

Board of Directors, 1990 - 1991

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Treasurer: Lawrence Kaplan
Past President: Jean Husher

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Michael Malec	George Mansfield
Ruth Nussbaum	Richard Primack
William Shaevel	Douglas Sherman
Vern Vance	Nicholas Yannoni

June 1990

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors meeting
June 14, 1990

Present: Peter Kastner, presiding, Ruth Nussbaum, Bonnie Carter, Burton Elliott, Roger Feinstein, Alan Cody, Jean Husher, Fran Seasholes, Mike Clark, member/guest.

Meetings: Peter announced that permission had been given to use this new building at Nahanton Park for our monthly evening meetings. With publicity this may encourage non-Board members to attend. We agreed to schedule meetings (except next month which will be July 11) on the first Wednesday of the month.

Minutes: The Board meeting minutes of May 1 and the Annual Meeting minutes of May 15, 1990 were voted ACCEPTED (with the spelling correction of Elliott).

Treasurer: Laurence Kaplan being away there was no treasurer's reporting.

Springfest: Our booth/display was located by the Commonwealth Ave. sidewalk this year.

Spring Walks: Three walks got rained out. Bonnie had 24 at the Edmands Park (Cabot Woods) Walk and Peter about 10 for the Aqueduct Walk. There was discussion of the Edmands Park history, current neglect and unsecured status of the park.

Cold Spring Park Clean-up: Ruth reported that about 35 people came to the rain date to clean out Cold Spring Park. These two years of clean-up leave the park in good condition and a different locale should be chosen next time.

Lasell Later Life Community: Peter led the discussion and distributed maps of the Auburndale area where Lasell College proposes locating a nonprofit life care complex which would include a large 5 story brick building on what is now open land. The letter we sent noted our preference to scale down the size, make restrictions on other aspects of that specific site and assure some conservation of other parts of their campus. The proposal identified college buildings that are on the historic register and noted the green space on Woodland Road and other developable spots they own.

A question was raised of requesting the college to compensate for loss of this open space by linking with preserving some other space in the city. Jean left our Conservators meeting early enough to attend a concurrent Conservation Commission meeting that was to discuss this matter. There was a VOTE to have Peter prepare a statement for the public hearing next week, asking that the Aldermen carefully examine the size of the development, which is very dense, and ask for a master plan of Lasell's property that would include some kind of letter of agreement/guarantees to the community that there would be community input process.

Auburndale Park construction: At the Little League baseball fields in both Auburndale and Albemarle Parks concrete dugouts and wooden perimeter fences with advertising have been constructed with private funds. We understand that there was no city review process of this since city money wasn't involved, but it was approved by Park Commissioner Russell Halloran. Our concerns focus on two issues: there should be a process for a public hearing or design board review when such things are proposed for public land and there should be a policy on allowing advertising or large displays on public land. Donor plaques of a more discrete sort are used in some other situations. Bonnie will discuss this with Aldermen Sandra Schick of the Public Facilities Committee and then Burton will speak to Mr. Halloran for more information.

Goals and Committees: To implement the plans approved at the Annual Meeting Peter will be defining what committees will be established, send a list and return envelope with the next Board minutes, and inform/solicit sign-ups in the fall newsletter.

600 Beacon Street: Mr. Lee, who failed to win approval for developing his site with cluster homes, has approached Helen Heyn and Peter about preserving for public access the rock ledges, which are used by geology classes and rock climbers. Peter will explore the options for him with the City, possibly linking to the adjacent Webster Woods.

Newton Recycling: We support the expanded program of household collections, which will begin on July 1 with plastic crates bought by the state from deposit bottle refund money.

Newton Trails: Burton reported on an enthusiastic organizing meeting, attended by many public officials called by Dr. Joel Andrews, who envisions walking routes to link Newton's villages, utilizing public lands as much as possible. The city apparently has some money that could be used to purchase easements from homeowners, etc., to link the route continuously. The city also will help this effort with things like printing costs. Currently the out-of-date conservators map is the only one of its kind, with the City Engineering Department revising its map. Dr. Andrews has asked us to consider assisting or "taking on" this project. We were not very interested in having them use us temporarily for a tax-free donation conduit, and Peter's experience with Nahanton Park cautioned against their getting involved in the 501c(3) (IRS nonprofit status). It was suggested they inquire about using the Conservation Commission to handle their funds. Our Conservators map could conceivably include the trail if the timing and scale were coordinated, and we did not feel in a position to take on the responsibility for heading up this effort although members, as individuals, would work with him. Finding volunteers is difficult. Burton will serve as a liaison between them and us. Jean and Peter have recently written a letter to a potential donor about our past work and note the possibility of a trail development. Some trail routes that are likely to be used are already in place, and blazing may be required.

Friends of Crystal Lake: Bonnie and Mike Clark have been attending meetings of this group initiated by Sophie Inbar, which is looking at increased use of this "great pond," which is actually state-owned because of its size. Subgroups are looking at swimming, boating, skating and fishing, primarily concerned with what are seen as current arbitrary restrictions by the City of Newton. The process of developing new boating recommendations to submit to the state was somewhat arbitrary, and some aspects are likely to be struck down. Bonnie and Mike will keep the Conservators, who would like a balance of tranquility and access, informed about these concerns.

Respectfully submitted,
Fran Seasholes, secretary

July 1990

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors meeting
at Nahanton Park
July 11, 1990

Present: Peter Kastner-presiding, Jean Husher, Fran Seasholes, Burton Elliott, Lawrence Kaplan, Doug Sherman, Bonnie Carter, Alan Cody, Bart Hague, Susan Mirsky. Guest Mary Herring.

Minutes: The report of the June 14 meeting was VOTED with the correction that the Treasurer's report was distributed.

Treasurer's Report: Lawrence distributed his report and noted that the Andover Newton bill for our catered dinner had finally been received. We have a Treasury Note coming due at the end of September, and he is likely to roll it over unless advised to do otherwise for our greater advantage.

Lasell Later Life Community: Peter led the discussion, having attended the Land Use hearing where it passed with two dissenting votes and the full Aldermanic Board where it failed, falling four votes short of the 18 (three-quarters) needed. Our carefully worded letter suggesting three conditions went to the Land Use Committee and the developer's attorney Howard Levine. It was agreed that Peter will write another letter (checking it with Jean) to the college, presenting our point of view and letting them know what actions would not get our opposition.

Some want to press them to link this development to other open space in the community. Some noted that by-right as an educational institution they can develop more on their land, and we need to be aware of the problems involved in taking a hard line on their not developing their open spaces. We feel that with the Conservators' mandate to protect open space we should speak firmly of the need for a master plan for their campus, which should set aside areas not to be developed. It is possible that the Aldermen will revote in three weeks.

Goal and Objective Review: At the next meeting Peter will present proposals on internal committees and at this meeting volunteers agreed to monitor these public meetings:

- Conservation Commission - Jean Husher
- Land Use Committee - Doug Sherman (AnnaMaria)
- Zoning and Planning Committee - Jean Husher
- Finance Committee (in budget process) - Peter Kastner
- MDC - Bill Jones & Liz Cody
- State links with Cohen, Shur & Pines - Burton Elliott

In representing the Conservators in such monitoring, the goal is to advocate for positions, not to give direct candidate endorsement, and to educate our membership about the work of these groups.

Fall election: We agreed that we should use our Newsletter and a candidates' night forum to increase awareness of the Conservators and bring issues in our area of concern to public attention. We seek a way for all views to come out by putting the same questions to each candidate. We want candidates to be aware that there is a constituency for certain points of view related to conservation of open space, etc. We will discuss this more at the next meeting, but in the meantime those who would like to suggest environmental questions for the Newton League of Women Voters to use in their fall voter education can submit them through Peter. Doug will explore our working with the

Green Decade Coalition. There was a preference for doing something between September 10 and 14 (before the primary election). Bart will approach the Charles River Watershed people for possible [sic]. If we can pull this off, a flyer to members would go out before the fall newsletter. The planning committee is Doug, Bart, Bonnie and Peter.

