

## Board of Directors, 1989 - 1990

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President: Jean Husher  
Vice President: Roger Feinstein  
Secretary: Frances Seasholes  
Treasurer: Lawrence Kaplan  
Past President: Nicholas Yannoni

### Directors

AnnaMarie Abernathy	Rodney Barker
Bonnie Carter	Alan Cody
Jeremiah Eck	Bart Hague
Mary Herring	Fiora Houghteling
Deborah Howard	William Jones
Peter Kastner	William Leitch
Steven Leonard	George Mansfield
Carol Morrison	John Munroe
Ruth Nussbaum	Richard Primack
William Shaevel	Vern Vance

## June 1989

Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday, June 6, 1989  
Abernathy's home

**Present:** Roger Feinstein, presiding; Ruth Nussbaum, Fiora Houghteling, Peter Kastner, Fran Seasholes, AnnaMaria Abernathy, Bill Leitch, Bill Jones, Bart Hague.

**Minutes:** On the May 2 minutes page 2, paragraph 3 correct spelling to Dathe. There was a VOTE TO ACCEPT the May 2 minutes as corected and the May 9 Annual Meeting minutes as distributed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Lawrence Kaplan's written report was distributed and reviewed and a VOTE taken TO ACCEPT it.

**Reorganization for 1989-90: Membership Chairman:** Fiora offered to be the person to pick up mail from the Newton Centre box. Ginny Taplin has materials and ideas for the person who succeeds her, and it was suggested that the President consult with Richard Primack who expressed some interest in outreach to expand Conservators membership.  
**Hazardous Waste Committee:** Ginny Taplin has been our representative on this city committee and now Fiora and Ruth agreed to share the position as liaison, noting that Deborah Howard also is a possibility. Off-Board involvement is also desirable. The next meeting is June 20.  
**Aldermanic Committees:** There are times when we should monitor

the Land Use, Zoning and Planning meetings and AnnaMaria will continue to do this, but we need a number of others who would be available, including Roger. **Conservation Commission:** It was suggested that Alan Cody has expressed interest in this.

**Stationery needs:** We agreed that Peter would ask his artist sister, Susan, to modernize the Conservator's **logo**, which was originally designed by Jean. The current supply of stationery is seen as adequate. We agreed that it would save time and money for the membership person to use a postcard for receipts of memberships and that this redesign should use the new logo.

**Quint Fund Grant:** An undesignated grant of \$500 has been received from the John and Emma Quint Fund, and we discussed designating this for playground equipment or other specific needs at Nahanton Park but decided in favor of using the money in relation to **up-dating and reprinting our map of Newton parks**. This was published in 1981 and distributed free to all Newton households at that time and most recently was sold for 25 cents at Springfest.

There were suggestions that the updating might show the aqueduct and MDC linkages and any bike routes. Bill Jones will arrange to have the latest MDC relevant maps mailed to our P.O. box. The original art work may still be in the hands of Fran Hints of Newton Ctr. The current supply of maps is about 100. Roger expressed interest in this project and suggested asking Nick as well.

**City Hall Library Site:** There is a newly formed group that feels that the new library's site is inappropriate because it is wetland. They were near our booth at Springfest and some people confused us, for which they apologized, but they are upset that the Conservators did not take a public stand on this issue. They are trying to obtain enough signatures to put this on Newton's November ballot as a referendum question (which could greatly delay the already long-delayed construction).

It was suggested that we could form a statement for the papers under Jean's name, indicating that we have been aware of the site plans, accept the Conservation Commission position of how to protect the Hidden Brook during construction, feel that legal requirements have been met, recognize that the site has been identified as the potential one for the library for as long as 35 years, and that given the history it is the best chance we have for a new city library on economic and social grounds. Bill L. will talk with Jeremiah Eck or others to clarify the status of their referendum efforts.

**Hazardous Waste Collection:** Ruth reported on the May 6 collection, when 400 cars delivered 82 barrels-worth of toxic waste material to the Rumford Ave. site plus batteries, used motor oil etc. This event for half of the city cost \$35,000. It was considered a valuable educational event, with high school students participating with adult volunteers in distributing literature and questionnaires to those who came. This meeting discussed proper public policy on disposals, such as building in the cost of disposal or rebates on items like tires and batteries.

**Commonwealth Ave. Task Force:** AnnaMaria reported on the Mayor's acceptance of the report (his letter was distributed) which rejected the 25% plan. The group will be meeting again in a few weeks under Chairman Mr. Guillette, who wrote the good recommendations, to work on some basic guidelines. Federal money may be requested for a small segment of carriage roads and intersections.

**Park Clean-up:** Ruth reported positively on the Cold Springs Park clean-up which the Newton Highlands Area Council helped us publicize by distributing flyers door-to-door. Seventy volunteers worked...and enjoyed her refreshments.

There was agreement that the next target for volunteer clean-up should be the Edmands Park (Cabot Woods) but there was no volunteer to coordinate this.

**Spring Walks:** These are proceeding well. Fiora had 30-40 on her cemetery walk.

**Bullough's Pond:** Bill Leitch reported that they are looking to the city capital improvement program for funds to do maintenance and catch basin work on a phased basis.

**Nahanton Park:** Peter reported on the June 25th dedication, which will start with a reception at 1:00 and dedicated at 2:00. 5000 solicitations/invitations will soon be mailed. A recent donation of \$4000 was received from Damon Medical. The park is open and being well used, including a fishing clinic and increased enrollment in the garden program, which is now under the Recreation Dept. There are 300 people on the Nahanton Park mailing list, and there will be annual solicitations to supplement the city's commitment of basic maintenance

**Newsletter:** It was agreed that the next one will come out in October, which may mean a separate mailing for fall walks. The LWV will be asking us to cosponsor a fall transportation forum.

**Next Board Meeting:** It was decided to combine July and August meetings on Tuesday, July 25 in the Kastner's air-conditioned house. Because the first September meeting would be right after Labor Day we set Tuesday, September 12 for that month's meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Fran Seasholes, Secretary

**July 1989**

Newton Conservators Board Meeting  
July 25, 1989  
Minutes.

The Board of Directors of the Newton Conservators met at the home of Peter Kastner on Tuesday evening, July 25, 1989 at 7:45 PM. The following members were **present**: William J. Jones, Roger Feinstein, AnnaMaria Abernathy, Lawrence Kaplan, Bill Shaevel, Alan Cody, Peter Kastner, Bill Letich, Fiora Houghteling, and Jean Husher, President. This number constituted a quorum.

The **minutes** of the previous meeting which had been circulated were ACCEPTED as written with one correction. Alan Cody confirmed his willingness to represent the Conservators at meetings of the Conservation Commission.

Lawrence Kaplan presented the **treasurer's report**. The question whether Ordway funds and the interest derived from them should continue to be so identified. Since the U.S. Treasury notes are derived from the original Ordway funds, it was recommended that in future Treasurer's reports this be acknowledge in parentheses after the line item titled, "US Treasury Notes"; thus: "US Treasury Notes (Ordway Funds)." The annual banquet item has been paid and when all moneys were accounted for, there was a slight positive revenue. 80 people attended of which 8 were guests. The Treasurer's report was RECEIVED and placed on file.

The Board still does not have a **membership chairman**. Following some discussions, Bill Leitch offered to furnish computer software for automation of membership lists, which would include easing in the solicitation of new members. Much of the information needed is already a part of the mailing list. He would discuss the possibilities with his wife Betsy and let Jean Husher know.

It had been voted at the previous meeting that the \$500 GRANT from the Quint Foundation would be used toward updating and reprinting the Conservators' **map of Newton Parks**. It was confirmed that this was in progress.

