



75

YEARS

BUILDING

home

IN BROOKLINE

BHA

Brookline Housing Authority

A PLACE TO CALL *home*

The Brookline Housing Authority creates and manages service-enriched affordable housing that transforms lives and sustains our community. We are the leading provider of affordable housing in Brookline, on an ambitious path to ensure that every member of our community has a safe and supportive place to call home.

75
years

\$44.4m
in annual housing support

3400
people housed (yearly)





Dear Residents and Partners,

At the Brookline Housing Authority (BHA), we believe that everyone deserves access to quality housing as a foundation for wellness and opportunity. For 75 years BHA has helped sustain a diverse community in which people of all abilities and backgrounds can access Brookline's many resources and contribute to our town's rich social fabric. Today, we are the largest provider of affordable housing in Brookline, and we're on a path to significant growth.

As housing pressures increase, we're innovating and expanding our capacity to meet community needs. Over the past several years, we've taken major steps to redevelop and decarbonize decades-old properties and to expand access to vouchers and housing choice. At the same time, we've grown our staff and bottom line as we prepare to take a more ambitious role in developing new affordable housing options in the future. The BHA has become a successful Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) developer, operator, and manager, allowing it to complete over \$300M of redevelopment, with hundreds of additional 100% affordable units in the pipeline.

The BHA has also been successful in growing rental resources in and around Brookline by securing new vouchers with wraparound services to support persons with disabilities and veterans, while also helping more rental subsidy holders remain in Brookline. We've expanded access to innovative on-site wellness services and economic opportunity programs through significant new investments in resident services. These efforts collectively have helped to create a more supportive and socio-economically diverse community for all.

This rapid growth and investments in staff, buildings, and residents is the result of the Board of Commissioner's strategic vision and direction. We're proud of our long track record and optimistic about the road ahead. We believe Brookline can lead the way in creating a community where everyone has a safe, decent, and affordable place to call home. We thank you for your partnership in making this vision a reality.

In gratitude and hope,

Michael Alperin

75 YEARS OF BUILDING *Opportunity*

Since 1948, the Brookline Housing Authority (BHA) has led the way as a provider of affordable housing options in Brookline. Today, we remain a refuge and a resource for thousands. Through the properties we manage and the state and federal voucher programs we administer, the BHA ensures that seniors can age in place with dignity, low-income families can find stability, and people of all abilities and backgrounds can live well and find community in Brookline.

13

owned or managed housing sites

2500+

Brookline residents served

1400

subsidized housing vouchers

100%

low-to-moderate income

66%

households of color

56%

elderly

31%

people with disabilities

29

languages spoken

1949

Brookline's first state public housing developments—High St Veterans & Egmont St Veterans—are built to serve veterans returning from war.



High St Veterans

1962

Brookline's first federal public housing development—22 High / Walnut St Apartments—is built to serve low-income seniors and families.



22 High / Walnut St

1965-81

Brookline constructs four additional federal public housing sites for seniors and people with disabilities.

1981

The BHA formalizes a partnership with the Brookline Center for Community Mental Health to provide supportive services to residents.



Kickman

2001

BHA co-founds Steps to Success with the Public Schools of Brookline.

2015

Brookline Food Pantry opens its first of two BHA locations at Egmont St Veterans.



86 Dummer St

BHA opens 86 Dummer St, its first new affordable housing property for families in over 30 years.

2019

BHA begins a period of housing redevelopment, based upon long-term strategic plan to preserve or redevelop all of its properties and expand on-site resident services.



61 Park St

2020

BHA completes its first redevelopment project at 61 Park St.

BHA adopts "small area fair market rents," increasing resources for Section 8 voucher holders in Brookline.



90 Longwood Ave

2021

BHA completes redevelopment of 90 Longwood Ave.

BHA's Self Sufficiency Program launches.

2022

BHA begins redevelopment of 50 Pleasant St.



50 Pleasant St

2023

BHA partners with Hebrew SeniorLife to provide comprehensive wellness services at senior housing sites.

2023-24

BHA begins development of 32 Marion St—the largest 100% affordable housing project to be built in Brookline in over 50 years.