600 Beacon Street: Peter spoke with owner, Mr. Lee, who is now offering three house lots for sale (by right) and has asked the City Assessor and Helen Heyn to work on the idea of the city buying an easement for access to the geologically interesting section next to the T tracks.

Conservation Commission: Jean reported that they felt the Lasell buildings were very large, but if the proposal had gone through they would pursue the conservation restrictions.

Newton Trails: Burton went to the second meeting and learned that Leo Levy of the Beautification Committee is expressing an interest in Edmands (Cabot Woods) Park which, as we have noted previously, is not clearly the responsibility of an official Newton body. He will suggest that they contact John Bliss, who organized a clean-up. A related concern is the illegal dumping of landscapers onto city land and whether stronger ordinances and enforcement are needed in this area. Newton Trails has inquired about our waiting to revise the city park map until their trail proposal is farther along. We agreed that we should work at **our map** at our own pace and not wait. Jean will convene the group of herself, Burton, Roger, Lawrence and Bonnie this summer to proceed.

Abelmarle/Auburndale Park constructions: Bonnie spoke to Alderman Sandra Schick of the Public Facilities Committee, and she will meet with a small group to discuss procedures that might be put in place to prevent future abuses like the current baseball equipment. Bonnie will be joined by Doug, Burton, Peter, Anita Capeless and AnnaMaria Abernathy on some late afternoon for this session.

Crystal Lake is Our Gem: Bonnie reported that this group is preparing a questionnaire, that Mike Clarke's efforts have resulted in some limited boat access, and that the swimming season has been extended. Being a "great pond" means state rather than city control over some aspects. The Conservators position is to maintain the general character, the pristine quality, and public access.

Bulloughs Pond: It will be dredged in fiscal 1992, after completion of the library construction. Bart noted that since it is a storm water holding area. the city should be held responsible for maintenance of it.

Commonwealth Avenue/Lexington Street proposal: Peter has spoken to Alderman John Ulin, who is concerned with safety at this intersection and is proposing closing the carriage road and altering parking. Modifications are being made and it is going soon to the Traffic Commission, but Mr. Ulin was not aware of the recommendations in the report of the Commonwealth Avenue Task Force until talking with Peter.

Meeting Place: Permission has been given to meet at the Nahanton Park Nature Center regularly on first Wednesdays of the month, and in order to encourage members and the interested public to attend notice will be sent to the local newspaper calendars. We will assess this plan in January. For security reasons, the city must provide a staff person to open and close for us, and no fee has been set but it was suggested that we might give a donation through the Friends of Nahanton Park. This raised the question of finding a free location and note that 30% of our budget is allocated to outside groups already.

Newsletter: We agreed on an August 20 deadline for materials so that there can be a late September delivery date. Those writing articles: Lasell - Peter, Commonwealth Ave. - Jean, Recycling including the Newton and state initiative petition update - Doug and Susan, Ordway Park - Mary Herring, Newton Trails - Burton, Crystal Lake - Bonnie, Annual meeting - [no name specified].

Ordway Park: Lawrence has looked after this half acre site ,which is under the Conservators' care, for the last 2 1/2 years and is not able to continue. A satisfactory way of monitoring it (mowing, trash pick-up, hiring people for upkeep like pruning) has not yet been worked out. The bank account for the bequest is complicated but is intended for maintenance. One option is to find an interested neighbor who has a landscaper come to their own property regularly and could add on the three times a year mowing and other maintenance required. Bonnie has such a person in mind and will check this.

Respectfully submitted,
Frances C. Seasholes

August, 1990

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
at Nahanton Park
August 1, 1990

Present: Peter Kastner, presiding, Mike Malec, Burton Elliott, Fran Seasholes, Bill Leitch, Lawrence Kaplan, Doug Sherman, Jean Husher, Firoa Houghteling, Bonnie Carter (late) and Susan Mirsky - visitor.

Minutes of July 11, 1990: VOTED TO ACCEPT as distributed.

Treasurer's Report: Lawrence Kaplan distributed and explained items on his report. The final financial statement on the annual meeting shows a profit of \$66.05 including a \$10 donation. The income for memberships so far in 1990 is about \$3200. There was a VOTE TO ACCEPT the report.

Membership: Bill Leitch noted that there are 494 people on the list, 234 have paid for 1990 or beyond, 75 are given free (city officials etc.) and 185 are not up-to-date on dues. There is concern about this low percentage of renewals, and it was agreed to promote this

in the September Newsletter and to have Board members each call 10 people of the 185. Peter and Bill will include lists for each of us with the next minutes. Mailing list labels will be available for the Newsletter by September 1st. Recommendations included a membership committee to work with Bill and having each Board member send a recruitment letter to 10 friends who are not members now.

Lasell Later Life: Peter reported that the project would probably come before the Aldermen on August 13, but no vote changes are anticipated and the time has lapsed for a zoning change. No solid information is available on the college's alternatives or conservation restrictions.

Conservation Commission: Jean said it was a quiet meeting with one new project that we want to be alert to: a request for special permit for 4 houses on **Vine Street** in Oak Hill on wetlands. There will be an August 20 hearing with the Board of Survey. We will wait until it comes before the Conservation Commission with specific plans. Helen Heyn is looking into implementing Mr. Lee's proposal that the city buy the back area of his **600 Beacon Street** land for restricted public access (unadvertised, primarily for geology students).

Commonwealth Ave./Lexington Street Intersection: Bill reported that the Task Force is being reconvened to look at it. Traffic volume checks are now being made, and there is concern about making the section toward Route 128 like a highway rather than the original green design.

Conservators' Fall Walks: The following schedules for Sundays was proposed:

- Sept. 30 Newton's original cemetery at Center and Cotton Streets, led by Thelma Fleishman
- October 14 Kennard Park and Conservation Area led by Helen Heyn
- October 21 Webster Conservation Area led by Richard Primack
- October 28 Charles River Lake area (Auburndale) a 2-3 hour hike to be led by Peter Kastner

It was also noted that the Bullough's Pond clean-up will be on October 28.

Newsletter: Bonnie reviewed the writing assignments. It was suggested that short bios of Board members might personalize the newsletter and make us more approachable to the membership.

Committees:

Finance-Investment Committee: The purpose is to assist Lawrence as our Treasurer related to getting the most appropriate bank accounts and investments. In addition to Lawrence, Alan Cody and Verne Vance were suggested.

Membership Committee: To work with Bill on ways to expand and serve the membership. Fiora and Doug volunteered.

Program Committee: The goal is to offer things of interest/education to the general membership and the public about three times a year. The annual meeting and walks and the forums we have co-sponsored with the League are examples and can be expanded upon with things like trips to parks out of Newton. Burton volunteered and others suggested, with Roger Feinstein chairing, were Deborah Howard, Rodney Barker, Bart Hague and Nick Yannoni.

Open Space Committee: One function of this group might be to survey/inventory the pocket parks of two acres or more (a previous study listed those over 5 acres) and to keep abreast of potential changes. Doug Sherman and Susan Mirsky volunteered and Peter has a list of about 15 people who indicated with their membership dues that they wanted to become more involved and he will contact them.

Other: Jean is heading the ad hoc group working on reissuing the map of parks. The booklet of Newton Geology needs changes and reprinting. Observers for the Zoning and Planning Committee of the Aldermen and the Land Use Committee are needed. Fran and Jean will work on dinner-related preparations for the annual meeting.