The modernization of the **Conservator's logo** also is "in the works."

AnnaMaria Abernathy reported on the last meeting of the **Commonwealth Avenue Task Force II**. A representative of the citizen action group in Boston that is concerned with Commonwealth Avenue from Arlington Street to Hereford Street attended the meeting, advising the Task Force that to be successful in improving the appearance of the avenue on a long range basis there must be:

- 1) a long range plan
- 2) zeal, effort and determination to see that it is carried out over time
- 3) professional city forestry operations
- 4) public interest groups that initiate and oversee some real efforts (even minor ones can be symbolic) in care and concern, planting, publicity, etc.

It was clear that one of the problems in Newton is the decline of the Forestry Department. Its budget has been declining year after year so that its efforts have been only able to be directed toward tree removals. There is a growing interest by the Commonwealth Task Force in developing a long range plan for implementation. The

consensus of the Board was that the Conservators' continue to express interest and support for a serious effort.

The issue of the **use of a public park for commercial purposes**, as the use of Cold Spring Park for the Farmers' Market, was discussed. It was MOVED, SECONDED, and PASSED unanimously that the president should write the Recreation Department a letter pointing out this inappropriate use, that it was hoped by the Conservators that the Market would be moved back to City Hall grounds as soon as the Library was completed, and that this temporary use of a park would not in any way set a precedent.

Carol Morrison has written a letter of resignation from the Board, because she and her family are spending nearly all their time now in New London, New Hampshire. Cay has served on the Board as a most dedicated member for many years, participating fully in its activities until recently. The Board ACCEPTED her resignation with reluctance and regret.

Peter Kastner, Chairman of the **Nominating Committee**, said that the committee had asked the Chestnut Hill Garden Club (in recognition of their continuing care and maintenance of Houghton Gardens) to recommend a member to serve on the Conservators Board. The club's recommendation of Kathy Brigham, came too late for the committee's report at the Annual Meeting. He recommended that she be asked to fill out Cay Morrison's term on the Board. It was MOVED, SECONDED, and VOTED that the president ask Kathy Brigham to serve on the Board of Directors.

Groundbreaking for the **new Library** will take place on Thursday, July 27 at 2:30 PM. Several Conservators will attend.

**Edmands Park** had been suggested at the last meeting as the site of a fall clean-up day. It is a very large park for a one-day project. Peter Kastner will make contact with a city authority to determine the feasibility of addressing the manageable section of the park.

**Ordway Park maintenance** has not been fully completed because of the inability of Lawrence Kaplan to organize a satisfactory maintenance effort over the summer. It was decided that the Board should have a clean-up morning one day in the early fall.

The **Fall Walks** series was planned as follows:

- 1) Aqueduct Walk, to be led by Nick Yannoni (Jean to ask him)
- 2) Newton-Waltham Lake District, to be led by Peter Kastner
- 3) Webster Deer Park, to be led by Verne Vance (Jean to ask him)
- 4) Canoe from Nahanton Park to Cutler Park water outlet, hike around Cutler Park, to be led by Jean & Dick Husher on Sunday, September 24th.

The flyer about the walks should be out by the first week in September in a special mailing so people can make their plans.

The **Newsletter** will be published in October. Ruth Nussbaum and Bonnie Carter will continue to serve as editors. All articles for the Newsletter should be submitted on or before the September 12th Board meeting.

It was MOVED, SECONDED and VOTED that the Conservators subscribe to an initial membership of \$50 for one year to the newly organized **Friends of Hemlock Gorge**, which is trying to continue the work begun by the MCD before its funds were cut by the state.

Peter Kastner announced that the opening of **Nahanton Park** had taken place on Sunday, June 25. The weather was perfect and the celebration was well attended. Peter agreed to report on this.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:01 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
William Jones  
Sec. pro tem (notes interpreted by Jean Husher, typist)

### **September 1989**

Newton Conservators, Inc.  
Board of Directors Meeting, September 12, 1989  
Jean Husher's home

**Present:** Jean Husher (presiding), Kathy Brigham, Alan Cody, Lawrence Kaplan, Fran Seasholes, Roger Feinstein, Bart Hague, Bill Shaevel.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the July 25th meeting were ACCEPTED as printed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Lawrence reported that he had rearranged the monthly statement as directed and he distributed this. He noted some money management actions including a postal deposit. which now stands at \$518, and transferring Ordway funds.

**Introduction of new members:** We welcomed Kathy Brigham who is representing the Chestnut Hill Garden Club. She lives at 92 Reservoir Ave., Chestnut Hill, 02167 and her phone is 734-9355.

**Membership:** Bill and Betsy Leitch have agreed to continue holding our membership lists on their computer software at home. Renewals of membership go first to Lawrence for financial recording then to the Leitchs to put on computer. Special attention names go to Jean. There is a need for new renewal cards which perhaps can have a perforated card for acknowledging the renewal or [else] a wallet card. Ginny Taplin used to do some of this, and another volunteer is needed.

**Fall Newsletter:** Bonnie and Ruth expect to put this together this weekend, so reminders on assignments were given. Most people received in today's mail the schedule of fall walks.

**Newton's Harvest Fair:** It was agreed that it was worth the effort to put up our display booth again at this city event, scheduled for the Newton Centre Green on Sunday, October 15 (rain date 22nd). Nick and Roger will move and set it up (hoping for less wind than at the May City Hall event!). Bill, Lawrence, Kathy, Mary Herring and perhaps Alan volunteered to help man it.

**Commonwealth Ave. Task Force II:** Jean and AnnaMarie will continue to attend meetings (next 9-21) of this citizen group looking at long range design plans of plantings, edgings etc. for this 5 mile east-west roadway.

Phase I of this group was to partially reject the proposals in a federal grant focusing on intersections and the carriage road. Jean solicited ideas now...and later...and the following suggestions were made: There should be provisions for biking and jogging, perhaps with a painted stripe on the carriage road. Linkage with the Brookline end should be considered especially to facilitate biking longer stretches. Trees should be planted far enough from the road edge to anticipate their mature size. Species native to the area and/or proven disease and salt resistant should be chosen by consulting with an arborist. Recommendations will be needed on curbing versus letting the grass grow to the pavement and whether the appearance should be formal or informal, uniform or varied along the way.

**Ordway Park clean-up:** We agreed to gather at 9:00 on Saturday, October 21 at "our" park under Lawrence's direction to cut brush and sprouting trees, tie them in bundles and place for trash collection. This will be put in the newsletter...rain or shine.

**Edmands park clean-up:** Having no coordinator we set the idea aside for the present.

**Conservator's "Visit Your Parks" Map:** With copies in hand we reviewed the necessary revisions for updating this valuable guide. It should include "pathways" in the name, noting the Aqueduct and Charles River Pathway. Roger has already reviewed it with Helen Heyn, but volunteers were solicited to further check with the city for corrections, confirmations.

We questioned the inclusion of Bemis Dam (path no longer cleared) and Crystal Lake. The differences of scales might be more clearly noted. The following assignments were made:

- 2 - Auburndale Park - Jean
- 6 - Webster Conservation Area - Lawrence and Richard Primack
- 7-8 Novitiate (Winchester St. Recreation Area) - Peter Kastner
- 9 - Kennard Conservation Area - Fran
- 10 - Commonwealth Golf Course - Katy Brigham
- 13-14-15 - Oak Hill, Nahanton & Saw Mill Brook - Bill Shaevel

16-17 - Hemlock Gorge, Cordingly Footbridge and Charles River Pathway (parts)  
Bart Hague  
the Aqueduct - Nick Yannoni  
Ordway Park - Lawrence Kaplan.