32 Marion St

BUILDING *access*

At the Brookline Housing Authority, we believe that everyone deserves choice in where they live and that Brookline's many benefits should be accessible to all. But as housing costs rise, more residents are being forced to move elsewhere or make impossible choices between housing and other needs. The result is a narrower, less diverse, and less healthy population.

The BHA is working against the broader trends to ensure that people of all incomes, abilities, and backgrounds can maintain a good quality of life in Brookline. Through recent innovations in how we administer vouchers, we're helping more people find apartments they can afford in Brookline, and through the expansion and redevelopment of our properties, we're ensuring that many more people have a safe, dignified place to call home.

EXPANDING HOUSING ACCESS WITH VOUCHERS

Since 2020, the BHA has made strategic moves to increase the total number of housing vouchers distributed and the size of the subsidy renters receive. Three programs have made an especially significant impact.

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHERS

These federal ("Section 8") vouchers subsidize the rent of low-income families, seniors, and people with disabilities. Until recently, voucher holders received a monthly subsidy based on average rents across the region. In 2018, the US Office of Housing and Urban Development introduced a change: communities can now link the subsidy amount to each renter's zip code, making higher-rent communities more accessible. The BHA opted in in 2020. As a result, more voucher recipients have chosen to stay in Brookline, receiving an average of \$1,200 more per month in rental subsidy than they would have in the past.

›MAINSTREAM VOUCHERS

Through a competitive process, the BHA was awarded 75 new rental subsidies for non-elderly residents with disabilities. The program has already helped 74 disabled residents to ensure that all have, supportive housing they can afford.

›VETERANS AFFAIRS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

In another two competitive applications, the BHA successfully added 25 vouchers for veterans who were formerly homeless. This unique program helps veterans secure housing with substantial supports, including housing search assistance and counseling through Boston's VA Hospital.

GROWING BROOKLINE'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING STOCK

The BHA operates and maintains 13 housing developments, most of which were built with targeted federal and state funding in the middle of the last century. Today, the BHA is focused on rehabilitating older properties to meet modern standards of safety, accessibility, and quality. We have also begun to expand Brookline's affordable housing stock through strategic building expansions and acquisitions.



- SITES FOR FAMILIES / GENERAL
- 1 • Egmont St. Veterans
 - 2 • Trustman Apartments
 - 3 • 86 Dummer St.
 - 4 • 22 High / Walnut St. Apartments
 - 5 • High St. Veterans



- SITES FOR SENIORS / PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
- 6 • Sussman House / 50 Pleasant St.
 - 7 • Morse Apartments / 90 Longwood Ave.
 - 8 • Kickham Apartments / 190 Harvard St.
 - 9 • O'Shea House / 61 Park St.
 - 10 • 32 Marion St. Apartments (under construction)



- SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING
- 11 • Kilgallon House
 - 12 • McCormick House
 - 13 • Connolly House

2 additional units not shown



413

vouchers added since 2020

88%

increase in Section 8 voucher holders in Brookline since 2020

\$27.8M

in total rent subsidy in 2023

1000+

units owned or operated by the BHA in Brookline

555

additional subsidized units in Brookline



BUILDING *wellness*

The Brookline Housing Authority provides more than a place to live. Our staff and partners take a compassionate and holistic approach to meeting the varied needs of our residents, who are often experiencing multiple stressors, such as food insecurity, limited English proficiency, chronic health conditions, and histories of trauma. With our partners, we offer wraparound supports that build health, mental health, and resource connections.

In 2023, the BHA introduced a holistic housing and wellness model with Hebrew SeniorLife at our five properties serving elderly and disabled residents to ensure that all residents have the support they need to live well and with dignity. At BHA family properties, dedicated case workers from the Brookline Center for Community Mental Health provide resource coordination and individualized support to help residents maintain stable tenancies and maximize health and wellbeing. Together, these programs embody our commitment to ensuring that people of all ages, abilities, and circumstances can thrive in Brookline.

SENIORS & RESIDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The BHA contracts with Hebrew SeniorLife (HSL) to provide comprehensive supports for seniors and residents with disabilities. The HSL Right Care, Right Place, Right Time (R3) model has shown success in increasing connections to services and decreasing turnover, emergency room utilization, and falls. The new partnership includes significant staffing increases to help residents access a full suite of wellness services where they live, including proactive care coordination, regular fitness instruction, enhanced educational and recreational activities, and an on-site dedicated nurse. Other local partners provide friendly visitors, grocery store transportation, cultural activities, and more.