Map Revision: Jean has shown our material to Helen Heyn, who has helped note changes such as additional conservation and MDC land since the old map was done. Maps need to be redone before printing, access streets noted, Ordway Park (ours) needs to be kept in for public relations purposes, and the aqueduct as a linear park can be added. Jean needs people willing to search out new information and people familiar with modern reproduction/computer techniques to work with her. The format was worked out in 1981 by "Graphics 3," and we will turn over our assembled material on separate pages to a graphics company for estimates. Suggestions were made to check City Hall for possible money to help with printing and to check with the Radcliff landscaping program to see whether a student would like to undertake the project. The aim would be to finish the work this fall and have it ready for spring distribution.

State Legislature: Burton made contact with the offices of our one Senator and 4 Representatives and in each found a person designated to receive our Newsletter and work with. Our comments to them are welcome; other groups are active in lobbying. One legislator who is in real estate tends to be a stumbling block for environmental proposals. Current legislative projects are in auto emissions, metropolitan water supply, endangered species, permit fees, wetlands, ozone, land, the Citizens for Limited Taxation referendum.

Edmands Park: Burton noted that Leo Levy wants to get new plantings there for study purposes. John Bliss wants to continue his involvement and has a list of needs for the park. Burton and Peter will meet with Leo rather than invite him to our meeting.

Notable Trees in Newton: There is a national project to register old, well sited, interesting old trees. We will ask a woman familiar with this to write for the Newsletter to alert the membership for nominations.

City Forester: It was reported that we still do not have a person in this position and that only three kinds of street trees are currently being planted.

Newton Budget Process: It was suggested that we look carefully at allocations reallocated to environmental concerns, parks etc. and mobilize neighborhood support for more money in these areas.

Candidate Forum: It was the consensus that there was not enough interest/enthusiasm to try a forum either before or after the September Primary election (State offices). The League of Women Voters will be printing questionnaire responses in the Newton Graphic. Peter will try to get a question ("What are the two most important environmental questions?") to key candidates and print the responses in the September Newsletter.

For Next Meeting: We will raise the question of a park at the new library and Mark White's proposal that Alderman not discuss land use/development issues outside meetings at City Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Frances C. Seasholes,
Secretary

September 1990

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
at Nahanton Park
September 5, 1990

Present: Peter Kastner, presiding, Lawrence Kaplan, Michael Malec, Fran Seasholes, Jeremiah Eck, Bill Leitch, Ruth Nussbaum, Bonnie Carter, Roger Feinstein.

Minutes: Minutes of the August 1 meeting were VOTED APPROVED as distributed.

Treasurer's Report: Lawrence Kaplan distributed copies of his September 4 report, which reflected little recent action. He led a discussion on how to handle the Treasury note that comes due soon, and it was VOTED to roll it over with a two year maturity so that it would be in sequence with our others. Copies of his June report were also available.

Membership: Bill Leitch said 6 renewals had arrived in August, so there are now 240 paid memberships. He and Peter will divide the approximately 160 names between Board members, asking them to personally telephone about 10 to inquire about renewing their membership. The next Newsletter will remind people to look at their address labels to determine whether they are paid for this year. Peter expects to prepare a President's

letter in December to the membership, and it was suggested that it suggest people give memberships as gifts and make year-end contributions.

Newsletter: Bonnie and Ruth have the material almost ready to go to the printer and expect it to be mailed out near the end of the month. Some additions were suggested. Doug prepared a letter to the 3 contenders for Susan Shur's seat as State Rep, with 3 meaty questions on their environmental records/positions. There was only one week for their response and one was unable to meet this deadline, but the responses from the other two will be in the newsletter.

President's Report: Peter reported that Vice President Roger Feinstein has agreed to chair a program committee. Peter consulted with Louise Bruyn of the Newton Green Decade about co-sponsoring an **environmental forum for state elected officials/candidates** probably the week of October 22. The Union of Concerned Scientists is having a national focus on CO2 emissions that week, and there was interest in supporting that with a speaker or two and opportunity for those running for office (or their spokesmen) to express themselves. There was general support for this, and some will attend a planning meeting at Louise's on Thursday the 13th. The Newton League of Women Voters is having a cable TV debate, not a conventional candidates' night this fall. The purpose is to remind candidates and the public of key environmental issues, perhaps tying it to the Middle East oil crisis.

Peter has spoken with Attorney Howard Levine, who indicates that he will alert us if **Lasell College** is willing to reconsider its life care proposal by possibly putting some units elsewhere on the campus to reduce density. He learned from Helen Heyn that there is \$22,000 in the city for easements, and James Lee (600 Beacon Street) is considering whether that is acceptable for making the rock ledge area accessible to student groups. The architectural firm hired by the **Stone Institute** to propose alternate uses of their grounds sent us some materials to examine. We will accept their offer to walk on the site (Saturday, September 22, using a phone chain to alert our Board) and to attend our next Board meeting.

Ordway Park: We still do not have a neighbor or other to oversee its upkeep, but we agreed to meet there at the park at 10:00 on Saturday, October 13 with gloves, clippers etc. to do a clean-up.

Fall Walks: September 30 with Thelma Fleishman is confirmed (15-20 people maximum) as is October 14 with Helen Heyn and October 28 with Peter Kastner. October 21 with Richard Primack has not been confirmed. We VOTED to give the Newton Historical Society (which maintains the Cotton Street Cemetery) a \$25 donation after Thelma leads that walk.

Newton Trees: There was discussion around the city's lack of a professional forester and note that old records show that there was one time an expert focused mostly on agriculture, then a focus mostly on streets and wiring, and most recently trees have fallen in with recreational concerns. It appears now that the Mayor and Rec Commissioner, Rus

Halloran, have most authority to authorize tree cutting (as on the new library site) and contract most of the pruning etc. to Laidlaw. The utilities have approval to keep their wires free from tree growth. The Planning Department has a landscape architect. Peter plans to continue pursuing this question of how the city handles its real estate and natural resources.

Construction in city parks: Bonnie and Peter still intend to meet with Alderman Sandra Schick to discuss the need for a process and guidelines for private groups building on public lands. Of concern are two recent baseball dugouts and a wading pool (the latter just installed in the Hawthone Park by Fats Pelligrini and objected to by Inspectional Services Commissioner).

Commonwealth Ave: At the recommendation of the Design Committee new stop signs are being tested. Repaving of the carriage road and other curbing and road maintenance were noted to be part of each year's budget.

Harvest Fair: Conservators will have their display on the Newton Centre green between 12 and 5 on Sunday, October 14. Our material is stored in Ginny Taplin's garage, and the following people think they may be available to help: Roger, Bonnie, Ruth, Mike, Doug. More specific arrangements at next meeting.

Fran Seasholes,
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October 1990

Newton Conservators
Minutes
October 3, 1990
Nahanton Park Nature Center

Present: Roger Feinstein, V.P. and chairing the meeting, Jean Husher, Bonnie Carter, Doug Sherman, Elizabeth Cody, and Burton Elliot; AnnaMarie Abernathy, guest.

Roger Feinstein called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m.

The **minutes** were reviewed and ACCEPTED as written except for the number of paid memberships (2240?). Jean said she would check with Bill Leitch.

Lawrence Kaplan presented an informal **treasurer's report** because he had not yet received the bank statement for the month. During September, there was a \$339 printing expense and \$68 mailing expense for the fall issue of Keeping Current. These were the only significant bills.

Fall Walks - The first of the Fall Walks series took place Sunday, September 30. This was the walk with Thelma Fleishman in Newton's colonial burial ground opposite B.C. Law School on Centre Street. About 20 persons took part in this interesting walk.

Small Grant from Quint Foundation - Jean Husher said that she had received a check for \$250 from the Quint Foundation as a result of having written an article about the old burial ground for Keeping Current. She made a MOTION that the \$250 be sent on to Historic Newton, Inc., the Newton Historical Commission's private non-profit organization through which it seeks grants and holds project funds, the check to be earmarked toward the preservation of the old burial ground. This motion was SECONDED and CARRIED. Jean also made a MOTION that the Conservators take on some maintenance projects in the burial ground. This motion was TABLED for the next meeting.

