

ARTICLE 25

**COMMISSION FOR DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY
RELATIONS REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

The mission of the CDICR is to support a welcoming environment by encouraging cooperation, tolerance, and respect among and by all persons who come in contact with the Town of Brookline (i.e. visitors, residents, employers, employees etc.) by advancing, promoting and advocating for the human and civil rights of all through education, awareness, outreach and advocacy.

The CDICR reviewed the warrant article on 5/12/2021. By a vote of 11-0-0, the CDICR recommends FAVORABLE ACTION on Warrant Article 25.

DISCUSSION

In November, 2019, Town Meeting voted overwhelmingly in favor of Warrant Article 21 mandating fossil fuel free construction during major renovations and new construction in Brookline. In July 2020, the Attorney General ruled that WA 21 was in conflict with existing State law. She stated that she was sympathetic to the petitioners' goal and suggested that they achieve the goal through zoning incentives. Warrant Articles 25 and 26 are a direct response to that ruling. WA 25 addresses this issue with respect to the remaining parcels in the Emerald Isle Special District. WA 26 is a new zoning bylaw using incentives for the issuance of special permits.

There is no denying that the climate is warming at an increasingly rapid rate. This catastrophic change has reached emergency proportions and drives the need to curb the use of fossil fuels dramatically now. There are significant equity issues involved in curbing the use of fossil fuels, since the fossil fuel infrastructure is often located in what has now been labeled environmental justice areas, or more recently "sacrifice zones", areas that are predominantly located in or near communities of color and lower income communities. We have seen this in the Greater Boston area with the Weymouth Compressor Station, the proposed Peabody Peaker Power Plant and the proposed biomass incinerator in Springfield. These installations are located in communities that will reap no benefits from the fossil fuels generated or transported but will suffer all the ill consequences while we make no progress in halting the rapid deterioration of the climate threatens us all.

Therefore, the commission voted FAVORABLE on the warrant article, by a vote of 11-0-0. (Voting in favor – Irving Allen, Sandy Batchelder, Malcolm Cawthorne, Jessica Chicco, Rezaul Haque, Joan Lancourt, Eloise Lawrence, Bob Lepson, Bishnu Tamang, Kea van der Ziel, Grace Yung Watson)

ARTICLE 26

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ARTICLE 1 & 2

SELECT BOARD'S SUPPLEMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

The Select Board considered the petitioner motions under Articles 1 and 2 of the Special Town Meeting. Members expressed concern that these articles were circumventing the budget process, and a process that will be developed for prioritization of the American Rescue Plan funding. One member also expressed a concern that the request was more appropriate coming from the Executive Director of the Brookline Housing Authority (BHA) and that the prioritization of projects should be made by the BHA.

A motion on the Articles failed by a vote of 2-3

ROLL CALL VOTE:

<u>Aye:</u>	<u>No:</u>
Fernandez	Green
Aschkenasy	Hamilton
	VanScoyoc

ADVISORY COMMITTEE'S SUPPLEMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

The following was voted FAVORABLE ACTION by the Advisory Committee:

Article 1

MOVED: That the Town adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, Brookline is an affluent community, but 12% of its residents live below the poverty level. Over 30% of its residents struggle to pay their bills. Senior single women and women head of households are especially vulnerable;

WHEREAS, this Warrant Article is about Brookline's humanity and our willingness as a community to help those most in need;

WHEREAS, this Warrant Article seeks to bridge the gap between our aspirations as a progressive community and to actually provide essential services for some of our most vulnerable residents;

WHEREAS, internet access is critical to the health, education and wellbeing of Brookline residents;

WHEREAS, the Brookline Housing Authority lacks to resources, despite its best efforts, to provide WIFI for its residents;

WHEREAS, at least \$140,000 is needed the ensure that all BHA residents have access to WIFI;

RESOLVED THAT: Town Meeting urges the Select Board to use its authority, promptly, to undertake discussions with the Brookline Housing Authority to identify no less than \$140,000 from Brookline resources like, but not limited to, federal stimulus dollars, to upgrade and expand WIFI access at BHA properties.

Article 2

MOVED: That the Town adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, Brookline is an affluent community, but 12% of its residents live below the poverty level. Over 30% of its residents struggle to pay their bills. Senior single women and women head of households are especially vulnerable;

WHEREAS, this Warrant Article is about Brookline's humanity and our willingness as a community to help those most in need;

WHEREAS, Brookline Housing Authority has aggressively sought to secure funds to make these essential repairs to its housing with minimal success;

WHEREAS, the kitchens at High Street, Veterans, Trustman and Egmont are in dire need of repairs;

WHEREAS, this Warrant Article seeks to bridge the gap between our aspirations as a progressive community and to actually provide essential services for some of our most vulnerable residents;

WHEREAS, at least \$625,000 is needed to repair a fraction of Brookline Housing Authority's (BHA's) worst state funded housing (25 of 375) kitchens and bathrooms;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT: 1. Town Meeting urges the Select Board to use its authority, promptly, to undertake discussions with the Brookline Housing Authority to identify no less than \$625,000 from Brookline resources like, but not limited to, federal stimulus dollars to repair units at BHA.

Roll Call votes:

	Attendance	Vote 1	Vote 2	Vote 3
# Votes Yes	0	24	21	20
# Votes No		0	1	1
# Votes Abstain		1	2	3
Vote Description:		Motion for no action on referral of 17	STM Article 1 amended to "urges" in place of "directs" and "promptly" in place of "60 days" and resources in place of sources	STM Article 2 amended to "urges" in place of "directs" and "promptly" in place of "60 days"
	<i>Enter P for Present</i>	<i>Enter Y, N or A</i>	<i>Enter Y, N or A</i>	<i>Enter Y, N or A</i>
Carla Benka	P	Y	Y	y
Ben Birnbaum	P	Y	Y	y
Harry Bohrs				
Cliff Brown	P	A	Y	y
John Doggett	P	Y	Y	y
Dennis Doughty	P	Y	Y	y
Harry Friedman	P	Y	A	a
David-Marc Goldstein	P	Y	Y	Y
Neil Gordon	P	Y	A	A
Susan Granoff	P	Y	Y	Y
Amy Hummel	P	Y	Y	Y
Alisa Jonas	P	Y	Y	Y
Janice Kahn				
Steve Kanes	P	Y	Y	Y
Carol Levin	P	Y	Y	A
Pam Lodish	P	Y		
Susan Park	P	Y	Y	Y
David Pollak	P	Y	Y	Y
Carlos Ridruejo	P	Y	Y	Y
Lee Selwyn	P	Y	N	N

Kim Smith	P	Y	Y	Y
Alok Somani	P	Y	Y	Y
Claire Stampfer	P	Y	Y	Y
Paul Warren	P	Y	Y	Y
Christine Westphal	P	Y	Y	Y
Neil Wishinsky	P	Y	Y	Y
Chi Chi Wu	P	Y	Y	Y
Mike Sandman	P			