

Please consider this letter a formal commitment that as Mayor, **permanently protecting Webster Woods will be a top priority for my administration.**

During my tour with the Friends of Webster Woods last year, I learned a great deal about this unique open space in our city. I was astonished at the beauty we have in our own backyard. I was also stunned to learn about the lost opportunities in the 1950's and more recently, to preserve all of Webster Woods. I will not let protecting this beautiful open space, through some form of acquisition or restriction; pass us by a third time.

I believe that with my leadership experience and the collaborative approach I have shown as President of the City Council, I will be able to conduct productive and respectful conversations with Boston College and all other stakeholders. As I said in my letter to the Friends of Webster Woods, if despite my best efforts, I am unable to forge an agreement with Boston College, I would fully support a taking by eminent domain that ensures no development of this area and continued public use of it. I am confident, however, that by working collaboratively with Boston College and other stakeholders, Newton will not have to get to this point.

As I also committed to the Friends of Webster Woods, I will form an advisory group that will include members from that group and the Newton Conservators. I will establish this advisory group within my first six months of taking office, if not sooner. I will personally meet with this group quarterly and if needed, more often, depending on how discussions with Boston College are proceeding.

I will work in partnership with the Newton Conservators and the Friends of Webster Woods to develop a master plan for this entire area. The Newton Conservators' presentation "The Future of Webster Woods" contains excellent points that can be incorporated into this planning effort.

As mentioned, I am prepared to negotiate an agreement with Boston College that includes permanent protection of 'at least the wooded area' but to address the specific points in "The Future of Webster Woods" presentation:

- a) I feel very strongly that preserving *Bare Pond and the vernal pool* be a priority in any negotiation, acquisition or restriction;
- b) The *MASCO parking lot* obviously would bring another stakeholder into the conversation. However, it would be my responsibility to explain to MASCO why the parking lot it uses is an important part of the Woods' integrity. It makes perfect sense to acquire and/or restrict the area now used by the parking due to its proximity to the pond and vernal pool. As Mayor, I will work to restore this area to a natural condition, unless during the formation of the master plan, the Conservators and the Friends point out a better use;

Scott Lennon

- c) I am amenable to granting the Conservators a role in administering the conservation restrictions on Webster Woods, assuming that doing so is in the best interest of the city and its taxpayers.

- d) I will work closely with all stakeholders, the city's Director of Transportation and the DCR on incorporating a full review into our master plan of the small parking lot and the access issues identified for improvement in your letter.

Lastly, I look forward to meeting with generous members of the public who have offered to contribute to this preservation effort. As Mayor, I would leverage city money to ensure that we do not let this opportunity pass by again.

I pledge a strong partnership with the Newton Conservators, the Friends of Webster Woods, and the many other supporters I have heard from on this issue to ensure that this "open space gem" (as the Friends of Webster Woods has called it) remains just that!