

Board of Directors, 1991 - 1992

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Treasurer: Lawrence Kaplan
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George Mansfield	Susan Mirsky
Richard Primack	Willaiam Shaevel
Douglas Sherman	Varne Vance
Nicholas Yannoni	

June 1991

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors
June 26, 1991
Lower Falls Community Center (Hamilton School)
545 Grove St.

Present: Peter Kastner, presiding, Roger Feinstein, Bill Jones, Burton Elliott, Lawrence Kaplan, Fran Seasholes, Catherine Brigham, Doug Sherman, Susan Mirsky, Bonnie Carter.

Minutes: The May 1 Board meeting minutes and the May 15 Annual Meeting minutes were ACCEPTED as printed by vote.

Treasurer's Report: Lawrence Kaplan distributed the prepared report as of June 5, 1991, and it was discussed and ACCEPTED BY VOTE. The final accounting on the annual meeting dinner for 75 people was a deficit of \$184 (fewer people than expected to cover the basic costs). A Treasury Note will mature on 8-15-91, and there was discussion on how to handle the money at current low interest rates. It was the sense of the meeting that it should be put in the savings account for the time-being.

Membership: There are approximately 191 paid memberships now.

Committee appointments: People not present will be contacted by the president to be added. It is expected that committees will be active, meeting a minimum of twice a year and other times as need dictates.

Program Committee: V.P. Roger Feinstein to chair, Catherine Brigham, Bonnie Carter.

Finance Committee: Bill Jones to chair, Lawrence Kaplan ex officio, Burton Elliott

Grants Committee: Burton Elliott to chair, Roger Feinstein, Jean Husher, Lawrence Kaplan, Elizabeth Coty, Peter Kastner.

Membership: (chair?) Bill Leitch, Richard Primack, Susan Mirsky, Doug Sherman

Little League Petition: At the last Board of Aldermen meeting the discussion went back to sub-committee, which supported (5-2) the placing of sponsor signs around the Little League playing field in Newton Centre. Peter led the discussion, reporting that it appears that there are 9 votes against the petition, which would be enough to defeat it, but lobbying to encourage defeat is needed. The vote is expected in late July. Peter will write another letter to the newspapers. The approval given for signs in Albemarle Park is seen as a mistake that should not be repeated. There were comments about the increasing commercialization and adult control of children's baseball.

Program Planning '91-'92: In the spring about 30 people went on the Aqueduct walk (3 hours) led by Nick Yannoni. We expect to continue offering **fall and spring walks** to the community. This is the Conservators's 30th year so it is hoped that we can prepare an **anniversary event** for the late fall, perhaps including recognition of long-involved Newton families and a tree planting.

Report of the Grants Committee: Burton reported a June 4 meeting to review past giving and propose a procedure for deciding on giving funds to groups and events. It is suggested that giving about \$3000 annually would leave us an adequate operating balance for the budget. The Ordway Fund, which has provided us with the flexibility not to have to worry about fundraising, needs to be preserved and used for the maintenance of Ordway Park.

It was proposed to give an outright gift of \$1000 to Newton's new library for increasing their collection of environmental books. Book plates identifying the source of the gift are recommended in addition to a small plaque recognizing the Conservators. It is further suggested that an additional gift of \$250 annually for this year and the next four be given to fund appropriate periodicals.

It is proposed that we initiate a \$100 award to a senior at North and at South High Schools in our name as "Environmentalist of the Year" to be selected by the school staff.

As already reflected in our budget, \$500 scholarship money is to be given to the Environmental Science Program as we have done in past years, to encourage this summer educational experience for young people.

At some later time it is suggested that we support a program in the elementary schools, working with curriculum coordinators and key teachers. We could sponsor a poster prize or other environmental awareness support. The philosophy would be not to intrude but to offer curriculum support, probably in the Conservators' name rather than through the Newton Schools Foundation.

Another idea to be further explored is the setting up of a special fund to assist in broad exposure and assistance in the community to Conservator concerns. Separate fundraising could be solicited with the dues in December or through special events and the Newsletter. One goal is to have more community awareness of the Conservators. An on-going fund could give small grants to support the Newton schools' educational activities on environmental issues, being administered by the Conservators. There was a sense of the meeting that these ideas should be further explored by the Grants Committee and Board.