Harvest Fair, Sunday, October 14 - The Conservators will have its usual display at the fair. Roger Feinstein said that he was willing to help with setting up and taking down the display. Doug Sherman and Liz Cody can help that day, too. Jean said that she has a large number of Geology of Newton booklets on hand and will make sure they arrive at the display. Roger is donating a number of copies of State of the World 1990, published by World Watch Institute, which can be sold for \$10 each.

Candidates Environmental Forum, "Energy for the 90's", Mon., Oct. 22, 7:30 p.m. - This event is jointly sponsored by the Conservators, Green Decade Coalition, Newton Union of Concerned Scientists, and Boston College Dept. of Sociology. It will take place at Barry Auditorium, Boston College Law School. The Green Decade is doing the mailing for all other organizations except Conservators, which is doing its own, but under the Conservators' mailing permit. We will be refunded.

New Proposal for Nursing Home at Stone Institute - Jean Husher, Doug Sherman, Peter Kastner and Bonnie Carter visited the Stone Institute on Sat., Sept. 29, to look at the current building and land, and then to meet with architect Dennis Rieske to review new plans. These were presented to the Board for comment. It was the consensus of the Board that the plans were acceptable on two [sic] conditions:

1. That the conservation land protecting the large front lawn and the woods at the rear of the building also include the lot at the corner of Pettee Street, which Rieske want to reserve for future building.
2. That the Stone Institute agree to reasonable maintenance of the woods and allow limited public access to it.
3. That a sensible use be allowed for the third floor of the proposed building, such as an adult day care center.

A statement presenting these conditions should be written for presentation to the Board of Aldermen and other appropriate City officials.

Frank Barney Conservation Area - Bonnie Carter reported that she located this area across the street from the Elliot Street Fire Station, Upper Falls. It contains about 1.6 acres which include some fine cliffs. There is a public path to follow.

Non-city Construction in City Parks and Playgrounds - specifically, dugouts for Little League fields at several playgrounds that were constructed with private funds and without building permits. This sets a poor precedent. Bonnie Carter has made plans to talk with Alderman Sondra Schick about the matter. It was suggested that she also speak to the Law Department to see if there are already ordinances on the books that are aimed to control this kind of private building on public land.

Tree Identification Project - Burton Elliot reported that this was moving along in lively fashion. The committee is planning to identify and label outstanding and unusual trees in the city. Following some discussion, it was the sense of the Board that there should be two aims in this project: 1) to identify outstanding trees; and 2) plant outstanding trees for future appreciation. Liz Cody volunteered to write a list of recommendations for the care, protection and maintenance of Newton's trees in parks and playgrounds for Leo Levy, chair of the tree identification project, and for Russ Halloran, Commissioner of Parks and Recreation.

Ordway Park Clean-up, Saturday, October 13, at 10 a.m. All members of the Board are urged to take part in tidying up the Conservators' own park. Bring gloves, cutters, pruning shears; wear sturdy boots and long pants. Lawrence Kaplan asked permission to arrange for a student of his who would be willing to do some regular maintenance over the year for a fee. The Board gave him OK.

Conservators/Green Decade Coalition joint meeting, Sat., Oct. 4, at 9 a.m. - to make final plans for the environmental forum. The meeting will be at Louise Bruyn's home, 29 Glenwood Rd., Newton Centre. All are invited to help.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean M. Husher, Sec. pro tem

November 1990

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board Meeting, November 7, 1990

Present: Peter Kastner, presiding, Katherine Brigham, Fiora Houghteling, Nick Yannoni, Roger Feinstein, Lawrence Kaplan, Ruth Nussbaum, Jean Husher, Bill Leitch, Alan Cody, Burton Elliott, Fran Seasholes, Bonnie Carter, Bart Hague, Bill Jones.

Minutes: The minutes of October 3 were corrected in the spelling of Leo Levi's name and "240" in membership, and then VOTED APPROVED as corrected.

Treasurer's Report: Lawrence Kaplan distributed copies of his report and noted that purchase of a new Treasury Note (roll-over) and the expenses of the fall newsletter

show. In 1990 about \$3800 in dues has been collected. It was noted that we pay \$265 for liability insurance, purchased at a savings through the Land Trust. It would cover things like injuries at Ordway Park but not actions of the Directors. When a Finance Committee is activated Lawrence would like the matter of a different kind of checking account explored to save some costs. The report was VOTED as presented.

Membership: Bill Leitch gave a full report, including: in 1990 there are 194 regular members and 45 sustaining members, in 1991 38 regular memberships have been received and 7 sustaining memberships. The total of active members is 285 (stable but not growing) and the mailing list has 357 names. Three new members have joined since Octoberfest and eight current Board members owe dues! The way to check for owing dues is to note the number on the address label. Membership envelopes and reminders will be in the early 1991 Newsletter.

In the discussion about increasing our membership it was suggested that current Board members submit names and addresses of potential members (these would be checked against the current mailing list), and they would receive either a separate mailing or an invitation letter along with the January Newsletter. A brochure explaining the Conservators would be helpful. Those agreeing to work on these ideas for increasing the membership are Peter, Bonnie, and Jean. Doug Sherman offered earlier to telephone members who had not paid in 1990. Last year the phoning brought 30-40 responses to 100 calls. About 100 extra January Newsletters will be printed, bringing the total to 800, since extras are usually made for distribution at the library and at events like the Harvest Fair.

President's Report: Peter noted that the President role brings with it numerous phone calls and a sense of "entitlement" by people in the community seeking resources. He is made more aware of the variety of things going on in the community and of our unique focus on land use issues.

Calls related to the Mass. Ballot question on sustaining taxes promoted a discussion clarifying that the Conservators are an advocacy group that takes positions on individual environmental issues but does not support candidates.

Candidates' Environmental Forum: This October 22 event was attended by 135-150 people, most of the state and national candidates, and was considered a success worth repeating, largely as a way of alerting candidates to this constituency. Peter, Roger and Doug worked for six weeks, along with representatives of the other sponsoring groups to plan the event. Our mailing list was used to help get the notice to people.

Ordway Park: On the designated clean-up day Lawrence worked along in the rain, but subsequently Roger, Bonnie and Ruth did some raking and pulling of saplings but more could well be done. The land and an endowment to maintain it was given to the Conservators, so the suggestion of turning it over to the overburdened city is not appropriate. It was a consensus that we need to find people who will be paid to do the work and recognition that we don't know how groomed/wild we prefer. A Committee of

Fiora, Bonnie, Ruth with Peter and Lawrence should figure out how to handle the responsibility.

Last Fall Walk: Peter led 7 people on a Charles River walk in heavy rain. The group dwindled to 3, one being a man preparing to write about it.

Newton Trees: Peter has been attending meetings and noted an up-coming walk in the woods owned by Andover Newton Theological Seminary in Newton Centre. Mayor Mann has appointed a Tree Commission to identify large old trees in fine condition and to advise on how to care for the city trees and parks. Several Conservators are members...Jean Husher, Liz Cody and Deborah Howard.

City Budget Process: A Committee of Peter, Roger, Alan and Jean will start work on understanding the city's process for deciding what is spent on basic services, especially looking at the Conservation Commission and Parks and Recreation and Public Works budgets. Peter intends to meet with some Aldermen, the Finance Commission and get informed on current land management. Is there appropriate coordination? Using the study process familiar to the League of Women Voters, it is hoped to understand how the city is now functioning in land use areas and offer some ideas on priorities for use of limited resources.