FAMILY SERVICES

Dedicated service coordinators and social workers from the Brookline Center provide wraparound case management at BHA family sites. They offer direct connections to mental health counseling and tenancy stabilization support and help residents access public benefits and local resources, including childcare, medical care, transportation, and food assistance. Through the Transitional Housing Program, Brookline Center case managers provide an additional layer of stabilization support up to 10 families per year who are transitioning from homeless shelters to ensure they can make a stable home in Brookline.

95%

of 125+ formerly homeless families successfully obtained a lease upon completion of the 6-to-9 month Transitional Housing Program

19%

reduction in emergency room visits at Hebrew SeniorLife's R3 demonstration sites



This is my home

Quinton Wilkins

A housing crisis can happen to anyone. Quinton Wilkins knows from experience. A few years ago, he was on the verge of homelessness after a series of unexpected losses. His own deteriorating health made the situation urgent. “I was about to give up,” he says. “One thing happened after another. I had no place to go.”

At the suggestion of his daughter, Quinton had joined the BHA waiting list years earlier, despite his reservations about public housing. “I never thought in my wildest dreams that I would be accepted,” he says. “When I got out of the hospital and my kids had fixed the place up for me, I broke down and cried like a baby.”

Quinton was surprised by the quality and cleanliness of his recently renovated apartment. His visitors have been surprised too, saying, “Oh, I can’t believe this place is so good!”

Quinton believes in making a good thing better and helped organize a regular Qi Gong practice for residents. A former jazz musician, he’s a regular at karaoke and for MusicWorks programs too. He’s eager to find more opportunities to connect with his culturally diverse neighbors. “I consider myself extremely fortunate to be living here,” Quinton says. “This is my home.”

Finding enjoyment in life

Elizabeth Warshaw

Elizabeth Warshaw moved into her first Brookline Housing Authority apartment in 1989. Nearly 35 years later, she’s grateful to remain in her beloved Brookline and in proximity to the medical care she needs. Elizabeth has witnessed many changes in the BHA over the years. She’s especially pleased with the recent evolution of services provided by Hebrew SeniorLife.

“Every day, there’s something,” she says, whether it’s a coffee hour, and exercise class, or games with youth volunteers. “I’ve been involved in most of them. It’s such a plus. They’re adding to your enjoyment of life.”

Elizabeth sees her neighbors benefitting too. “There are a lot of people living here that had been lost in the shuffle. People that couldn’t get along in group have now started to come to groups, slowly. They’re trying to make everyone more of a community. Isn’t that what the world should be about?”



BUILDING ECONOMIC *independence*

The Brookline Housing Authority views affordable housing at the starting point for transforming lives and building opportunity. Together with our residents and partners, BHA creates pathways out of poverty that allow residents to move from crisis and economic instability to self-sufficiency, resiliency, and growth. We help residents access financial resources—including rent assistance and free and low-cost childcare—to resolve debts and address unmet needs. And we provide a variety of financial education programs, employment counseling, and one-on-one coaching to help residents set goals, increase earnings, and plan for their future.

BHA'S PATHWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY

All BHA residents have access to on-site employment counseling and educational workshops. Those seeking a bigger boost can apply to our higher-commitment programs.

SELF SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM

Launched in 2021, the BHA's Self Sufficiency Program helps low-income families increase their earnings, build assets, and build a path to economic stability. Participants work with a dedicated coach to craft an individualized opportunity plan and participate in continuing education and other offerings that cultivate financial literacy and valuable job skills over a three-to-five-year period. Through a matching fund program, participants accrue up to \$15,000 in escrow savings, which they can apply to a down payment on a home or another financial goal. The program celebrated its first 10 graduates in 2023.

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

BHA's employment coach provides career exploration, job search, and job placement assistance to Self Sufficiency Program participants and others seeking to improve their economic situation. During weekly office hours, residents get help with job searches, resume writing, and interview practice. The coach helps residents enroll in programs where they can earn a diploma or equivalent, build their English skills, and gain valuable workforce certifications. A partnership with Operation ABE provides additional support to residents interested in upgrading their skills and entering high-demand industries.

“You don't have any idea how it helped me.”