There was a VOTE (with one dissention) to allocate \$1250 this year to the Newton Library for special books and periodicals and to follow this with \$250 in each of the next four years.

There was a VOTE to initiate two \$100 senior awards for graduates of Newton's two public high schools, with the assumption that these will be annual.

Environmental Science Program: This year's program is over-subscribed. They have requested our annual contribution, and it was suggested that a profile of the program be provided for members not familiar with it.

Nahanton Park Celebration: About 200 people, including Peter and Bonnie and the mayor participated in a fishing-oriented second anniversary celebration at the park last week. Boy Scouts are involved in clearing brush.

City Boards and Commissions: Peter noted that the Newton League of Women Voters is undertaking a major study next year, headed by Anita Capeless, of how city commissions are appointed and function. They would welcome participation, especially in the review of bodies we deal with, of Conservators who are interested.

Conservators' Open Space Map: Burton has received the material from Jean who has done a "spectacular" job in preparing the material. Before arranging for graphic designing and financial estimates he will work with Bill Jones and Peter Jackson to acquire MDC maps of Quinobequin Road and Hemlock Gorge.

Misuse of MDC parking: Bill told the group of the Marriott Hotel using the adjacent duck-feeding parking area for its own purposes, and he is disturbed at other commercial encroachment on public land.

Helen Heyn Reception: Bonnie and others recently honored the retiring Conservation Commission Director at a reception initiated by the Newton Planning Department.

Commonwealth Ave. Advisory Committee: This group recently approved a Request for Proposals from contractors for work on the whole length of this linear park.

Newton's Green Decade Coalition: Doug received positive comments about the exploratory ideas of the Green Decade group to increase environmental awareness, including the possibility of a weekly column in the Newton Graphic for notices and info in this area.

Frances Seasholes, Secretary

July 1991

Newton Conservators Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
July 25, 1991
Lower Falls Community Center (Hamilton School)
545 Grove Street

Present: Peter Kastner, presiding, Bart Hague, George Mansfield, Fran Seasholes, Jean Husher, Susan Mirsky. [not a quorum]

Donation to Newton's new Library: It was agreed that Bart's suggestion of a mini-committee to recommend some publications for the Librarian to purchase with our donations was appropriate. He and Lawrence Kaplan could draw on their professional experience and that of Bart's wife Mary Ann Hague in this.

Little League field signs in Newton Centre: From his observations of Aldermanic meetings Peter notes that most local groups have not expressed an interest, as Conservators have, in the maintenance of our public lands. He suggests convening the 10 to 15 small neighborhood associations that focus on specific parks or areas, to see whether a concerted conservation advocacy group can be rallied for efforts such as up-keep on the Little League fields without commercialization.

George discussed the reconsideration vote that the Aldermen will be doing, expecting that the sponsor signs will again be narrowly defeated, but that our contacting some aldermen on their votes would be helpful and attendance at the August 12 session useful. It was noted that the functions and layouts of the Albemarle (already has signs) and Newton Centre playgrounds (playing fields vs. park) were different.

There was discussion and general willingness to compromise, if necessary, by adopting Ald. Ruth Balsar's idea of one sign (instead of 36) which could list (not advertise) the sponsors who contributed to the field's maintenance. Its size, placement and lettering would need to be discrete and perhaps taken down off-season.

Zoning regulations specify that Aldermen control free-standing signs in the city, but apparently no guidelines exist and there is no standardization. It is felt that the Public Works Department has a low aesthetic sense and that some new signs over-stress the Mann and Halloran names.

It was the sense of the meeting that Conservators would go along with modest signs.

Newton Map: Jean and Burton met and he will now take the material to a commercial designer.

Edmands Park/Leo Levi: Peter reported that a park neighbor and Leo Levi are discussing creating a plan for this underdeveloped park, which might include a section devoted to specimen wild flowers.

Grass Mowing: The city currently has both a private contract and the public workforce cutting grass, reflecting poor management.

Next Meetings: It was suggested that we cancel the August meeting but urge attendance at the August 12 Aldermanic session and full attendance in September when Helen Heyn will be invited to come and give her over-view of the city needs.

Fran Seasholes

September 1991

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
September 25, 1991
Lower Falls Community Center (Hamilton School)
545 Grove Street

Present: Roger Feinstein, presiding, Lawrence Kaplan, Bill Leitch, Bonnie Carter, Fran Seasholes, Burton Elliott, Susan Mirsky, Liz Cody, Doug Sherman, George Mansfield.