Stone Institute: The Board of Aldermen felt that there were not significant changes in the new plans for building a nursing home adjacent to the current elderly residence, so the plans were withdrawn. They may be resubmitted later, but now the plan is to build two two-family houses by right on Pettee Street to get some needed money. The Newton Upper Falls community seems to resist the nursing home (which would have included some conservation restrictions) as the lesser of the developmental possibilities, and the Aldermen don't seem to want it either.

Construction in City Parks: Bonnie has invited Alderman Sandy Schick and former Board member AnnaMarie Abernathy to attend the December meeting to discuss this issue.

Conservation Commission: Bill will attend tomorrow's meeting. We need to be alert to a proposal to add parking spaces to congested Newton Centre by adding 50 to 80 spaces near the fire station on aqueduct land owned by the city (or MWRA). In this connection it was noted that the city does not have a professional traffic planner.

Board Openings: Peter noted that additional nominations are in order to have the full number on the Board of Directors. Suggestions made included Susan Mirsky who has attended some meetings, checking those who indicated on their membership forms that they wanted to be more active and having youth members, possibly from each high school or the Environmental Science program.

Winter Happening: Jean suggested that we decide at the December meeting whether we want to schedule an event such as the one that was scheduled last year at Nahanton Park but got rained out.

New Library Trees: Burton noted that Martin Ovin and others had protested the removal of some key trees in this construction...an issue that became politicized. It is understood that 150 trees are to be planted around the building by a landscaper, and the ones installed today are larger than they might have been because of depressed prices. Helen Heyn and others raised the question of whether the choice of trees was made in relation to road salts and whether the contract specifies who is responsible for maintaining them. Peter will write a letter to the Mayor alerting him to our concern and asking for clarification on the process used in the landscape questions.

Edmands Park: Burton will ask Martin Ovin of the Friends of Edmands Park to meet with us in January, to be aware of each group's concerns and activities.

Map Revision: Jean has been working on it and will pass her material to Peter by the end of November.

Committee Assignments: Not all of the projected committees have been set up so that the work of the organization can be more evenly distributed.

Conservators' Coordinating Role: There are a variety of local organizations with related interests (trees, land use etc.), and it was suggested that we might have a role in coordinating, centralizing this in some way. We already have some overlapping memberships on our Board to serve as liaisons but perhaps there should be more. The Green Decade Coalition does this somewhat already. Ruth suggested putting articles on different groups in our Newsletter. Burton suggested we discuss this further in January.

Next Newsletter: The next publication will be out at the end of January, the deadline for articles will be January 9, and assignments will be made at the December meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Frances Seasholes

December 1990

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board Meeting
December 5, 1990

Present: Peter Kastner, Roger Feinstein, Elizabeth Cody, Bonnie Carter, Douglas Sherman, Lawrence Kaplan.

Minutes: A **quorum not being present** the minutes were not adopted. However, Douglas Sherman wanted the November minutes to indicate that he did not volunteer to telephone delinquent members to have their dues brought up to date.

Membership: Bill Leitch has provided an updated status listing of members to facilitate sending out a follow up letter to delinquent members. Peter Kastner and Douglas Sherman agreed to work together to send out membership solicitations, based upon lists provided by Directors. Various strategies to increase membership were reviewed, including the possibility of giving 6 month gift memberships.

Treasurer's Report: Lawrence Kaplan distributed copies of the proposed 1991 budget, which caused a lengthy discussion about the nature and purpose of the various accounts.

It was generally agreed that the organization should attempt to pay for current expenses with membership dues, and that the Endowment, including related interest, should be devoted to maintain Ordway Park or for major long term projects. Liz Cody proposed using the funds in the Open Space Acquisition Fund to sponsor an annual elementary school garden competition.

Map Project: It was felt that the map project was a major effort of the Newton Conservators, and that funds should be allocated to finish the project based upon the work of Jean Husher. In the past the map had been sent to all the households in the city, and it was assumed that corporate sponsorship might be developed to underwrite the final production work and mailing. It was noted that this is the most visible project that we undertake, and that a new map with updated park listing and the aqueduct walk would be a great asset.

Great Trees & City Tree Survey: Bonnie Carte discussed Leo Levy's goal to start in the spring indexing all city trees in order to establish a city wide data base of trees. Liz Cody as a member of the Tree Commission reported that the Tree Commission is being organized to give recommendations to the city on how to maintain trees. The current work of the commission is devoted towards public safety work, taking out dead trees, and will expand its scope in the future. Liz Cody also reported that Marthia Mitchell has taken an interest in the planting of additional trees in the city.

Newsletter: The due date for the January newsletter is January 9th, and the following articles were assigned:

- Great Trees - E. Cody to ask Marthia Mitchell
- Lasell College - Peter Kastner
- Map Project - Peter Kastner/Jean Husher
- Construction in City Parks - Bonnie Carter
- Spring Forum - Peter Kastner

Spring Forum: As we move toward the year 2000 it was felt that the Conservators could provide a useful service by sponsoring a Spring Forum that would be devoted towards helping the city form an open space plan for the year 2000. The general feeling was that

the City of Newton largely reflected a Victorian vision of the city, tempered by the impact of the railroad, trolley and highway - and that the city now has to think about what is the future and how does open space figure into the image. The forum is to take place in the spring, and we are to solicit speakers in the January newsletter.

Nuts & Bolts: Lawrence Kaplan indicated that we had filed the report to the Secretary of State Office and State Treasurer. He was to review his records to ensure that the reports and checks had been sent out.

Committees: Nominations to be the chairman of the open space committee were solicited, and recommendations are requested.

[No signature]

January 1991

The Board of Directors Meeting scheduled for January 9, 1991 at 7:45 p.m. at Lower Falls Community Center (Hamilton School) was cancelled due to snow.

February 1991

Newton Conservators Board Meeting
February 6, 1991, 7:45 p.m.
Lower Falls Community Center (Hamilton School)
545 Grove St., Newton Upper Falls

Present: Peter Kastner, presiding, Roger Feinstein, Ruth Nussbaum, Jean Husher, Katherine Brigham, Lawrence Kaplan, Fran Seasholes, Bill Leitch, Burton Elliott, Douglas Sherman, Susan Mirsky.

Minutes: Minutes of the December 5, 1990 meeting were distributed and corrected to indicate that we will solicit speakers for a 30th anniversary forum in the spring about Newton's open spaces. These minutes were ACCEPTED. Due to snow the January meeting was cancelled.

Newton's Open Space Future: Discussion focused on what changes in the look of the city can be anticipated and what safeguards or utilization of the natural aspects need to be looked at. It is thought that we lack a vision now, in contrast to an earlier Victorian image of Newton as the garden city. The Conservators can continue to monitor and promote the city's green spaces, but this idea needs further clarifying, updating. Docia Scott developed a slide show of the city's history a few years ago, which may be useful to look at again now. Local attitudes toward creating and using space for parks, highways, playgrounds etc. have ebbed and flowed along with national patterns and priorities.

Peter will work with a subcommittee of Roger and Elliott to articulate a direction and decide how to express it...probably a forum or annual meeting program. The suggestion was made to co-sponsor an event with the Newton Historical Society.

Treasurer's Report: Lawrence distributed his report, indicating we're a bit ahead of where we were last year due to interest received. He led the discussion on the proposed 1991 budget (Prepared for the 12-5-90 meeting). He was asked to prepare a more detailed report which would include such items as the annual dinner meeting which approximately pays for itself. There was a VOTE to ACCEPT the report and budget. The budget goal is to fund our expenses from dues. It is understood that we will be discussing and adjusting budget items as needed during the year.

Map Project: Jean Husher has almost finished the preparation of needed revisions on the map of city parks etc. and we discussed how to fund the design (layout), printing and distribution. Ten years ago the first version was mailed to all households free and since then sold at city fairs for 25 cents. It is seen as our best service to the community and wide distribution is valuable. Elliott will do some initial exploration of approximate costs, and it was agreed to investigate outside sources of funding and further discuss the policy of using some of our treasury. (No item in the budget at this point).