Lea Luz Ríos

Originally a refugee from Nicaragua, Lea Ríos moved into a Brookline Housing Authority apartment more than 20 years ago and was one of the first BHA residents to join the Self Sufficiency Program. She especially appreciated the financial education workshops, where she got advice on managing credit cards, which had been a problem in the past.

“You don't have any idea how it helped me,” she says. “Thank God, I'm now doing so well.”

Lea also participated in the Homebuying 101 workshop. While her dream of purchasing a home is still a way off, she now has information and \$15,000 in escrow. Lea, who is also a BHA employee, spends her days processing housing vouchers from low-income families like her own. That work increases her appreciation for the stability and resources she's found through the BHA.

Moving to Brookline changed “everything,” she says. “It was a complete blessing for me.”

Participants have collectively accrued

>\$300,000,

an average of \$8,000 per participant with an escrow account.

63%

have increased their income and opened escrow savings accounts.



BUILDING *Support*

The Brookline Housing Authority provides an array of additional services that help residents feel welcome in Brookline and discover a greater quality of life, starting at home. At each site, we offer a mix of individualized support and community programs that address a full spectrum of resident interests and needs in collaboration with 50+ partners.

RESIDENT SERVICES AT A GLANCE

BHA takes a whole-person, whole-family, whole-community approach to cultivating wellness and opportunity.

BASIC NEEDS • The BHA hosts two on-site food pantries with the Brookline Food Pantry to ensure residents have access to healthy groceries each week, and we work with the Brookline Center to help residents access case management and concrete resources, including coats, back-to-school gift cards, and rental assistance through the Brookline Safety Net.

YOUTH • The BHA works in collaboration with partners to create free education and enrichment opportunities for families with children. With Brookline's Early Education Program (BEEP) and Trust Early Learners, BHA families have enhanced access to free and affordable preschool and home visiting programs. With Steps to Success, children living in BHA housing participate in homework help and horizon-expanding opportunities from grade 3 through college.

DIGITAL ACCESS • The BHA operates several initiatives that address the digital divide for low-income residents. Through a partnership with Starry, Inc. and Tech Goes Home, we've established free WiFi in the common spaces of every development and helped more than 300 residents access free or low-cost broadband in their units.

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY BUILDING • From healthy cooking demonstrations to vaccination clinics, the BHA offers a variety of programs that promote health and community of our residents. This past year, the BHA collaborated with Women Thriving and other local partners to launch the Summer Wellness Challenge, engaging 30 women in health and wellness activities while strengthening their social networks. Every graduate earned a free gym membership.

\$450,000+

in rental assistance secured through the pandemic (2020-2023)

2000+

resource connections made

500+

community activities hosted

50+

program partners

40+

residents connected to therapy / specialized clinical support

MORE THAN A PLACE TO

live

Ericka Pierribia

The Brookline Housing Authority entered Ericka Pierribia's life at exactly the right time. It was the first year of the pandemic, and she'd lost her job. Then, her landlord sold the house, and the new owners decided they no longer wanted to have a tenant. Without work, Ericka had no way to secure a new apartment for herself and her five-year-old daughter. Then, she got the news: She'd been granted a Brookline Housing Authority unit through the state's centralized waitlist.

"That was a miracle," Ericka recalls. "I couldn't even describe how I felt. The first thing I said was, Thank you, Lord. We no longer have to worry about where we are going to live."

A native of Boston, Ericka didn't know much about Brookline, aside from the reputation of its schools. She's been happily surprised by the many resources she and her daughter have been able to access through BHA, the Florida Ruffin Ridley School, and other town agencies.

"I came here just hoping for a place to live, but we got so much more than that," Ericka says. "The opportunities and benefits that we've received since living here have blown my mind. I didn't know any of this was available."

Ericka says yes to every resource she can. Her daughter participates in free swimming lessons through Brookline

Recreation as well as afterschool programs, including Steps to Success.

Ericka joined the Summer Wellness Challenge through BHA and Women Thriving, earning a free gym membership at HealthWorks, which has made a big difference in her mental health. She's also participated in workshops with Women Thriving, and as a participant in the Self Sufficiency Program, Ericka enrolled in a Google IT certificate program to increase her earning potential. This year, she began a paid internship through Women's Thriving's BIPOC Leadership Training Program, where she is working to build a stronger community for all residents.