**Announcements:** Notices from other groups, included the Bulloughs Pond clean-up on Sunday, November 5 (dredging will be done when the library is near completion). Mass. Audubon watershed conference is November 11, and we can pay someone's registration to attend. Newton Hazardous waste collection is September 23, and the Elmbank Reservation and Hemlock Gorge brochure indicates resumption of MDC-led walks there. We noted the good publicity given to the opening of Nahanton Park.

Next Meeting: Conservators will continue to meet on the first Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be on October 3 at the Seasholes.

Fran Seasholes, secretary

### **October 1989**

Newton Conservators  
Board of Directors Meeting  
October 3, 1989  
At Fran Seasholes'

**Present:** Jean Husher (presiding), Cathy Brigham, Bonnie Carter, AnnaMaria Abernathy, Mary Herring, Fran Seasholes, Ruth Nussbaum, Liz Cody, Peter Kastner, (later Fiora Houghteling)

**September Newsletter.** There was praise and appreciation expressed for the excellent Newsletter.

**Minutes:** The September 12 Board minutes were ACCEPTED as printed.

**Treasurer's Report:** There being no questions the printed treasurer's report was put on file for later auditing.

**Letter from Louise Bruyn:** Jean shared a proposal received from this community activist to bring together more than a dozen environmentally related groups in Newton to act on a city-wide basis on matters influencing global warming etc. It would set goals to be achieved between 1990 and 2000...**a green decade**, and serve as a model for other cities in what can be achieved by inspiring individuals to adopt environmentally appropriate behaviors. We agreed that such an umbrella organization has potential, and Jean will attend an organizing meeting tomorrow.



**Remodeled cards:** Slight modifications were suggested in the membership renewal/acknowledgement card/letter that Ginny Taplin has suggested. Peter's artist sister will be asked to revise our logo with more contemporary typeface and strengthened design features, while keeping the general concept of the city map.

**Strengthening our membership:** There was a wide-ranging discussion about this organization, its goals and procedures, including the following points.

The Newsletter should note that Board meetings are open, provided a number to be called to check on date and location. We currently have no on-going committees that draw in non-Board members. We should set time aside to evaluate our organizational structure and reflect on long-range goals, perhaps in a ten-year frame. Specific examples are looking at the city budget carefully, taking a look at improvements in city landscaping, expanding the stewardship of specific parks in landscaping, expanding the stewardship of specific parks in the "Friends of \_\_\_\_" idea, creating a resource book of "The Green Pages," considering whether fund raising is more effective done privately or working on elected people to address the use of public money, examining the Newton Parks Department with suggested forestry improvements.

In the past the Conservators have been effective in working toward acquisitions and fighting specific development with the goal of good open spaces. It was suggested that one way to draw current members into this evaluation process would be to put some well framed questions in the next newsletter and ask for responses, work on those, and bring to the spring annual meeting a proposed plan for the year 2000. We agreed to use the November Board meeting (or December) for furthering these thoughts, and that Peter will ask a professional management facilitator who Peter knows to lead our discussion to avoid floundering in a set of ideas.

**Harvest Fair:** Coverage was arranged for our display.

**Commonwealth Ave. Task Force:** In the current phase of this group three committees have been formed: carriage road, landscaping and aesthetics, and traffic and hardware. AnnaMaria and Jean attend, and Liz Cody and Jack Sullivan have expressed interest.

**Ordway Park Clean-up:** Lawrence will coordinate the work on Saturday, October 21.

**Redesigning the Parks Map:** In reviewing our checks on various parks there was a common theme of signs being inadequate. We agreed to write a letter to the Parks and Recreating Department with all of our recommendations together, when our survey is done.

**Hazardous Waste Collection:** There were apparently long waiting lines again at the September 23 collection. We discussed proposed improvements and models used in other places.

**Fall Walks:** Peter had 10-11 people on a beautiful day for the 6 1/2 mile Ware's Cove walk. Jean is scheduled for Cutler Park and was asked to do the old Center Street Cemetery sometimes.

**Conservation Commission:** AnnaMaria reported that Echo Bridge is to be cleaned, that the MBTA weed control on their right-of-way varies with areas, and that some abutters are disturbed not to be notified ahead of the spraying. In Brookline apparently this right-of-way is cut by hand, but Helen Heyn says that the Cons. Comm. marks no-spraying areas and these have been adhered to by the MBTA in the past.

The MWRA is checking on the amount of water in their aquifers (including a well water check in Cutler Park) for possible future use. There are 15 aquifers along the Charles River and there are questions of who regulates these. Golf courses are looking into tapping into this water because of the rising cost of public water.

**Environmental Science Program:** A thank-you letter indicated that three students had received partial scholarships last summer. We VOTED unanimously to send now our \$500 donation, which will serve them as seed money and be applied to scholarships in 1990.

Fran Seasholes, Secretary

### **November, 1989**

Newton Conservators  
Board of Directors Meeting  
November 7, 1989  
At Bonnie Carter's home  
177 Homer Street, Newton Centre, MA

**Present:** Jean Husher (presiding), Bonnie Carter, Peter Kastner, Lawrence Kaplan, AnnaMaria Abernathy, Fiora Houghteling, Bill Leitch, Ruth Nussbaum, Bart Hague; and Doug Sherman, guest.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the October 3rd meeting were ACCEPTED as written with no additions or corrections.

**Treasurer's Report:** There being no questions, the printed report presented by the Treasurer, Lawrence Kaplan, was placed on file for later auditing.

**Membership:** Bill Leitch reported on the state of the Conservators' membership. 234 persons have paid dues for 1989 including 33 sustaining members (with an additional few yet to be recorded), and 5 have paid for a 1990 membership. Four members of the Board (not including the members from the Board of Aldermen) have not yet paid dues for 1989. The Conservators mailing list totals 488; 73 (15%) are non-paying members of the Board of Aldermen, and representatives of appropriate city departments,

commissions, boards, and committees. 181 did not renew their membership for 1989. Bill Leitch agreed to write a letter urging them to do so before the end of the year. Jean Husher will take this to the printer; Bonnie Carter and Ruth Nussbaum agreed to help fold, stuff and lick. It was also decided that 2000 dues envelopes with the new membership rates would be printed so that they will be ready to send out soon after the new year. Ruth Nussbaum agreed to arrange for the printing.

**Friends of Nahanton Park:** Peter Kastner reported that Cay Morrison had written a letter of resignation to the Friends Board of Directors. He thought that the Conservators might like to suggest a replacement for Cay. The Board felt that the Conservators' views were well represented there by Peter Kastner, Bill Shaevel and former board member Susan Stone.

**Facilitator for Board Meeting:** Peter Kastner reported that the facilitator, Deborah Tosti, whom he had asked to help direct the discussion on future directions for the Conservators, was unable to come because of other commitments. She would, however, like to meet with two or three people before the next board meeting to learn what the Conservators are about and why its future directions are under discussion. Jean and Peter are willing to do this, Peter will make the arrangements.

**Fall Walks Series Report:** Lawrence Kaplan reported that the Aqueduct Walk led by Nick Yannoni, which took about 3 hours, was enjoyed by all who participated. Peter Kastner felt that 10 was a good-sized group for his walk in the Lakes District of the Charles River. He would not want a large group for this walk for safety reasons. Jean Husher said that about 15 attended the Cutler Park walk, a comfortable number to talk to and lead. Carol Stapleton and other walk leaders do not like to collect money for walks on behalf of Community Schools.

