several BrooklineCAN committees. Everyone is welcome to attend, but if you do so regularly, we invite you to support BrooklineCAN with your membership. You can join using PayPal, credit card or by check. Instructions are on the right hand sidebar on the front page of [brooklinecan.org](https://brooklinecan.org)  
Thank you.