Fall Walks list: Bonnie distributed the flyer, which was mailed to the membership today listing the schedule of four Sunday afternoon walks between September 29 and October 27.

Minutes of July 25, 1991: APPROVAL of the minutes with the following corrections: spelling mistakes on Edmands & Heyn, clarification of "we" on grass mowing means the City of Newton, and Bart's wife's name is Mary Ann Hague.

Treasurer's Report: Lawrence distributed his report and noted that the 3 year Treasury Note matured and is temporarily in the checking account. All accounts are now in the Bank of Boston. Dues this year amount to about \$4000. The library gift of \$1250 was

made, and the \$100 to the Land Trust Alliance enables us to purchase low rate insurance. So far in 1991 \$3052 has been disbursed. The report was ACCEPTED BY VOTE.

It was VOTED to convene the Finance Committee to discuss what amount of money should be freed to be spent.

Membership: Bill noted that there has been little recent activity and we are not growing beyond the roughly 500. It was suggested that an effort to stimulate new memberships be targeted at youth. A special winter outdoor event (January thaw walk in Hemlock Gorge & cave, for example) for youth, along with holiday gift memberships, might be tried. Activating the Membership Committee this fall seems indicated.

Little League signs in Newton Centre Playground: By a fluke in the Aldermanic process the signs are now possible. A Boston College Law School class will be looking into the legality of commercials in public space.

Program Committee: Roger reported that the Program Committee met and finalized the fall walk schedule, [and] listed 12 people of interest who could be invited to give a half hour educational presentation at monthly Board meetings (thus making them more aware of our organization also), and set a membership day for work at the Ordway Park. This is to be from 9:30 to 12:00 on a drop-in basis on Saturday, November 2. Bonnie reported that Ross Brown had been paid to do mowing at this Grant Ave. site once and that brush removal is the primary job needed, so that people should bring clippers and loppers.

Grants Committee: Burton reported that two plaques noting the Conservators gifts related to our 30th anniversary are in place in the new Newton Free Library on Homer Street. We have not yet passed on our suggestions of specific journals to be obtained.

The Grants Committee needs to know from the Finance Committee and Board the amount of money it can make proposals for, before the next Board meeting. Member suggestions are welcome. Doug again spoke of offering to Newton teachers grants in the \$100-200 range for environmental awareness proposals. The publicity around soliciting and granting these would increase Conservators visibility in the community. One letter with a request has already been received.

New Map of Parks: Burton expects to be able to give a full report on map costs at the next meeting. Copies of the old maps and geology books have been located to sell at the October Fair.

Stone Institute Plans: Roger reported that three community meetings are scheduled on the new nursing facility to be attached to the current building. His conversation with the Newton Planning Department indicated that they will probably favor it. Eighty per cent of the woods are to be preserved, as well as the lawn and an underground containment basin would be at the 100 year flood capacity. Their current publicity uses our name as in support of the plan, but this is a little unclear since we had primarily looked with favor on their preserving of the lawn and woods and we had no objections to the projects.

There was a VOTE of support for the plan and asking the President to testify at the October 15 Land Use Committee Public Hearing. Roger will draft a statement and others are urged to speak as individuals.

Fall newsletter: Bonnie noted the separate mailing for the fall walks and notification of media calendars. Note was made of the subjects to be covered in articles, and she expects it to go the printer on October 4.

Newton Hazardous Waste Collection: Volunteers are needed again to assist in the October 25-26 and November 1-2 collections.

Harvest Fair on Newton Centre Green: Sunday, October 6 is the date. Roger and Bill will haul and install our display. A few volunteered manning it and Roger will telephone for more people.

League of Women Voters Candidate Night: The 22 candidates for Aldermen will be asked to this October 24 event, and we would like to have people submit questions on our area of interest. Suggestions included spending on park maintenance, hiring a trained city forester, land preservation vs. development, acquisition of new wild land and a wish list of spots, commercialization of public open space and permanent structures on same.

Fran Seasholes, Secretary

October 1991

[Apparently there was no October meeting.]