Jean Husher said that the Community Schools' fall catalog was sent out too late to be of much use, although all the walks were specially scheduled for October. The publicity in the catalog for the spring walks was very good. Jean also pointed out that the catalog raised the charge for the walks to \$1.50 per person, a raise not at all cleared with her. It was MOVED and SECONDED that the Conservators not participate as a member of Community Schools hereafter, because the Conservators prefer the walks be given free of charge as a service. It was suggested that the Conservators could place a paid ad in the spring catalog.

**Harvest Fair:** The Conservators' booth was located on about the same site as a year ago, a good central location where many people passed by, often stopping to look and questions. Many purchased maps and geology booklets and took copies of the fall Newsletter, which resulted in some new memberships later.

**Ordway Park Clean-Up:** This was done entirely by Lawrence Kaplan. We applauded his hard work, but admit that there was a shameful response by Board members to his request for help that Saturday morning. Reminders must be mailed out for future clean-ups, and it is hoped the response will be MUCH better!

**Commonwealth Avenue Task Force II Report:** At its last full meeting, the Task Force was divided into three sub-groups, each to look at the avenue from a different standpoint in order to begin to set future guidelines. The groups were: landscaping, traffic and safety, and the carriage road.

Reporting for the landscaping group, AnnaMaria emphasized the importance of the vision of a tree-lined boulevard with overhanging arching branches. Needed to achieve this would be plans drawn up by a landscape architect or similar professional firm. This could serve as a master plan as well as for fund-raising. Existing large trees should remain even if close to the roadway. Also suggested was a water line to serve maintenance of plantings and for fountains. Recommended were sloped granite curbing, benches and low plantings at intervals. Utility lines should be put underground.

Bill Leitch, reporting for the carriage road group, said that trial closings, especially around Grant Avenue, should be made. Stop signs could be effectively used to control speed. The current use of the carriage road for parking by City Hall while the new library is under construction has changed the traffic flow in that area. One real benefit has been that cars can no longer cross the intersection diagonally at Walnut Street.

Jean Husher said that the traffic and safety group looked at the avenue only with those matters in mind. It was felt that trees close to the roadway were both good and bad for safety: they are easily hit, especially in slippery weather; but, on the other hand, they are a visible hazard, tending to make drivers wary. It was generally felt that new trees should be planted well inboard from the road. Post-type traffic lights were adequate at most intersections. Some intersections should be narrowed for better traffic control, especially at Walnut Street at the southwest corner. The group recommended granite sloped curbing along both sides to protect the grassed areas and provide better storm drainage while remaining reasonably unobtrusive.

**Map of Newton's Parks Review Project.** Several additional park reviews were turned in. It was noted that much of the written material in the brochure needed updating and correcting.

**The Green Decade - Newton/Model City Coalition.** Jean reported on the initial meeting of this new organization, just in the formation stages. The idea is to form a coalition of representatives of local organizations now supporting a variety of environmental programs plus other interested persons to conduct a campaign over the next decade to improve greatly the environmentally-sound use of resources in Newton with the aim of becoming a model city for other communities to emulate. It was MOVED and VOTED that the Conservators join this new coalition.

**Newton Conservators: Assesment and Long-Range Planning Discussion — I.** In discussing what the Newton Conservators is or should be, it was noted that the age of the members tends to be older, and there is therefore a need to reach younger citizens

through education, distribution of a new map of the parks, development of nature trails and bicycle paths, etc.

It was pointed out that our focus is the protection of open space and we should do this through: education, following the permit process for developers, guarding the ambiance of Commonwealth Avenue and other park-like roads, fostering an understanding of wetlands protection, pushing for the development of "vest pocket" parks, encouraging the use of conservation restrictions, and supporting the maintenance of buffer lands between commercial and residential development through the use of such restrictions. For expansion of our environmental education, the Conservators do now and should continue to: support the Environmental Science Program, conduct walks in Newton's parks and conservation lands, publish the Newsletter regularly to keep people informed, sponsor forums on land use and environmental topics, work with other environmental groups, and monitor the city's land use policies. We should make more effort to work with teachers for curriculum development concerning the importance of our natural environment and increase our supplement to the schools.

The Conservators need to look at the state laws regarding the expansion of educational and health institutions (such as the hospital and Boston College) and lobby for one which offers the community better protection from their uncontrolled expansion.

It was suggested that the Conservators design a 4 to 6-week course on environmental issues to offer through Community Schools or Adult Education.

Since transportation has a lot to do with land use, the Conservators have decided to sponsor with the League of Women Voters a public forum on public transportation. Similarly, other such forums could be developed by working with groups concerned with solid waste and hazardous waste disposal and recycling.

Study groups on a variety of issues could be formed involving both board members and members at large.

Choice articles from the Newsletter could be also published in the Graphic or TAB.

Further discussion on re-energizing the Conservators will take place at the next meeting. The meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 5 at 7:45 p.m. at Jean Husher's home.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jean Husher, Secretary pro tem  
(with assistance of notes taken by  
AnnaMaria Abernathy and Bonnie Carter

**December 1989**

Newton Conservators  
December 5, 1989  
at Jean Husher's home

**Present:** Jean Husher, presiding, Bill Jones, AnnaMarie Abernathy, Bart Hague, Roger Feinstein, Fiora Houghteling, Fran Seasholes, Peter Kastner, Lawrence Kaplan, Bill Shaevel and guests Peggy McLellan, Fred Salzman, Doug Sherman.

**Minutes:** Minutes of November 7 were corrected as follows: page 2 third line from bottom delete "concentrate of this" and substitute "do this." Fourth paragraph on page 3 delete "could" and substitute "have decided to." The minutes were then APPROVED.

**Treasurer's Report:** Lawrence Kaplan distributed his report, which indicated no major changes from last month. He requested notice of any outstanding bills and will prepare a budget for the January meeting. People appreciate the helpful format, which includes "disbursements to date."

**Stone Institute:** President Peggy McLellan and board member Fred Salzman of the Stone Institute in Newton Upper Falls distributed helpful materials and discussed their desire for help with income-producing plans for 2.02 acres of woods on the back of their property, which would save it as open space and give them desperately needed money. Newton Planning Department has appointed an advisory committee which has seven months (until the end of February 1990) to make proposals. They are not interested in building up the front of the property (lawn) but are looking at different development options. Neither the MDC or Land Bank Bill are sources of conservation funds. They were invited to return to our January 9 meeting to continue the discussion.

**Membership:** Bill Leitch and Jean Husher have worked on the master list and sent letters to members who have not renewed this year.

**Green Decade in Newton:** The statement of purpose was read, and some felt it was not focused enough, had "too wide a brush" and saw all problems as a crisis. There is, however, no reservation about our joining this new coalition of Newton conservation-related groups. AnnaMarie and Jean served on a subcommittee creating this statement.

**New England Governors' Conference on Tourism and Land Conservation** in New England: Bart Hague attended (with EPA and Conservators hats on) and reported, particularly on the preservation of community character as a tourist attraction...Stockbridge vs. North Conway with different zoning protections. It applies to Newton in the example of protecting the Commonwealth Ave. green belt.

**Conservation Commission meeting:** AnnaMarie noted that the Oak Grove (Winchester Street, CJ land) land is still not secured by ordinance, Protection of Newton's grade changes (slopes) is needed. City land on Cragie Terrace, Newtonville, is on the Aldermanic docket related to building a two family house there.

**Winter Happening:** It was agreed to repeat this recreational outing at Ware's Cove, Auburndale, where skating and cross country skiing will be offered (with some refreshments) on Saturday, February 10.

**Winter Newsletter:** Articles are due a week before the late January target for publication. Bill Jones will write about the dump, Roger Feinstein about the Green Pages, Doug Sherman about the Hemlock Gorge, Peggy McLellan about Stone Institute and Jean Husher about Winter Happening.