"Every time I see that they're having a program, I'm like, I definitely want to go to this. This will be beneficial," Ericka says. "All of these opportunities to get out and meet people in the community—it's been amazing."

Ericka feels grateful to have landed in Brookline. "I feel safe. I feel like I have what I need here. And the biggest thing is my daughter—her future is important to me, as it would be for any parent."

Ericka plans to stay in Brookline, though she's looking forward to the day when she is earning enough to pass on her BHA apartment to another family needing a safe place to land.

"I feel safe. I feel like I have what I need here."



BUILDING *sustainability*

The Brookline Housing Authority works to build sustainable futures on multiple levels: for our residents, for our community, and for the environment. In a period of rising housing costs and flattening wages for lower-income residents, we are hard at work expanding and redeveloping our housing portfolio to ensure that our residents and community can count on quality, affordable housing well into the future.

In the past five years, we have completed major redevelopment projects on two large properties, and we have four additional projects planned or underway. With each project, we have redesigned common spaces and upgraded apartments to meet current standards for safety, quality, and comfort for our residents. We have also made major steps toward decarbonizing our properties and making them more energy efficient through the use of more sustainable designs and materials, cutting-edge solar energy, and the replacement of natural gas with full electrification.

412

units rehabbed or added since 2021

\$83M

committed for sustainable rehab over the next 3 years

60%

of all electricity is now solar generated (and growing)

50%

reduction in electricity use in renovated properties

100%

goal of removal of legacy gas ranges by 2027

100%

conversion of gas HVAC to electric in new/redeveloped properties

32 Marion Street Apartments

In December, the Brookline Housing Authority achieved a milestone: We closed on the financing for a major redevelopment project in Coolidge Corner. The new 32 Marion St Apartments will be built on the site of one of Brookline's original federal public housing developments that was demolished in 2023 after falling into obsolescence. The original 60-unit complex will be replaced with 115 new affordable apartments for seniors and non-elderly residents with disabilities.

The development's state-of-the-art, community-oriented design promotes aging in place and will include an enclosed garden patio, fitness room, AV rooms, and spaces for a nurse, library, multimedia room, and multiple community rooms for music and functions. Residents will have access to a full suite of care coordination, clinical support, and education programs through our partnership with HebrewSenior Life.

The 32 Marion project, which has received strong support from the Town, will be built using environmentally friendly materials and according to the latest "Passive House" standards which maximize insulation to minimize utility usage, increase energy efficiency, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the consumption of fossil fuels. The project will also include rooftop solar to power the building. It will be the largest 100% affordable housing development built in Brookline in over 50 years and is projected to open in 2025-2026.



BUILDING A *better future*



After a period of careful strategic planning and ambitious asset management, the Brookline Housing Authority is poised to significantly expand affordable housing options in Brookline in the decades ahead. We recognize a real and growing housing crisis in Massachusetts and beyond, and we are more committed than ever to expanding access to safe, compassionate, best-in-class affordable housing for our community.

Recently, BHA has secured several large public grants and private funding agreements that have strengthened our bottom line. Going forward, we see BHA becoming a leader in the creation of new affordable housing in Brookline. In addition to the redevelopment of our existing portfolio, we will partner with other local developers to acquire underutilized and abandoned properties to increase Brookline’s affordable housing stock and meet an urgent need in our community.

As we embark on this new stage, we welcome new and continuing partnerships and opportunities.

BHA'S GOALS

The BHA has several ambitious goals for the coming decade. We intend to:

- ➊ **Renovate or develop** all remaining properties, including green energy conversions and 100% decarbonization of the BHA portfolio.
- ➋ **Continue** expansion of access to housing choice vouchers.
- ➌ **Sustain** and expand robust resident services, including new service programs and partnerships that promote wellness and opportunity for residents of all ages.
- ➍ **Prepare** for major new growth opportunities in partnership with the Town of Brookline and others, including the redevelopment of 22 High/Walnut St as 100% affordable, state-of-the-art housing for as many as 265+ families, seniors, and persons with disabilities.