November 1991

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
November 6, 1991

Present: Peter Kastner, presiding, Paula Chasan, Burton Elliott, Lawrence Kaplan, Barbara Herson, Fran Seasholes, Bill Leitch, Bonnie Carter, Susan Mirsky, Roger Feinstein, Bart Hague, Doug Sherman, Katherine Brigham, Jean Husher and guest Helen Heyn.

Birds of Newton: Barbara distributed a list prepared by Oliver Komar of 231 species of birds seen in the city.

Minutes of September 25: The minutes were ACCEPTED with the addition of mention that there was an agreement to ask the President to activate the various committees.

Treasurer's report: Lawrence distributed his October 23, 1991 report showing few changes from September. It was ACCEPTED.

Membership: Bill noted that there are no new members as we approach the end of the year. It was suggested that we create a flyer including the history of the Conservators, and that the Membership Committee be activated and consider some incentives and further publicity to increase membership. The map will include membership information.

Helen Heyn Presentation on Newton's Open Spaces: Guest Helen Heyn shared the following information based on her lengthy experience with this issue.

In 1989 there was a Recreation and Open Space Plan for Newton. The Engineering Department's large map is being remade by volunteers. The publicly-owned open space is now at the rate of 16.39 acres per 1000 residents, and the total open space (likely never to be built upon) is 27.96 acres per 1000 residents. In the Conservation Restriction program (private owners who have given up the development rights) the city has 66.07 acres. In the state's inland wetland permanent restriction category we have 22 acres along the Charles River, brooks, streams, ponds and lakes. The introduction of cluster zoning also preserves open space. We also have Historic Districts that have preservation restrictions. Aldermanic Board Orders also are a means of restricting use.

Helen listed the following issues of recent concern:

1. Newton Centre playing field with commercial signs for contributors to the maintenance costs.
2. The proposal for 53 parking spaces over the Sudbury Aqueduct hillside area on Lyman Street, Newton Centre.

Recent positive steps include:

1. Limitations on new homes at Buswell Park subdivision near Newton Corner where there is Hyde Brook.
2. Sherman Way subdivision will have 5 houses above the Baldpate Meadow wetlands.

The MDC purchased Brook Farm (West Roxbury, adjacent to the Newton Oak Hill area) for preservation (and Harvard archeological work) in 1987.

The issues of greatest concern for the city's next fiscal year are around the **Conservation Commission budget for land maintenance**. Concerned citizens can assist by attending the November 14 Aldermanic meeting to continue discussion on things not yet decided, and they can volunteer to be responsible for the upkeep of specific trails and paths around the city. The Parks and Recreation Department contracts with Lewis Tree Service for mowing and tree work.

Ongoing opportunities for volunteer help in addition to those mentioned are: open space map (George Batchelor and Helen Heyn), Conservation Commission slide file (Thelma Fleishman), Environmental Science Program (Richard Staley). Helen noted that the

Conservation Commission looks forward to the updated "Visit your parks" map being prepared by the Conservators.

Possible land acquisition in the future is Boston Edison land by Saw Mill Brook, which they bought in 1973 for a small substation. A remaining gap in the Charles River Pathway is at the Lasell College boathouse in Auburndale.

Suggestions for Conservator action: We should be pushing for some assured means of continued maintenance of public land. The Planning and Parks & Recreation Departments and Forestry Division do not see this as a priority. We should monitor the appointments made to the Conservation Commission, which Richard Staley now chairs, to strengthen it.

Conservators' priorities: Peter indicated that we would:

1. Keep the Little League sign protest alive.
2. Send a letter to MWRA Director Paul Levy, with copies to others, on the proposal for parking spaces on Lyman Street, indicating that this diversion of open space is inappropriate and we favor the maintaining of this linear open land (path). Alternate parking options might be two-level parking at the Pelham Street lot.
3. Attend and speak at the November 14 meeting to influence budget decisions on the upkeep of parks etc.
4. Publicize in the Newsletter the volunteer opportunity to "adopt a trail."

Presentation by developers of the Security Mills Property: Gwendolyn Noyes Rono and Ken Krems from the Standish Care Company showed architect drawings and discussed the proposal to build a 122 unit complex for assisted living (independent collages and nursing for frail elderly) on **land adjacent to Cabot Park** which used to have a large 2-story mill. This proposal comes before the Land Use Committee on November 12, and they have been working extensively with the neighborhood but were seeking to inform and alert the Conservators because of possible impact on the park itself. Some kind of public-private partnership seems likely, with this developer providing some maintenance and improvements.