Newsletter: The Winter Newsletter was distributed recently and the editors praised again for a good job. The question of using recycled paper to print on was raised and the difficulties noted, but there was a consensus that there are philosophical advantages to being environmentally responsible by using only white paper (which can be recycled) instead of colored.

Membership: Bill reported that there area about 485 on the mailing list including 73 political/press "freebies." Renewal memberships are not coming in well. It was clarified that we do not have a reduced senior citizen rate.

City Budget: In the proposed city budget submitted by the Mayor it is proposed that the Conservation Commission be cut by 43%. It is part of the Planning Department, given a low priority, and consequently a disproportionate cut to other aspects of that Department (see Newsletter article). Although we are the obvious group to advocate for full or equitable funding for the Conservation Commission, there were mixed responses to pressing this issue in the current economic climate with significant cuts in revenues. One of its major functions is to protect wetlands. The Parks Department is also reduced. Peter's letter to the Mayor on this received an unsatisfactory response.

Construction in Parks: In December Peter, Bonnie, Burton and AnnaMaria Abernathy met with Alderman Sondra Schick, who was sympathetic to the issue of uncontrolled additions to public parks. She is seeking communities with model legislation in this area and will get in touch with us when she finds some.

Winter Happening: We are too far into this mild winter to arrange and publicize an event (which was cancelled last year due to lack of snow) and agreed to omit it this year.

Nominating Committee: Bill Leitch will convene a committee with Ruth Nussbaum and Doug Sherman.

Annual Meeting: Fran Seasholes will chair a group, including Jean Husher, to make arrangements for our annual meeting (There was no discussion on projected place and date.)

Newton as All American City: Mayor Mann is again seeking nomination of Newton based on our effective citizen involvement and has asked Peter to write up a piece about Nahanton Park. It was noted that this eventually successful effort was opposed earlier by the Mayor!

Audit Committee: Roger and Fiora are asked to review the Treasurer's books before the annual meeting.

Spring Walks: Roger was asked to coordinate these plans. Jean proposed her doing Cutler Park and Doug proposed a walk in the Wells Avenue area beside the River.

Environmentalist of the Year: Suggestions are solicited. Leo Levy was proposed.

Spring Clean-up: Bonnie will be asked about our working on Ordway Park, possibly having a picnic with it.

Neighborhood Network: Susan Mirsky noted that the YMCA will be proposing a new project for the open space next to their building, and the Newton Corner Neighborhood Association (Bob Gerst Pres.) is alert to its potential impact. She noted that the Conservators is the community group associated with protecting open spaces and requested that we watch this. Peter asked that they call him to discuss it.

Stone Institute: They plan to submit a new plan to the Aldermen in March involving a nursing home, private houses and conservation restrictions. We need an updating, and Doug will check with them and we may take a position at the March Conservators meeting.

Lasell College: Peter talked with President Dewitt, who reiterated that since the previous proposal failed they would be putting the land to an educational use, which wouldn't need Aldermanic approval. The Japanese school that was being considered has chosen a Lexington location.

Hemlock Gorge: A group has formed and invites our participation. but we noted that their primary focus is the preservation of the stone building there (actually in Wellesley) rather than the natural environment.

Meeting at Hamilton Community Center: By using this room for our Board meetings we save the city the cost of hiring a person to open [it] and heating, since it is open for community use of the gym. We agreed that it was satisfactory (this was our first use of it) but possibly small when we have good attendance.

Respectfully submitted,
Fran Seasholes, Secretary

March 1991

Newton Conservators Board Meeting
Lower Falls(Hamilton) Community Center
March 6th, 1991

Present: Peter Kastner, presiding; Roger Feinstein, note taking, Bonnie Carter, Elizabeth Cody, Jeremiah Eck, Bart Hague, Fiora Houghteling, Jean Husher, William Jones, Lawrence Kaplan, William Leitch, Ruth Nussbaum, Douglas Sherman, Nicholas Yannoni.

Minutes: Minutes of the meeting on February 6, 1991 were distributed and APPROVED.

Treasurer's Report: Lawrence Kaplan distributed the Treasurer's Report, which was ACCEPTED. Lawrence discussed the high bank fees for checks written for the Conservators' account. He requested authority to maintain a petty cash fund in the amount of \$100.00 per year. A MOTION to establish this fund was made and APPROVED.

Membership Report: William Leitch - The Membership Report showing a total mailing list of 485 (of which 78 are for public officials, city agencies, the press, and others). Unrenewed memberships for 1988 were 53, and for 1989 were 64. Peter Kastner suggested that board members in attendance each take two pages from the mailing list for telephone solicitation of the unrenewed members. Pages were distributed.

Newsletter: Ruth Nussbaum raised a suggestion of Ann Dorfman for a joint newsletter for all conservation organizations in Newton. A joint newsletter could more effectively maintain membership interest, and inform the wider citizenry of Newton on questions of open space, recycling, conservation, etc. Peter Kastner cautioned that this venture might cause the several groups to become indistinguishable, and the Conservators' point of view could be neglected. Peter suggested that we investigate the possibility of a common mailing list or data base. Peter will ask Burton Elliott of our board to contact Ann Dorfman on this matter.

Map Project: Jean Husher reported that the map was finished and ready to go to the designer. The map will have more detail than our earlier map, including several "walks." Mention was made that "corporate" sponsorship should be sought to cover the cost of mailing the map. For printing we will look into the possibility of using the print shops of Newton North HS and Minuteman Voc Ed School. (Newton South HS also has a print shop.)

Conservation Commission: It was reported that the mayor has restored the parks maintenance budget, but that he is eliminating one staff line for a planner, which will be the planner now servicing the Conservation Commission. Board members were encouraged to attend a hearing on the planning budget (chaired by Rodney Barker) at City Hall, on Wednesday, March 13th to request that one planning line be assigned to staff the Conservation Commission. Mention was made of Helen Heyn's resignation (because of ill health) as Secretary of the Commission. Peter Kastner will send a letter to the press urging the restoration of the planning staff position to serve the Conservation Commission. Ruth Nussbaum brought up the need for volunteers for the Commission's "adopt-a-trail" program.

Annual Meeting: Jean Husher reported that the Annual Meeting and Dinner can/will be held at Andover-Newton in mid-May, depending on the availability of the dining hall and our proposed speaker, Representative David Cohen. Information for the mailing must be in the hands of Fran Seasholes by April 7th, so that it can get to the printer by April 13, and be mailed out by April 20th.

Awards for 1991: Conservationist of the Year: Leo Levy.
Certificate of Appreciation: Helen Heyn

Newsletter Assignments (for April issue):

Lasell "dorm" proposal: Peter Kastner
Stone Institute: Douglas Sherman
Commonwealth at Lexington intersection: Peter Kastner
Awards: Jean Husher, Elizabeth Cody
Speaker: (David Cohen) Peter Kastner
City Budget: [no name given]
History of the Conservators: Jean Husher
Annual dinner: Frances Seasholes
Spring walks: Peter Kastner, Roger Feinstein
Membership: William Leitch

Spring walks: scheduled for Sundays at 2:00 PM in May and June:

May 5: Kennard Conservation Area - Toni Wallace (965-4431)
12: (no walk to be held because of Springfest)
19: Nahanton Park - Paula Chasan (965-2752)
26: Houghton Garden - Fiora Houghteling
Jun 2: Cutler Park (Needham) - Jean Husher
9: Aqueduct - Nick Yannoni

Stone Institute: Doug Sherman reported on committee's visit to the Institute to review submission of new plans for a nursing home, which provide for the preservation of 80% of the woods and all of the front lawn (except for minor driveway widenings). If the Institute's proposal is approved by the Aldermen, the Institute will drop all plans for the building of dwellings on the property (including the building site at its northwest corner) and provide a preservation easement on its property. Letters will be sent to the Institute indicating Conservators' support for its application for permissive use, both from Peter Kastner, as President, and from three board members living near the Institute (Feinstein, Hague, and Sherman).