**Transportation Forum:** AnnaMarie noted that we will be co-sponsoring such in March with the League of Women Voters. In the Parking vs. Public Transit debate we would like focus on walking, biking, MBTA and what makes short bus "legs" feasible.

**Newton Conservators: Assessment of Past Performance and Long Range Planning** ...Discussion, Part 2. Professional facilitator Debbie Tosti (colleague of Peter Kastner's) led us in a continuing discussion, noting the importance of stepping back to look at where an organization is going. Through various exercises we worked on a mission statement and compared it with the current statement. Questionnaire to complete at home and return to her by the next meeting were distributed and some will go to a sampling of the general membership.

**Mission Statement:** To protect a suburban environment and maintain its natural characteristics, geological and biotic, and minimize the adverse impact of development.

Fran Seasholes, secretary

### **January 1990**

Newton Conservators  
Board of Directors Meeting at Kaplan's  
January 9, 1990

**Present:** Jean Husher (presiding), Lawrence Kaplan (host), Catherine Brigham, Mary Herring, Peter Kastner, Deborah Howard, Bill Leitch, AnnaMarie Abernathy, Fran Seasholes, Bart Hague, Alan Cody, Roger Feinstein, Bill Jones and visitors Bertram Eliot, Jm Wright and Doug Sherman.

**Minutes:** The minutes of December 5, 1989 were APPROVED with the addition of the mission statement, which was agreed upon at the end of the assessment discussion. It reads: To protect a suburban environment and maintain its natural characteristics, geological and biotic, and minimize the adverse impact of development.

**Continuing assessment:** Debra Tosti is reviewing our questionnaire responses and suggested that we set a meeting, with the continuation of our assessment being the only

agenda item. We will meet on Tuesday, January 23 at 7:45 at the Husher's to work on our long-range goals.

**Treasurer's Report:** Lawrence Kaplan distributed prepared materials. The report of January 9, 1990 compared the disbursements of 1989 with the allocated amounts and the 1989 receipts with what is projected for 1990. Because of the increase in dues charged to the members and increased interest from Treasury notes, an increase of receipts of \$2494 is projected.

A proposed 1990 budget was presented and discussed and then VOTED, with increases to \$500 over that suggested amounts for Program and Forums. The amount budgeted for Newsletter leaves the possibility of increasing from 3 to 4 issues. The reprinting of the Newton map will be handled outside the budget. As the only local environmental group with an endowment, we agreed that it is appropriate to contribute to related, local groups and projects from our budget but did not establish a percentage guideline for this.

**Membership:** Bill Leitch reported that our mailing list is 496, which is a paid membership of 456 plus free memberships to Alderpersons and press. This reflects a 5% increase over 1988. It was identified toward the end of the year that 180 people had not renewed in the last 3 years so that letters were sent to them. Of these, 36 responded, 3 at the \$100 patron level. Bill wrote some observations about membership and included some of this in his assessment questionnaire. New printed envelopes for membership dues have been printed and will be sent with the next Newsletter.

**Environmental Lobby:** It was AFFIRMED that we want to contribute regularly to the Massachusetts Environmental Lobby (working on state legislation) and authorized the Treasurer to send in the amount sent previously, even if we missed 1989.

**Newsletter:** Co-editor Ruth Nussbaum asked for articles in the next few days because work will be done this weekend.

**Maps of Newton Parks:** A committee consisting of Jean Husher, Roger Feinstein and Lawrence Kaplan will put together the material that has been gathered for updating this guide and prepare it for the printer.

**Nominating Committee:** This year's committee will have two former members, Bill Leitch and Lawrence Kaplan, and a new member Alan Cody who will convene the group. Their work should be finished in April so that the list can go out with Annual Meeting invitations.

**Annual Meeting:** It was agreed to repeat the format of the last 2 years by choosing a Tuesday (or Wednesday if necessary) in early May at Andover Newton Theological School. Despite an increase in price, about 80 came last year, 10 less than 1988.

Mary Herring agreed to work with either Fiora Houghteling or Fran Seasholes on making the arrangements. The group suggested nine different speakers (or organizations) and it



was agreed that an emphasis on open space would be appropriate, its acquisition and strategies in light of the availability of little public money. From this list we rank ordered our choices, and Jean will make the contacts.

**Winter Happening:** We will have a flyer (Jean) in the Newsletter for our February 10 gathering at Auburndale Park. Fran will bring cider and donuts; if appropriate we'll encourage cross-country skiing and lead a walk.

**Spring Walks:** Since we are uncomfortable asking for money with our walks we will not use the Community School listing again, and we are not sure that buying an ad in their program is effective but may do so. We will use the free publicity of WNTN and the Tab and Graphic calendars.

**Conservation Committee Meeting:** Alan Cody apologized for missing two of three. Roger will attend the one this week.

**Green Decade in Newton:** Fran reported on meetings of this coalition of local environmentally concerned activists. Those interested in helping make April 22nd's Earth Day celebration a success can go to an organizing meeting on January 22, and those interested in hearing Rep. David Cohen talk about legislation and being involved in taskforce work can go to the February 14 meeting.

**Transportation Forum:** AnnaMaria reported that the League of Women Voters/Conservators-sponsored meeting will probably be on March 27, tying in with Earth Day focus. She solicited ideas for panelists and a focus. There is a concern that the various public bodies concerned with transportation do not adequately communicate with each other and this format will address that, especially in the question period.

Gene Kennedy leaving: It was noted that he is leaving his city conservation position and a letter of appreciation from the Conservators would be appropriate.

**Deer Park:** There were differences of opinion on whether the potential budget cuts necessitating eliminating the deer was good or bad.

**"Crystal Lake is our Gem Association":** Guest Sophie Inbar, who initiated this organization in August 1988 to extend the swimming season at Crystal Lake, talked about organizing to protect and enhance this unique natural resource. Different constituencies have been brought together cooperatively, and she sought ideas from the group on organizing and tapping various outside resources for education and preservation. It was not seen as appropriate for the Conservators to donate money toward their start-up expenses.

Fran Seasholes, Secretary

## February 1990

### Notes on the Meeting of the Board of Directors Meeting February 6, 1990

**Present** were: Jean Husher, president; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Bonnie Carter, and Roger Feinstein; and Douglas Sherman, of Newton Upper Falls. Since this **did not constitute a quorum** as set by the by-laws, the meeting was informal and limited to discussion.

Ruth Nussbaum called in advance of this meeting to say that she would like the secretary's report for the January meeting to be corrected to state that she was present.

The **treasurer**, Lawrence Kaplan, could not be at the meeting because he has a class to teach on Tuesday evenings this semester, but copies of his report for the past month were distributed for review. No questions concerning it were raised.

**Winter Happening** - Final plans were made for this February 10th event (which did not happen because of all-day rain). AnnaMaria Abernathy agreed to bring several gallons of apple cider; Jean Husher to bring 5 dozen donuts/donut holes, cups and napkins. She also said she would make a big sign to post there for the afternoon, announcing that this was a Conservators' event and all were invited to participate.

**Transportation Forum** - This will be sponsored together by the Conservators, League of Women Voters of Newton, and the Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce. It will take place on the evening of March 27 at the First Baptist Church, Newton Centre. There will be a panel of four: Thomas Glynn, head of MBTA; Ray LaMotte, Newton Traffic Commission; a traffic consultant and an environmentalist. The moderator will probably be from the Chamber of Commerce.