67,050

people are on BHA's combined waiting lists

\$130,600

median household income for Brookline
(Source: American Community Survey, 2022)

\$18,944

median annual income of BHA families with children;
\$15,947 for senior and disabled households (2023)

\$1,055,400

median Brookline home value in 2022
(Source: Brookline Community Foundation)

36%

of Brookline residents are housing burdened
(spending more than 30% of income on rent)



“

The Brookline Housing Authority has been an amazing partner to the Town, helping to preserve and create new affordable housing at a scale and pace that we do not hear about in peer communities.”

KARA BREWTON, Director of Planning & Community Development for the Town of Brookline

TOGETHER WE'RE BUILDING A STRONGER *Community*

The Brookline Housing Authority thanks the many partners and supporters who make our mission possible. These organizations and institutions share our commitment to creating quality, compassionate, affordable housing and ensure that BHA can be here for our community for decades to come. We are grateful for their continued partnership and support.

Government Partners

Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities
Public Schools of Brookline
Town of Brookline
US Department of Housing and Redevelopment

Contracted Service Partners

Brookline Center for Community Mental Health
Hebrew SeniorLife

Selected Community Partners

Allston Brighton Community Financial Management Program
Brookline Adult & Community Education
Brookline Arts Center
Brookline Community Development Corporation
Brookline Food Pantry
Brookline Interactive Group
Brookline Teen Center
City on a Hill Church
Greater Boston Interfaith Organization
HarborOne Bank
League of Women Voters
Martin Trust Partnership in Education for Early Learners
Mothers Out Front
Operation ABLE
Springwell, Inc.
Starry Internet
Steps to Success, Inc.
Tech Goes Home
Thrifty Threads
Women Thriving, Inc.

Housing Partners

Brookline Community Development Corporation
Druker Companies
Hebrew SeniorLife at Centre Communities
Peabody Properties
Pine Street Inn
Specialized Housing
Vinfen
WinnCompanies

Finance/Banking Partners

Bank of America
Boston Financial
Brookline Bank
Eastern Bank
Massachusetts Housing Investment Corp.
Massachusetts Housing Partnerships
MassDevelopment
MassHousing
National Equity Fund
Rockland Trust
Silicon Valley Bank

Institutional Supporters

Brookline Community Foundation
Brookline Rotary Club

BHA Leadership

Michael Alperin • *Executive Director*
Ana De La Puente • *Property Management*
Chris Devoll • *Maintenance and Modernization*
John Hillis • *Leased Housing and Admissions*
Sara Eamma • *Assistant Director, Leased Housing*
Flor Nieves • *Assistant Director, Admissions*
John Kelley • *Finance*
Maria Maffei • *Redevelopment*
Danielle Mendola • *Resident Services*
Sheila O'Flaherty • *Strategic Asset Management*

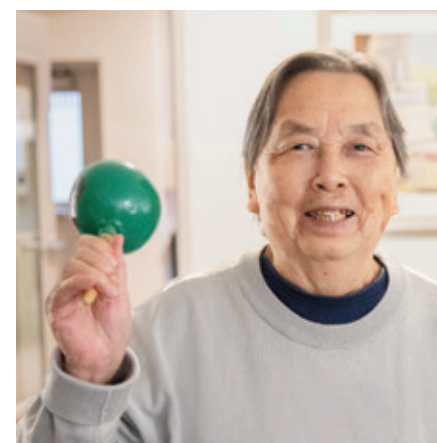
Board of Commissioners

Michael Jacobs • *Chair*
Joanne M. Sullivan • *Vice Chair*
Barbara Dugan • *Treasurer*
Sue Cohen
Judith Katz

Report Credits

Writing • *Katie Bayerl*
Photography • *Liz Linder, Liz Linder Photography*
(p. 22: *Brooklyn Photography*; p. 16: *unattributed*)
Design • *Rena Sokolow, one2tree*

As of April 2024





BROOKLINE HOUSING AUTHORITY MISSION

The Brookline Housing Authority provides low-income families, seniors, and people of all abilities with safe, decent, accessible, and affordable places to live in a community rich with opportunities. The BHA works in collaboration with government and civic organizations to support and encourage the well-being and economic self-sufficiency of BHA residents; to sustain a diverse population in Brookline; and to maintain attractive residential neighborhoods.



BROOKLINEHOUSING.ORG

90 Longwood Ave • Brookline, MA 02446