Discussion after the presenters left indicated general support for the proposal. Peter will draft a letter raising the question of careful examination of the public-private financing on Cabot Park.

Newton Historical Society: Roger reported that this group is focusing on different Newton villages with the preparation of time capsules. For Newtonville they would like to co-sponsor with us a house tour and Sunday walks, specifically at Edmands Park, where a film would be made and something about the landscaping around houses. There was a sense of the meeting that such cooperation and sharing of membership lists for publicity has good potential, but it should be further explored at our next meeting. It raises the question of our working with other groups.

Grants Committee: Although the Finance Committee has not yet met to propose some money guidelines, Burton invited his committee and others interested in working on ways to distribute some of our funds in the community to his home on November 13.

Map Project: Burton reported that Frances Hintza did the original map work, which is not now available. He obtained preliminary estimates of \$4200 for printing 10,000, \$3000 for the graphics work and \$500 for typesetting. Peter will explore the possibility of free printing with the Boston Globe Foundation, and it is felt that the graphics could be done for less on a computer. There are 27,000 households in Newton, and the previous map was distributed to each household. Distribution questions (and quantity to be made) have not yet been decided. There will be an update at the next meeting.

Next Conservators meetings: December 4 will be the next meeting and the January meeting will return to the fourth Wednesday, January 22, 1992.

Fran Seasholes, secretary

December 1991

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board Meeting
December 4, 1991
Lower Calls Community Center (Hamilton School)
545 Grove Street

Present: Peter Kastner, presiding, Bill Leitch, Roger Feinstein, Burton Elliott, Susan Mirsky, Fran Seasholes, Bill Jones.

Minutes of the November 6 [meeting]: Correction on page 2: Map project (change \$400 to \$3000 for estimate on graphics.) Historical Society (omit "other neighborhood" from last sentence. There was a VOTE to accept the minutes as amended.

Treasurer's Report: Lawrence's report was briefly reviewed and received, our noting a current balance of \$65,077 and about \$4400 dues paid in 1991. The Finance Committee will meet in the week of December 16.

Committee on Grants: Burton reported that they had met on November 13 and found some disagreement among themselves on their assignment. There is agreement that the goal is environmental education, not beautification. Susan has spoken to 3 key Newton teachers about our idea of offering environmental grants for school use, Doug has spoken to a key high school counselor, and Burton to Superintendent Blumer, and 3 science staff. The response is universally enthusiastic. Included in these peoples' responses was the information that the estimated amount of \$3000 could go far, because some classroom expenses for projects would be small. Budget restraints have cut back on materials, there are unused resource materials and curricula available if teachers could have release time

to locate and prepare them, field trip transportation would be helpful, [and] Newton North had to drop an environmental teacher and now has no required course. Some underlying ideas are to reach the community (parents especially) through the children's increased environmental awareness, to have the project proposals come out of the children and teachers themselves, and to increase the visibility in Newton of the Conservators organization.

It is noted that the Newton School Foundation has a good proposal form we might adopt, that a selection committee might include the school science coordinator, [and] that this be in place to be effective in September 1992. Caution was expressed on not spending time duplicating work already available and refining the selection criteria etc. There was agreement to continue pursuing this grants-to-the-schools program with further discussion in January.

Map Project: Burton reported a new cost estimate (Dianna Lobe Design who would prepare it on her MAC computer) of approximately \$1300 for the art and typeset (ready to print). There was a VOTE to authorize him TO PROCEED, spending up to \$1600 on graphic design for the map. There will be many decisions yet to be made as this process proceeds. Peter will explore getting free printing through the Boston Globe or if that is not possible, exploring use of one of the high school print shops.

Stone Institute: The Aldermen have accepted the nursing home plan, which preserves open space and sets up a trust for preservation.

Conservation Commission Meeting: Peter and Jean Husher attended and discovered that there is a budgetary risk on park maintenance money and a recommendation that this role be taken over by the Parks Dept. (rather than under Gene Bober in Planning) or that the work be done by volunteers. Peter will look into why the phone being used by Helen Heyn as a volunteer for the CC has been cut off. He and others will attend the December 12 meeting, and he and Burton may try to have a meeting with Gene Bober to underline the Conservators' concern that the basic work of the Conservation Commission be continued, despite the elimination of the paid leadership position. It was noted that with an example of trees across paths in Webster Woods, volunteers would not be able to handle the work.