**Annual Meeting** - Tuesday, May 15th - Plans are well along for a satisfying Annual Meeting. John DeVillars, State Secretary of Environmental Affairs, has agreed to be the **speaker** for the evening. Mary Herring has completed arrangements with Andover-Newton Theological School to hold the dinner meeting in Noyes Hall at a fee of \$175, down from \$250 we paid last year. This ensures that the cost/person will not need to go up from last year's \$17, and may even be reduced. Quick Copy has agreed to print the invitations and agenda/program in green at no extra charge.

It was suggested that Cay Morrison be named the **environmentalist-of-the-year** for her outstanding and persistent efforts to establish Nahanton Park; or Barbara Herson in recognition of her many years of work on the Household Hazardous Waste Committee. The final choice will be made at the next meeting if there is a quorum. Also needed to be established then is an **Audit Committee** of 3 to audit the yearly financial statements.

**Spring Walks** - Several possibilities were suggested for this traditional walk series:

Kennard Park and Conservation Area  
Charles River Pathway

Edmands Park - Bonnie Carter, May 6th  
Webster Deer Park (for a last look at the deer)  
Aqueduct Walk

Perhaps one of these could also be for the Mother's Day Bird Walk, May 13th.

**Leaf Composting Problems** - reported by Roger Feinstein - Last year, this project went smoothly with few complaints from neighbors because the total project was smaller (house owners' leaves from only a small part of Newton plus leaves collected by city sweepers). In addition, the weather was fairly dry and warm, so that the piles of leaves, shaken out of the plastic bags, could be turned over from time to time by city workers.

This year, however, the amount of leaves collected from house owner tripled, and more were allowed to be dumped by gardeners. The plastic bags were never emptied because of unusually rainy weather, which then turned very cold early in December, freezing great piles of plastic bags of wet leaves. (Normally, city street workers have little to do at this time of year and so could empty the bags and turn over the leaves, but the whole got frozen before they had a chance.) Consequently, "bad" bacteria had a chance to multiply in and under the piles during the January thaw, creating the terrible odor the neighbors were justified to complain about.

**Earth Day** - Plans are still being formulated. President Jean Husher had been asked whether the Conservators wanted to have a representative sit on a forum panel on that day at Newton North High School with the proposed topic (title not yet formalized): "Looking at the 1990s: Changing/Evolving Our Environmental Perspectives". The few members present thought we should agree to this.

The meeting closed.

Reported by Jean Husher, President

### **March 1990**

Newton Conservators, Inc.  
Board of Directors Meeting at Hushers'  
March 6, 1990

**Present:** Jean Husher, presiding, Bill Leitch, Ruth Nussbaum, Peter Kastner, Roger Feinstein, Bonnie Carter, Fran Seasholes, Bill Jones, Bart Hague and members Burton Eliot, Doug Sherman and Jim Wright.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the January 9 Board meeting were ACCEPTED with the addition of Ruth Nussbaum in attendance, by unanimous vote. The minutes of the non-official meeting of February 6 were also ACCEPTED as printed.

**Treasury:** Lawrence Kaplan's printed report was distributed and reviewed. There was a question as to why the costs of the January Newsletter did not appear. It was ACCEPTED by vote.

**By-law changes:** As a result of the vote at the 1989 Annual Meeting Article VI, Section 2 needs to be changes in peoples' copies of the Newton Conservators by-laws as previously revised in May 1982. Section 2 now reads:

The membership fee for an individual member shall be ten dollars (\$10.00); for a Family Membership fifteen dollars (\$15.00); for a Sustaining Member twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) and for a Patron one hundred collars \$100.00.

**Annual Meeting:** Mass. Secretary of Environmental Affairs, John DeVillars has agreed to be our speaker. There was a unanimous VOTE to have **two Environmentalists of the Year** this year, with different descriptive designations: Carol (Cay) Morrison, who stayed and steered the course over many years in the pursuit of Nahanton Park; and Barbara Herson, who has been active in the city's recycling and waste disposal efforts and is heading the up-coming Earth Day Celebrations. Jean will write to them and prepare news releases, Peter will word the recognition and write a Newsletter article on Cay. Doug will word the recognition and Bonnie will write a biographical piece on Barbara for the Newsletter.

**Spring Walks:** Bonnie will lead the Edmand Park walk on May 6, Nick Yannoni the Charles River Pathway on May 20, Peter will lead the Aqueduct walk on June 3 and the dates of May 13 and April 29 remain open, one probably Carol Stapleton at the Webster Deer Park.

**Solar House Tour:** The Green Decade Coalition suggested that we sponsor a tour of Newton solar installations in houses, but there has been nobody coming forth to work on such a project.

**Conservators' Self Assessment:** Our consultant Debbie Tosti noted that the group was divided on the issue of broadening our focus to include other environmental issues or mainly stay with open space concerns in Newton. Our past emphasis has been on acquiring and preserving open space, urging the city in areas of parks, conservation restrictions, zoning. There is much unfinished agenda in the open space problem, with pressures to develop, and there is a need to continue being visible in testimony, pressing for initiatives and advocacy in dealing with the green environment.

Two examples of pending developments where we could try to have an impact are the LaSell and Stone Institute lands. Our concerns also should encompass waste disposal problems, an example of a now popular subject related to the environment. We can have an impact on neighborhood land use issues and would dilute our impact by being too broad-based.

Because there is not much new land in Newton (except golf course) we should focus some on betterment of the open land we now have (example of needed help with mowing). We should give some priority to the preservation of natural open space in contrast to landscaped, which is a common focus in developers' site plans. We need to get Conservators' members to commit themselves to regularly attend Conservation Commission and Aldermanic committees and perhaps neighborhood group meetings to keep abreast of events in Newton.

The discussion ended with unanimous agreement VOTE on the following statement of the direction of the organization: The Newton Conservators' primary concern is for the acquisition, defense and improvement of open space in Newton. A committee composed of Peter, Roger, Bart and Doug will work on a proposed plan to make this goal more specific in the next year, to present to the annual meeting.

**Conservation Commission request:** It appears that private funds may be the only source this spring for necessary grass mowing in certain parks etc., because the C.C.'s request for supplementary money was turned down. The proposed 1991 budget may also be insufficient, in which case there was consensus that we should protest the proposed cuts through letters and attending the budget hearings. The sense of the meeting was that we not commit Conservators money (\$500 for Dolan Park was suggested) at this time but review the situation at a later meeting, after expressing the view that such service should be covered by taxes.

**Over-ride of Mass. Proposition 2-1/2:** We heard a list of the projected eliminations from Newton's city budget because of the limitation on city taxing ability and reductions in state local aid payments. There was a unanimous VOTE on the following statement which is to be sent to the local newspapers and put in our Newsletter: The Newton Conservators support the over-ride of Proposition 2 1/2.

**Transportation Forum:** There was agreement that when we mail a flyer to our membership next week about the March 27 forum we will fold in with it a letter urging support of the Earth Day Walk from its co-chairs Doug Sherman and Susan Mirsky.

**Membership:** Bill Leitch reported that there are 483 names on the list, 128 of which have paid membership dues in 1990 and 93 are given free to city officials etc. We are ahead of last year.

**Lasell property:** Jean and Peter provided information for a discussion on the proposed life care center serving 270 people that Lasell College wants on about 13 low, relatively unattractive acres of the 50 acres they own. This is a non-educational use and would require many special permits and legal complications over road access. The college needs the money, has agreed to preserve the pond and give the public access to it, and to provide 17 units to low income people.

Recognizing that it is a tight space, a socially useful project, and that there might be compromises, Peter proposed to the college president and others that if the development

is permitted restrictions might be placed on other parts of their land. Another opinion is that the Conservators should hold off support, recognizing that once lost to development the land will never again be open. There was no consensus, there is time to continue following this, and Peter will write an article for the Newsletter.