Lasell College: Peter Kastner reported his conversation with officials of the college. The proposed development in the esker area has been scaled down. Plans now envision a "dormitory" where elderly residents will take "courses" in the style of an "elderhostel." The building will also be used for geriatric training for traditional college students. The college intends to seek a "declaratory judgment" from the Land Court to facilitate its plans.

Peter will write a letter (to the Board of Aldermen) to the effect that this project should not be considered an "educational venture," but should be treated as a residential special permit land use.

Commonwealth Avenue/Lexington Street Intersection: Alderman John Umina has proposed a redesign of this dangerous intersection. William Leitch will review this question at the forthcoming meeting of the Commonwealth Avenue Task Force, Tuesday March 12th. Jeremiah Eck voiced opposition to small-scale changes that detract from the consistency of design of all of Commonwealth Avenue, which the Conservators see as a linear park.

Ordway Park - Spring Clean-up: Scheduled for Saturday, April 27th at 10:00 AM. All Conservators are urged to participate and bring lopping shears and heavy gloves.

New business: Liz Cody presented a request from the Zervas School for help in landscaping and planting of shrubs and trees on the school grounds. A photograph showed the extreme lack of planting on the grounds of this otherwise handsome school building. The school's plan is to involve students in the proposed landscaping program. Discussion brought up the lack of adequate landscaping around most Newton schools. Also noted was the location of Zervas School, adjacent to Cold Spring Park. Peter Kastner will address a reply to Zervas indicating Conservators' support for this project. He will also try to determine what an appropriate gift would be, in view of the fact that such a gift would set a precedent for the other schools of the city:

Adjournment: 10:30 PM.

[No signature]

April 1991

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting - April 3, 1991
Lower Falls Community Center (Hamilton School)

Present: Peter Kastner, presiding, Fiora Houghteling, Burton Elliott, Roger Feinstein, Bill Leitch, Bill Jones, Lawrence Kaplan, Fran Seasholes, Richard Sherman, Bart Hague, Bonnie Carter and visitor Susan Mirsky.

Minutes: After correcting the spelling for LaSell College and Leo Levi the minutes of the March 6, 1991 meeting were ACCEPTED by vote.

Treasurer's Report: Lawrence Kaplan distributed the current printed report and it was VOTED with the removal of the heading "To be approved".

Membership: Bill Leitch reported 485 members, 47 plus several envelopes received at the meeting renewals prompted by the telephone campaign. Only 145 are up-to-date with

1991 dues. It has been our practice to carry people on the mailing list for a year after their dues have lapsed.

Some Board members were uncomfortable calling to ask for renewals, and some people thought the call was asking for past, not just 1991 dues. We do not have a "rolling" membership renewal but are all for a calendar year. We VOTED on a clarified policy that those joining after October 1 will have their dues credited to the next year. We also VOTED that the membership return envelopes be mailed (assuming no technical problems related to the Post Office) with the last and first issues of the Newsletter. The envelopes should be stamped with the calendar year they apply to. We will not review the dues structure (Patrons, life members etc.) now.

Map Project: The material has been ready to pass on to a professional for design work but that contact and research on funding have not moved. Peter plans to do this.

Conservation Commission: Bart Hague was one of the Conservators who met recently with Aldermen around the proposed city budget cut being taken disproportionately from the staffing for the Conservation Commission. He and others argued that a specific amount of time per week and a clarifying job description support the idea of a member of the Planning Department serve the Conservation Commission. With Helen Heyn's retirement some of the work is falling to Dennis Dittleberg, but it is unclear whether this is an interim system because of money constraints or intended to be permanent. It was effective to have key Conservators there to argue for more attention to this role in the city and to raise statutory questions on the CC's independence from the Planning Department. The Conservators have an on-going role to watchdog the city on environmental issues and open space...being advocates and an environmental conscience. Peter will reproduce the copies of Conservation Commission minutes he receives and send them with our minutes and agenda, so we all can be more familiar with it.

Constructions on City open land: We still await some clarification from Alderman Sondra Schick on regulations related to the Little League baseball dugouts. A similar concern was expressed for the Nynex tower and telephone equipment recently going onto public land at the Waban T station. Peter will draft a letter to the city's legal department raising this as an issue.

Conservators Annual Meeting: Peter reported that State Representative David Cohen, who has an excellent voting record on environmental issues, will be the speaker, focusing on watershed protection. We will give the Environmentalist of the Year award to Leo Levi and special recognition to Helen Heyn. Peter will arrange for calligraphy on framed statements to be given them. Fran reported on the arrangements for the meal in Andover Newton's Noyes Hall on Wednesday, May 15, starting at 6:30. The price this year will be \$17.50, and a schedule for making and mailing the invitations was noted. It was suggested that newsletters be on display and that Barbara Herson or someone she might recommend be asked to do a song or two as she did last year.

Nominating Committee: Bill Leitch reported that so far there are 16 renewals on Board members and they are looking for more new people. Treasurer's position: Lawrence asked to have this time-consuming position split to make it more manageable. Burton Elliott offered to do the end-of-year reconciling, and Peter offered to prepare the 4-page Attorney General's report, leaving Lawrence with the other financial aspects.

Meeting date change: To accommodate a member's regular schedule conflict there was agreement to change from the first to the 4th Wednesday of each month for our meetings. This will start with the June 1991 meeting and probably will be altered for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Promptness of meetings: It was agreed that we will begin Board meetings promptly at 7:45 and when possible, end by 9:30.

Spring Walks: Roger reported that Tony Wallace will lead the Kennard Walk on June 16 rather than in May.

Lasell College development: We will continue to watch the use of the esker land on their campus. The city is now questioning whether the proposed elderly housing is an educational use and consistent with zoning.

Ordway Park clean-up: Bonnie reported that "professionals" will be there with chipper, etc. when we assemble at 10:00 on April 27 to do trimming, etc.

Newsletter: Articles were due at the meeting, and it will be sent out about April 12. It was agreed that it is appropriate to include notices of deaths or other events related to people especially known to the Conservators.

Earth Day: We agreed to participate in this April 28 event which will be a "parade" from Newton Centre to Newton Highlands and a display and speeches at the end. Peter will arrange for the making of a banner to be carried (noting our 30 year anniversary...1961-1991 ?). He also expects to have a proposed **revised logo** for the Conservators to be discussed at the next meeting.

Spring Fest: Peter said he would organize the moving of our display and staffing it for the May 12 event at City Hall.

Commonwealth Ave. and Lexington Street intersection: The Comm. Ave. Taskforce recommends that no steps be taken to change individual intersections until a more comprehensive plan is approved.

Leo Levi Requests: There was discussion on the use of Conservators' funds prompted by three requests (money for Zervas School landscaping, tree marking on Quinobequin Road, money for tree planting in the city) from Newton Beautification chairman Leo Levi. There is some feeling that the Conservators could generate more visibility in the city by initiating more projects in its own name...the map being one example, in contrast

to giving funds to other groups. There are questions about people available to "make things happen," about attempting a single focus for a year, about spreading the work load more broadly, about reluctance to spend money, and having briefer business meetings thus allowing for more focus on one discussion topic. It was suggested that people bring specific proposals for next year to the May meeting. No decision was made on Leo's requests.

Fran Seasholes, Secretary

May 1991

Newton Conservators, Inc. Minutes
Board of Directors Meeting
May 1, 1991
Lower Falls Community Center (Hamilton School)

Present: Katherine Brigham, Bonnie Carter, Burton Elliott, Roger Feinstein, Jean Husher, Lawrence Kaplan, Peter Kastner, Bill Leitch, Susan Mirsky, Ruth Nussbaum, Doug Sherman, and guest Robin Washington.

