BROOKLINE **FOR EVERYONE**

Warrant Article Endorsements for May 2026 Town Meeting

Special Town Meeting 1 (STM1)

Article 1 – Chestnut Hill Commercial Area Zoning Overlay

- Recommendation on AC Amendment: **NO ACTION**
- Recommendation on Main Motion: **FAVORABLE ACTION**

Article 2 – Authorization for the Select Board to Enter Agreements with City Realty

- Recommendation: **FAVORABLE ACTION**

Annual Town Meeting

Article 8 – Annual Budget

- Recommendation: **FAVORABLE ACTION**

Article 9 – Annual (FY27) Community Preservation Act (CPA) Fund Appropriations

- Recommendation on motion to vote on individual projects: **NO ACTION**
- Recommendation on main motion: **FAVORABLE ACTION**

Article 14 – Accessory Dwelling Units

- Recommendation: **FAVORABLE ACTION**

Article 15 – Revisions to Inclusionary Zoning Payment-in-Lieu Threshold

- Recommendation: **FAVORABLE ACTION**

Article 16 – 26 Pleasant Street Rezoning

This article has been withdrawn by the petitioner. However, if moved our recommendations are as follows:

- Recommendation on referral motion: **NO ACTION**
- Recommendation on main motion: **NO ACTION**

Article 22 – Resolution on Proposition 2½ Modernization / Municipal Cost Index

- Recommendation: **FAVORABLE ACTION**

Continue reading on the next pages for further explanations of each recommendation.

For more information about Brookline for Everyone, check out www.brooklineforeveryone.com

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Special Town Meeting 1 (STM1), Warrant Articles 1 and 2

These articles will rezone the Chestnut Hill Commercial Area (CHCA), a long-underutilized 27-acre district at the western end of Boylston Street (Route 9) that has been identified for redevelopment in Brookline planning documents for nearly two decades. **We urge Town Meeting Members to support the rezoning package in its entirety** so Brookline can realize the fullest range of benefits: new housing across a range of price points, substantial new commercial tax revenue, major public realm and open space improvements, improved neighborhood connectivity and walkability, and significant contributions supporting the Town's housing and fiscal goals.

Together, STM Articles 1 and 2 represent a long-overdue opportunity to transform an aging office park into a more vibrant, economically productive, and inclusive neighborhood for Brookline's future. For further details on this proposal, including extensive FAQs, check out the website assembled by Select Board member Michael Rubenstein.

STM Article 1 – Chestnut Hill Commercial Area Zoning Overlay

> **Vote NO on the Advisory Committee amendment to remove the Transit-Oriented Mixed Use district**, as well as any other amendments that would weaken the proposal. However, regardless of whether amendments pass or fail, it is critical to vote YES on the final motion establishing the CHCA overlay districts.
>
> **Vote YES on the Select Board's compromise Main Motion.**
>
> This rezoning represents a rare opportunity for smart, mixed-use, transit-accessible growth at a scale appropriate for this unusual location. Developed through extensive community and Planning Department engagement, the proposal modernizes zoning for an aging and underperforming area while adding strong design standards, open space requirements, environmental improvements, and neighborhood protections. If Brookline hopes to maintain essential services without repeated overrides, it must embrace the kind of smart, tax-positive growth this proposal represents.

STM Article 2 – Authorization for the Select Board to Enter Agreements with City Realty, Developer of the CHC 4.0 West District

> **Vote YES on this important companion article to STM Article 1.**
>
> These agreements will help secure key public benefits associated with the redevelopment proposal, including infrastructure and streetscape improvements, open space enhancements, transportation and connectivity improvements, and substantial financial contributions benefiting the Town and its housing goals. Together, STM Articles 1 and 2 represent a long-overdue opportunity to transform an aging office park into a more vibrant, economically productive, and inclusive neighborhood for Brookline's future.

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Annual Town Meeting

Article 8 – Annual Budget

Vote YES on the Main Motion

Brookline for Everyone supports Article 8, the FY27 operating budget, and urges Town Meeting to vote **FAVORABLE ACTION**. We recognize the enormous amount of work that has gone into developing this budget by Town staff, department heads, the Select Board, Advisory Committee, and many others during an extraordinarily difficult fiscal year. Even after the approval of a significant override, difficult choices were unavoidable. At the same time, we believe the proposed reduction in Planning Department staff is shortsighted and risks undermining many of the Town's long-term fiscal and policy goals. Brookline is on the verge of completing a major new Comprehensive Plan, and successful implementation of that plan will require strong professional planning capacity. The Town also needs planning staff to help guide the commercial and residential growth necessary to expand Brookline's tax base, support economic vitality, and help avoid — or at least mitigate the severity of — future overrides. Strategic planning and smart growth are not luxuries; they are essential investments in Brookline's fiscal future.

Article 9 – Annual (FY27) Community Preservation Act Fund Appropriations

Vote NO to separate the vote for individual projects.
Vote YES on the CPA Committee's recommendations in Article 9.