**Newsletter:** Articles are due by March 30 so that the Newsletter can be mailed about April 12. We reviewed who would be responsible for writing what articles.

**Next Board Meeting:** Tuesday, April 3 at Ruth Nussbaum's.

Frances C. Seasholes, secretary

### **April 1990**

Newton Conservators, Inc.  
Board of Directors Meeting at Nussbaum's  
April 3, 1990

**Present:** Jean Husher (presiding), Alan Cody, Bill Leitch, Nick Yannoni, Ruth Nussbaum, Fran Seasholes, Mary Herring, Fiora Houghteling, Bonnie Carter, AnnaMaria Abernathy, Peter Kastner, and guest Doug Sherman.

**Handouts:** Jean provided copies of the **revised by-laws** for all and some copies of a map and guide to the Kennard Conservation Area (1987) provided by Helen Heyn, and a few copies of the Charles River Pathway Plan (1975).

**Minutes** of the March 6, 1990 meeting: Correction on page 3; the heading Membership should be changed to "Mailing List" to reflect the fact that copies of the newsletter are sent to some (city officials) who have not joined the organization. With this correction there was a VOTE TO ACCEPT the minutes.

**Treasurer's Report:** Lawrence Kaplan prepared the statement, which was distributed and reviewed. It will be put on file.

**Nominating Committee Report:** Alan Cody presented the list of officers and Board members for 1990-1992 as prepared by him, Bill Leitch, Lawrence Kaplan and Fran Seasholes. This will be reported in the Newsletter and invitations to the annual meeting for an official vote at the latter. He expressed appreciation to President Jean Husher, who will be retiring from that position, and to Board members AnnaMaria and Mary, who will be leaving. Clarification of Verne Vance's decision to remain on the Board is pending.

**Announcements:** Among the events of other organizations is the 8th annual Run of the Charles...canoe races of 6, 9 and more miles on April 29. Conservators will not organize a crew but were urged to help.

**Annual Meeting:** Barbara Herson and Cay Morrison were both pleased to be chosen Environmentalists of the Year, and John DeVillars has confirmed his willingness to speak on a topic of what individuals can do for the environment. They, a family member and Debbie Tosti will be our guests (free).

**Newsletter:** The next issue is being prepared now, and it was suggested that we investigate the availability of senior citizen collators for the stapling and labeling.

**Spring Walks:** The flyer is being printed now.

**Park Clean-up:** We agreed, after considering other options, to see whether the Newton Highlands Neighborhood Association (Julie Smith) would combine forces again as we did last year at Ruth Nussbaum's initiation. Doug and Fiora agreed to help Ruth with organizing/publicizing. We agreed on Saturday, May 5, ten o'clock to noon with a bring-your-own-picnic to follow there in **Cold Springs Park**. Jean will design a flyer, putting the walk schedule on one side. Fiora will see about the donation of large paper bags to avoid plastic ones, and the city will be asked about providing more barrels and picking up the collected debris. The rain date would be a week later, May 12.

**Ad hoc Planning Group:** A group headed by Peter presented the Board with an impressive 6-part outline of **aims and goals for 1990-91** for the Conservators. This was carefully reviewed and a few additions and revisions made. There was agreement that future meetings be in a public building, trying the new facility at Nahanton Park. An underlying theme was to tap into the broader Conservators membership for participation, and this effort will include acknowledging in the Newsletter the good response to a sign-up in the last one and providing more at the Annual Meeting. There was a VOTE to present this revised outline to the Annual Meeting for acceptance.

**Earth Day:** We will have a table/booth at the April 22 event in Newton North High School, using slide pictures of Newton parks, either with an automatic projector (Peter) or a TV-like projector which may be available (Jean). We will also offer newsletters, membership forms and a person to talk about the organization. Peter agreed to help this effort with use of AnnaMaria's table and some "coverage" by Alan and Fran. Jean will be one of 3 panelists on an afternoon forum. (She has had other recent opportunities on radio etc. to discuss the organization).

**Springfest:** We agreed to plan our May 20 participation at the next meeting.

**Commonwealth Avenue Task Force II Report:** Jean, who has served on this city committee, said that this advisory report is finished but not yet given to the Mayor for his approval. It provides guidelines for any future treatment of this linear green-space in Newton, and since there is no current proposal for work, the task force is now dissolved. Alan suggested, and others agreed, that we propose that the Aldermen act in a way to require that the work of this group be considered when related work is proposed.

**Lasell property:** Peter and AnnaMaria will be at the April 24 public hearing before the Aldermanic Land Use Committee and will report to us.

**Membership:** Bill reported that 48 renewals have been received since the last meeting.

**Transportation Forum:** Those who had helped plan this successful event with the League of Women Voters and Chamber of Commerce had some reservations as to the moderating and limited audience participation, but others were enthusiastic about the quality of the presenters and good attendance.

**Conservation Commission:** We will have representatives at this week's important meeting, which will particularly focus on the **status of their operating budget** and the disproportionate (10%) cut projected for next year for the maintenance of parks, etc. Restrictions on the Kennard money prevent its use elsewhere.

We agreed that a strongly worded letter should be sent to the appropriate city people questioning the priorities, which give inadequate money to the Conservation Commission for spring mowing. Further, it was agreed that Alan would research the procedures used in creating the Commission, specifically whether it is appropriate for all the commissioners to be appointed by the Mayor and whether there is provision for turnover. Observations were made about the separation of roles in city government between employees and advocates and those with oversight functions.

**Recycling Initiative Campaign:** Jean read the statement that a group is soliciting our endorsement of, but since there was insufficient time to discuss this it was tabled until the next meeting.

**Donation to Newton's new library:** Lawrence has suggested that we use some of our funds to create some environmentally related aspect in the new building. We will consider this at the next meeting.

**Newton Pride Tree Sale:** Volunteers are sought to help man several days of selling trees to be planted throughout the city.

**Override Vote on Proposition 2-1/2:** It was clarified that after the March meeting all those present were polled on the question of officially endorsing/working with the local coalition, which wants to be able to raise taxes to keep services at a higher level than currently projected. There was agreement that we would support "Yes for Newton". This VOTE, which accompanied last meeting's discussion, will be relayed to Jane Rutan of that group; and volunteers to help telephone before the May 22 vote were solicited. One dissent felt that the spending side of the city budget should be more closely monitored.

Frances Seasholes, Secretary

**May 1990**



Board of Directors Meeting  
May 1, 1990 at Hushers'

**Present:** Jean Husher, presiding, Katherine Brigham, Mary Herring, Roger Feinstein, Bart Hague, AnnaMaria Abernathy, Fiora Houghteling, Fran Seasholes, Bill Leitch, Ruth Nussbaum, and members Burton Eliot and Doug Sherman.

**Minutes:** The minutes of April 3, 1990 were corrected to add Bart Hague in attendance and in the last item, Proposition 2 1/2 Override, the first sentence should read: "It was clarified that after the March meeting all those present were polled on the question of officially endorsing/working with the local coalition which wants to be able to raise city taxes to keep reductions in services less than currently projected."

**Treasurer's Report:** Lawrence Kaplan's prepared report was reviewed, noting that the expenses of the forum we shared with the LWV and the April Newsletter apparently aren't reflected. Fiora explained the New Israel project, to which we donated in her late husband's name. The report will be filed.

**Audit:** Bill and Fiora reported doing this with Lawrence's records. We discovered that the by-laws call for three people to do it, so Roger will go and briefly review them also. Lucy Kaplan has offered to open envelopes and record as they arrive. They noted that too large an amount is in the checking account and that documentation of expenses will be aided by a small new form Bill has created.