Ware's Cove neighbors: Peter has been approached by a group that plans to raise funds to treat and aerate this area of the Charles River but does not have a non-profit status to receive donations (501C3). Bill suggested that they contact the Charles River Watershed Association, the Boston Permanent Charity Fund, and MDC. They also could consult with Betsy Leitch because of parallels to the Bullough's Pond Association. Peter will consult with lawyer Bill Shaevel on the liabilities that might be involved if Conservators were to receive funds for them in a separate account and include the paper work in our annual report to the state. Peter noted the value of our constructive role in enabling small environmental groups in the city.

Bill Jones reported that after serving for 10 years as MDC Commissioner he is now leaving the post.

Fund-raising letter: Peter plans to write a letter to the membership this weekend, requesting donations, noting our expansion into educational grants, and also suggesting people give gift memberships. He is eager to establish this as an annual effort, although some questioned its timing as too close to the request to renew annual membership dues.

Fran Seasholes, Secretary

January 1992

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
January 22, 1992
Lower Falls Community Center (Hamilton School)
545 Grove Street

Present: Roger Feinstein, Peter Kastner, Bonnie Carter, Paula Chasan, Burton Elliott, Bart Hague, Jean Husher, Lawrence Kaplan, William Leitch

Minutes: The November 1991 minutes were APPROVED as presented.

Treasurer's Report: Lawrence Kaplan distributed the treasurer's report, indicated that he had transferred funds from the matured note and accrued interest into the Ordway account, and indicated the low interest rate now paid on demand accounts. Thus given the very low premium being paid on long term obligations, the board APPROVED keeping the current balance in the demand account, with the expectation of placing the funds into a longer term vehicle when interest rates rise.

Lawrence reported that he is working on preparing the annual report for the Attorney General.

The Board APPROVED continued membership in the Environmental Lobby and the Charles River Watershed Association.

Membership: Bill Leitch noted a total of 35 to 40 renewals vs. 75 at this time last year. Bill indicated that the decrease might be due to changes in the economy, and that we would have to focus more on increasing membership, including the newsletter, Map Project, Walks and grants. A heated exchange took place around the merits of a telephone membership drive, and it was agreed that William Leitch and Peter Kastner would design follow-up cards to be sent by board members in lieu of a telephone canvas.

It was noted that the gift membership drive resulted in 17 new memberships.

Conservation Commission: Peter Kastner reported that the Conservation Commission reviewed their budget with the mayor, with the hope that sufficient funds will be added back to their budget to hire a full-time administrator for the Commission. No funds would exist for land maintenance, and the Commission is reviewing various fund raising alternatives with the mayor. Individual commission members have talked about resigning due to increasing pressure to raise funds.

Bart Hague indicated he would contact Alderman L. Baker to review last year's commitment to insure that the Planning Department maintains resources to handle the city's legal responsibilities.

Boston College's plans to develop graduate student housing near **Edmands Park** have been shelved for 2-3 years. B.C. claimed that they were delaying the project for management reasons -- that they had too many other projects in progress.

Wares Cove: The Wares Cove group seems to have secured sufficient funds from the MDC to chemically treat the cove -- in exchange for a promise from the neighbors to help monitor the process and educate the neighborhood about the need to better manage the land. The Green Decade has indicated concern about the introduction of chemicals into the river. We indicated that we felt that safe chemicals, properly supervised, could be used, but that we need to change old habits, such as controlling fertilizers, repairs to leaching fields, developing buffer areas and improving storm drains.

Historical Society: Representatives of the Historical Society are to be invited to speak at the next week to review possible areas of cooperation.

Nomination Committee: The following individuals were appointed to the nominations committee: Jean Husher, Burton Elliott, Susan Mirsky, Bart Hague.

Map Project: Burton Elliott announces that based upon the work of Jean Husher, the Map is being finished by Diana Loeb and will be completed within 4 to 6 weeks. A draft was presented to the group, to the delight of all. It was noted that the new map will allow for individual folds along the lines of the individual parks, with better notice for our sponsorship, as well as space for donators. Peter Kastner and Burton Elliott are to develop budgets for printing. Peter Kastner indicated that he would work towards getting corporate sponsorship -- starting at \$100. There was a spirited discussion around the merits of seeking donors, and the point is to be further reviewed.