As noted last year, we appreciate the thorough process that the CPA Committee goes through each year to vet, assess, and debate the merits of each project submitted for consideration. deserves substantial credit for assembling a thoughtful and balanced FY27 package that advances Brookline's goals in affordable housing, historic preservation, and open space/ recreation. Particularly notable is the nearly $2 million allocated for community housing, including major investments in preserving Brookline Housing Authority units at Trustman Apartments and High Street Veterans Apartments, as well as support for the Affordable Housing Trust. The package also includes important historic preservation work at United Parish and the Old Burial Ground, along with climate resilience and open space investments at Larz Anderson Park and other town facilities.

Taken together, these recommendations reflect careful vetting, broad community benefit, and a responsible use of CPA resources. Town Meeting should approve the entire package as presented, without attempting to divide it into separate votes on individual projects, recognizing that the Committee has already undertaken the detailed balancing and prioritization process contemplated by the CPA statute.

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Article 14 – Accessory Dwelling Units

Vote YES on Main Motion

Warrant Article 14 updates Brookline's Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) bylaw to comply with the Massachusetts Affordable Homes Act and state regulations governing "Protected Use ADUs." This practical, carefully developed proposal will make it easier for homeowners to create modest additional homes, including both attached and detached ADUs — for seniors, caregivers, adult children, renters, or others — while bringing Brookline into compliance with state law after portions of the Town's prior ADU bylaw were disapproved by the Attorney General. The proposal was developed over many months through an open public process by a Subcommittee of the Housing Advisory Board (HAB), working with Planning Department staff and Town Counsel, and has received overwhelming support from the HAB, the Planning Board, the Select Board, and the Advisory Committee. Allowing ADUs by right in all our housing districts is one of the best ways to modestly expand housing opportunity, support multigenerational living, and help address Brookline's housing shortage.

B4E urges **FAVORABLE ACTION** on Warrant Article 14.

Article 15 – Revisions to Inclusionary Zoning Payment-in-Lieu Threshold

Vote YES on Main Motion

Brookline for Everyone supports **FAVORABLE ACTION** on Warrant Article 15, which would restore Brookline's previous inclusionary zoning framework by allowing projects with up to 19 units to contribute to the Affordable Housing Trust in lieu of providing on-site affordable units. While mixed-income buildings are valuable, Brookline's experience has shown that Housing Trust funds can be leveraged with state and federal subsidies to create and preserve far more permanently affordable housing than would otherwise be possible through scattered one- or two-unit set-asides in small projects.

This article will strengthen Brookline's ability to finance major affordable housing initiatives, including future phases of Walnut High and other redevelopment opportunities, while also reducing barriers to smaller multifamily housing production and easing administrative burdens associated with monitoring isolated affordable units. We believe Brookline needs both more mixed-income housing and a stronger Affordable Housing Trust, and WA 15 helps advance both goals.

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Article 16 – 26 Pleasant Street Rezoning

This Article has been withdrawn by the petitioner. However, if someone else decides to move the article it could come up for a vote, and there will be a referral motion.

Vote NO on a Referral Motion
Vote NO on the Main Motion

The Petitioner of WA 16 has advised the Town that it will not "move" WA 16, which means it will not be considered, so no action is necessary at this time. Brookline for Everyone supports the goal of Article 16: rezoning the long-time Pleasant Street surface parking lot site to encourage new housing development in an easily walkable and transit friendly location. As originally proposed, the development was also projected to generate more than $300,000 annually in net new tax revenue for the Town, helping to mitigate — though certainly not eliminate — the pressure for future override votes as Brookline struggles with mounting fiscal challenges. We appreciate that a number of concerns and questions were raised during the review process, and we hope that the petitioner will return with a revised proposal in the fall that addresses many of those issues.

Article 22 – Resolution on Proposition 2½ Modernization / Municipal Cost Index

Vote YES on the Main Motion

Brookline for Everyone supports **FAVORABLE ACTION** on Warrant Article 22, as amended. Brookline and communities across Massachusetts are facing growing fiscal pressures as the costs of schools, infrastructure, public safety, employee benefits, and basic municipal services continue to rise faster than the rigid 2.5% annual revenue cap under Proposition 2½. This article does not propose changing taxes or weakening voter protections. Instead, it calls for a thoughtful, data-driven analysis of the real costs of delivering core municipal services through the possible creation of a "Core Services Municipal Cost Index." By encouraging serious study, transparency, and long-term planning, WA 22 helps Brookline better understand the structural fiscal challenges facing municipalities and supports a more informed public conversation about how to maintain the high-quality services residents depend on.

WA22 evolved from a resolution implicitly supporting modernization of Prop 2½ into a much narrower proposal urging Brookline to study and benchmark municipal cost pressures through a regional "Core Services Municipal Cost Index." In paractical terms, the proposed index would track major cost drivers—such as employee compensation, capital improvements, utilities, and other operating expenses—to better understand the gap between constrained municipal revenue growth and rising service costs. Rather than endorsing specific fiscal reforms, this version of the article emphasizes data collection, benchmarking, and regional collaboration as tools to help municipalities, taxpayers,

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and state officials assess long-term fiscal pressures and make more informed decisions about municipal sustainability.

The Select Board voted unanimously (5–0) in support of this revised version. We appreciate the broader, more collaborative approach reflected here and see value in Brookline helping lead regional conversations about municipal cost pressures, long-term fiscal sustainability, and how communities can better plan for the future.