**Annual Meeting:** Jean reviewed the program outline, noting that Peter will present the program for next year. Mary Herring reported on the dinner arrangements. We will ask Nick to provide background music again, certificates have been ordered and will be framed, there was notice of it in today's TAB newspaper, and we will invite and pay for the dinners of a reporter from the Tab and the Graphic. The head table will have officers, guest speaker, environmentalists of the year and their spouses.

**Membership:** Bill reported that there are 497 on the mailing list, 406 of whom are paid members and 91 are public relations and governmentally related.

**Commonwealth Avenue Taskforce II:** Jean reported that the Mayor has accepted the recommendations and plans to put them in effect. Twenty copies will be available at the annual meeting.

**Springfest:** Roger and Dick Husher will move our display for the May 20 event at City Hall. Those volunteering to man this display include Jean, Roger, Doug and Fran (Ruth?). We recommend adding some material related to the override vote two days later.

**Cold Springs Playground Clean-up:** Ruth Nussbaum is again organizing this event for Saturday, May 5 (raindate 12th). Those volunteering included Jean, Bonnie, Fiora, Doug,

John Bliss, and Alex Nussbaum. We purchased for \$58.40 one hundred large, double paper bags as safer and biodegradable (in contrast to the usual plastic garbage bags). Refunds from returnable bottles and cans will be used to pay part of the cost of refreshments.

**Other clean-ups:** It was noted that John Bliss and Boston College students (who were doing it as community service because of disciplinary action) did a major clean-up at Edmands Park. The Bulloughs Pond Association, Friends of Hemlock Gorge and the Chestnut Hill Garden Club have also done clean-ups.

**Conservator Walks:** They have been noted in the Tab and Graphic and on WNTN. Helen Heyn did the first with about 10 people who walked on the Kennard land in a drizzle.

**Lasell Later Life Community:** AnnaMaria reported that she and others attended the Land Use Committee and Planning Board session where people spoke pro and con about this 198 unit development, called Glenridge on Lasell College land. In discussion it was agreed that Jean would send a letter to the Aldermen for their May 8 working session, noting that we don't like to lose open space and that we would like to see a comprehensive plan for all of the college's land. There was consensus that we should at least convey to them the idea that "we're watching," even though it is too early to take a strong position and there are persuasive arguments on both sides.

**Dr. Joel Andrews' proposed walking route:** This Newton resident was our guest to present his idea that the 14 Newton villages outline a walking route for people to better appreciate their natural and historical surroundings. He would have this help link different neighborhoods and extend some of the environmental awareness generated at Earth Day. He proposes that city money not be used in creating and distributing such a map-pamphlet-guidebook. He noted that the many guides and such already available are not known, particularly to the 12% of the city that changes each year. The group found his idea intriguing and approved his giving a 30 second presentation on it at the annual meeting.

**Recycling Initiative Campaign:** Jean read the resolution of this group, which wants to put a question on the 1990 Massachusetts ballot, and there was a VOTE TO ENDORSE it. It deals with having packaging regulations in place by 1996.

**Override of 2-1/2:** AnnaMaria distributed a LWV correction of information being distributed by the people against this Newton ballot question. "Dear Friends" cards were distributed for members' use.

**Gift to Library from Conservators:** Lawrence was not present to promote this idea and there is no urgency so it can be addressed later, but there was a feeling that a collection of environmental books might be appropriate.

**Newton Conservators' Records:** Ginny Taplin has been storing a 30-year collection of materials from our organization, and it is proposed that we turn these over to the Jackson Homestead for preservation, which will include organizing, cataloging and storage. We would retain the last six years' material for current reference. There was an affirmative VOTE.

**Earthday loan:** For our very successful display table at Earthday we borrowed the Jackson Homestead automatic projector for slides. It was agreed that we would send them a \$25 donation in appreciation.

**Auburndale Park concern:** AnnaMaria noted that without a public hearing a private group, the Little league baseball teams, had been permitted to create dug-outs in two city parks, complete with advertising inside. This was seen as an example of inadequate process in city government and she will write letters to the Mayor and newspapers.

**Jean Husher as President:** This was the last Conservators meeting for Jean to chair as President, and appreciation was expressed for her leadership in the last two years. It was suggested that she do a course on Newton next year.

Fran Seasholes, Secretary

### **Annual Meeting**

Newton Conservators, Inc.  
May 15, 1990

The 28th annual meeting of the Newton Conservators was called to order by President Jean Husher in Noyes Hall of Andover Newton Theological School, after an opening reception and dinner attended by 91 people.

Roger Feinstein presented the Treasurer's Report for Lawrence Kaplan, noting that 388 checks had been received and 45 written, and there had been an 8% increase in assets, largely because Ordway Funds had been invested in US Treasury notes and dues were increased. Total receipts for 1989 were \$9272 and disbursements were \$4845. Fiora Houghteling, who had served with Roger Feinstein and William Leitch as an Audit Committee, reported that they had found the financial records clear, well kept and in balance. There was a VOTE TO ACCEPT this report.

The President's Annual Report covered the following matters: Jean Husher represented the Conservators on the citizen task force reviewing and making proposals to the Mayor on the linear park that is Commonwealth Avenue. Copies of the report were available. Our second year of cleaning up Cold Springs Park helped stimulate other groups to follow. The fall and spring walks were again offered to the community. Nahanton Park was dedicated on June 25, 1989. The Conservators had displays and literature at Harvest Fair, Springfest and Earth Day. We joined Newton's Green Decade Coalition, formed this year. We gave support for the 23rd year to the Environmental Science Program,

offering summer learning to youths. We monitored the use of open spaces and parks and proposed developments in the city. We had a very effective Newsletter and increased our membership. With the help of a professional management person, we did a self-assessment and proposed long-range goals. Debbie Costi, who could not be present, was recognized for this volunteer leadership with a certificate of appreciation.

The membership gave President Jean Husher a standing ovation in thanks for her effective leadership.

Alan Cody, speaking for the Nominating Committee of himself, Bill Leitch, Fran Seasholes and Lawrence Kaplan presented the list of officers and directors. There was a VOTE to approve this slate, and special recognition was given to two long-time members who were voluntarily leaving the Board, AnnaMaria Abernathy and Mary Herring.

As new business, Dr. Joel Anderson asked for support for his proposal to create a 14-village trail connecting parks and other places of interest in Newton, to encourage walking and biking.

Jean Husher handed the President's gavel to Peter Kastner, who reported on the recommendations of the current Board on goals, aims and objectives for the next year. The primary focus continues to be the preservation and improvement of open spaces in Newton. There are small parcels needing protection. We want to involve more people actively in the organization and will let the meetings, held in a regular public space (instead of homes), be better known, plus having four public meetings a year. The education focus will continue, including a look at the public school curriculum in the environmental science area. Oversight of city departments and aldermanic activities and funding is proposed, along with a review of state policies. It is proposed that an Open Space Committee be re-established to look at small parcels, that we increase membership by 25%, that the high level of the Newsletter be continued, that work continue on revising the map of parks, and that we cooperate with other groups with similar goals and objectives. There was a VOTE to accept these goals and objectives.

Environmentalist of the Year awards were presented to Barbara Herson for her work in recycling and Earth Day and to Carol Morrison for her long work on what became Nahanton Park.

The speaker of the evening was Massachusetts Secretary of Environmental Affairs John P. DeVillars, whose topic was "The Environment and the Individual's Responsibility for It."

Frances C. Seasholes, Secretary