1. **Minutes** of April 3, 1991, were unanimously ACCEPTED with the following changes: typographical errors: changing the membership report numbers from "...485 members..." to "...485 names on the mailing list..." and "...145 are up to date" to "...114..."; P2, line 4, adding "NINE" Tower on Away Hill and..."
2. **Treasurer's Report:** Unanimously ACCEPTED. A report was prepared for the upcoming annual meeting with some changes in allocations from the February, 1990 report format. L.K. requested a comparison of actual and paid up and reported membership numbers and dollars for next meeting.
3. **Membership Report:** The latest paid up membership count was 171. The envelope enclosure in the Newsletter was effective. It was suggested to set up a membership table at the annual meeting.
4. **Map Project:** PK reported that Jean Husher had finished all the work on revising and updating the original material on the Parks Map. JH was applauded for the major effort required for that work. BE accepted responsibility for seeing to the production of the new Map, with consultation with JH and PK. PK is to collect and turn the material over to BE. Exploration of the possibility of obtaining one major or many small sponsors for the project to help defer the cost, but to be done in good taste.
5. **City Budget:** PK reported that the City budget was passed, and the Conservation Commission activities were assigned to other staff members (Parks Dept). No replacement was made for Helen Heyn's position as Chairman. The Maintenance budget was reduced by 22%, but may be restored. There is no advocate for conservation in City Hall at present, per PK's sense of the meeting. The entire Planning Dept. budget cuts, except for a part time secretary, were taken from the Conservation Commission.
6. **Little League Petition:** PK reported on the Little League's petition to allow advertising posters in parks, and the rebuttal by Andrew Stein. This was discussed, as well as a review of some members meeting with Sandra Schick in December on this same subject. Cynthia Creem accused PK of not speaking for the NC's consensus.

There will be a hearing on May 7, and members were encouraged to attend. PK spoke to Brian Yates re Leo Levi sending letters. Members were encouraged to write individually. It was VOTED that PK will write a letter as President of the NC, voicing our unanimous OPPOSITION to signs in the parks. Also, PK will write to Sandra Schick, reminding her to support us on this vis-a-vis our December meeting. Per PK: it appears that the "Parks" Dept. is now essentially the "Recreation" Dept. It was not mentioned at the City Hall meeting that the Historical Society recommended against the petition.

7. **Annual Meeting**: It was reported that Helen Heyn, Leo Levi and David Cohen will all attend the Annual Dinner Meeting. The program is attached.
8. **Nominating Committee Report**: 19 confirmed nominees to be on slate. Helen Heyn will be asked to serve, also Zimmerman of the Charles River Watershed Committee. The slate is attached to these minutes.
9. **Spring Cleanup - Ordway Park**: 49 paper bags were filled, which BC removed. "It only made a dent." PK recommended that this be made into a group "event," or a "happening," with food, etc. next time. Alternative: pay someone to do it, get a sponsor or aid. Leaflets could be distributed around Ordway Park next time to ask neighbors to participate in a fall cleanup. We might hire some equipment - truck, blower etc. Conclusion: a better way is needed.

RN reported that the Newton Highlands Neighborhood Council arranged for a Cold Spring Park cleanup. 20-25 people attended. It was organized by RN. Also, Chestnut Hill Station was done by a neighborhood group.

LK reported that Hammond Pond Park Webster Woods had been spray painted with graffiti: "disgraceful".

10. **Springfest**: May 23. PK will bring posters and arrange for staffing of booth/table. PK & RF to get workers.
11. **Stone Institute**: DS reported that the petition has been postponed for a few weeks. We should write a letter indicating that the NC considers the project worthwhile, and that we are pleased that the front and rear open spaces and woods will be retained, and will not be taken over by houses. It was AGREED; PK, JH and DG will approve letter and see that it is sent.
12. **New Library Project**: BE reported on meeting PK and BE has with Virginia Tashjian, City Librarian, regarding a gift by the NC to the new library. She gave us a "wish list," with costs. Among possibilities befitting our organization might be: a) a collection of environmental or ecology books for the children's section; b) the collection of National Geographic National Park videotapes; c) subscriptions to various children's magazines on nature, etc. (e.g., Sierra Club Children's monthly) paid

for annually; d) adult books on Newton History, ecology, etc. Any gift would bear the NC's name to give us recognition. PK thought \$1000 might be appropriate.

BE followed this discussion up with the following proposals:

1. That a standing "**Committee on Grants**" be established for the purpose of recommending to the Board periodically annual or periodic gifts to be made to worthy causes or persons for the approval of the board. An example of such a grant would be the gift to the Library, or it might be an award to the best high school essay or poem annually on "Newton Green Spaces, "Our Local Environment," or the like. The purpose of such grants would be to advance the interest in and the preservation of Newton's Green Spaces and its natural assets, and to raise the visibility of the Newton Coonservators in the community.
2. In the annual budget, a certain amount of our annual income should be used for the above purpose, and the committee would work with the Treasurer to determine the amount to be recommended to the board.
3. The committee and the Board could consider special fund-raising efforts to support such grants.

VOTED: Unanimously, to establish a Committee on Grants as described above.

Members volunteering to join were JH, LK, RF, BE. PK appointed BE Chairman. Others would be welcome to join.

13. **Newton Tree Committee**: Fiora and LK indicated that they would participate on the Committee.
14. **Waban Citizens Block Party**: Robin Washington reported that this would be taking place. It needs an educational aspect. Would we run a walking tour and participate? RW said he would run the walk.

Respectfully submitted by Burton Elliott, secretary pro tem.

Annual Meeting 1991

Newton Conservators, Inc.
1991 Annual Meeting
May 15, 1991

The Annual Meeting was preceded by a dinner with 75 people in attendance in Noyes Hall, Andover Newton Theological School.

Barbara Herson and three others provided an opening of songs with guitar accompaniment.

President Peter Kastner presided at the presentation of the Environmentalist of the Year Award to Leo M. Levi for his volunteer activities in beautifying Newton through education, trees and flower bulbs. A Certificate of Appreciation was presented to Helen Heyn, who is retiring from her position as Executive Director of the Newton Conservation Commission after years of varied activities to preserve and enhance Newton's open spaces. Another Certificate of Appreciation for Helen Heyn from the Mayor on behalf of the city was presented by Jordan Kraus, who noted that a tree honoring her will be planted on the grounds of City Hall. A third recognition of Helen Heyn, on behalf of the Massachusetts Senate, was presented by Senator Lois Pines for her important input, guidance and inspiration on environmental issues in the state.

The Treasurer's Report was presented by Lawrence Kaplan, who noted receipts in 1990 of \$9360 and expenditures of \$5010. The Audit Committee reported their review and approval of the financial records.

Membership Chairman Bill Leitch reported 217 members paid up-to-date, the exact same as last year. Fifty-nine of these contribute extra beyond dues, and 73 copies of the newsletter go to the press, elected people etc. There was a unanimous VOTE TO ACCEPT this report.

President Peter Kastner thanked the officers, key workers and retiring Board Members. The Conservators are beginning a thirtieth year of citizen activity and interest in parklands and related concerns. He noted the situation of cutbacks in city and state funds and programs and thus the tendency toward privatization of public activities. It is a challenge to retain the concept of public access and private use of land, and he noted the current controversy that Conservators are monitoring related to Little League teams having private sponsor signs by the fields. Education is continually needed to protect our precious resources, and the revised Newton map, which encourages use of our parkland, is being readied.

The Nominating Committee report on officers and Directors for next year was presented by Bill Leitch and VOTED.

State Representative David Cohen delivered a moving speech on progress and set-backs in environmental legislation.

Frances Seasholes, Secretary