[no signature]

February 1992

Newton Conservator Board Meeting
Minutes
Wednesday, February 26, 1002
Newton Lower Falls Community Center

The meeting of the Newton Conservators Board of Directors was called to order by its president, Peter Kastner, at 8 p.m., February 26, 1992. **Present** were: Kastner, president; Carter, Feinstein, Husher, and Leitch. In the absence of the secretary, Jean Husher agreed to take the minutes of the meeting. [lack of quorum]

Copies of the regular **treasurer's report** and the preliminary **proposed budget** for 1992-93 were passed around for review and comment [see attached]. No changes to the proposed budget were made.

Membership: Bill Leitch circulated copies of his analysis of membership and renewal based on data of 2/24/92. He said that news was both good and bad. Good news was that membership renewals were a bit ahead of last year at this time and that more members are sustaining members and life members. In addition, a significant number had made donations. The bad news was that we still are carrying more who receive the newsletter (such as aldermen, City Hall staff, commission members, etc.) than was a healthy proportion of the total membership, and that we need to persuade many more 1991 members to renew. He recommended that the membership list be divided up among board members, so that a personal appeal letter (which Bill would prepare) might be sent to each who has not renewed. Bill read such a letter, which he had prepared for comment. Several suggestions were made with regard to the wording, but most of those present felt that a phone call to each should be made first. Bill estimated that 350 letters would need to be sent out to pick up those who had not renewed from 1989 to 1991 as well as for the present year. The letter should be signed by a Board member and hand addressed to each person by name.

Walks: It was felt that the walk program should be extended, because it is one of the Conservators' best and most popular public programs. A preliminary spring walk schedule was drawn up by the Board as follows:

As before all walks to be on Sundays, at 2 p.m. [except for one canoe trip]

April 26 - Earth Day to co-sponsor

WALK from DUMP to WARE'S COVE, Auburndale

Leader: Peter Kastner and maybe Alderman Dick McGrath

May 3 - HOUGHTON GARDEN, Chestnut Hill

Ask Chestnut Hill Garden Club to co-sponsor and perhaps to provide a leader.

May 9 - Appalachian Mt. Club to co-sponsor

CANOE TRIP from NAHANTON PARK BOAT RAMP south on the CHARLES

Leader: AMC's Michael Clarke [only Saturday event]

May 10 - MOTHER'S DAY BIRD WALK in NAHANTON PARK

- May 17 - NEWTON CEMETERY WALK
[same day as Springfest at City Hall; easy to lead walk from Conservators' booth there].
- May 24 - ANDOVER-NEWTON NATURE TRAIL WALK
[ask Andover-Newton to co-sponsor and perhaps provide leader]
- June 7 - AQUEDUCT WALK
Leader: ask Nick Yannoni
- June 14 - HEMLOCK GORGE WALK
[ask Friends of Hemlock Gorge to co-sponsor and provide leader, maybe Doug Sherman]
- June 21 - MIDSUMMER PICNIC at KENNARD PARK
- June 28 - EDMANDS PARK WALK
[ask Newton Historical Society at Jackson Hmstd to co-sponsor; the society has wanted a Newtonville walk].

Peter Kastner said he would pursue finalizing this program for leadership and co-sponsors. It was suggested that the aldermen from the ward in which each walk was sited be personally invited to join the walk. Peter said he would write the letters to do this.

Spring Clean-up at Ordway Park - It was decided to establish Saturday morning, May 2nd, as clean-up day. Peter Kastner said he would lead this effort. He thought that the Board thinks seriously of composting the leaves instead of raking them into bags for city disposal. An obscure site in the park could be chosen. A leaf blower could be borrowed or rented for the morning. It was suggested that Deborah Howard be consulted for the best way to set this up.

Conservation Commission Meeting: Thursday, February 27, to finalize the budget. It was proposed that excess moneys from the Newton Commonwealth Golf Course fees be used for other maintenance needs; and also that a major part of the commission's funds be used to underwrite the salary of professional administrator. The use of a staff member of the Planning Department to do the necessary work on a part-time basis has proven inadequate. The Board expressed its support. Peter Kastner planned to be present.

Environmental Science Program - It was suggested that it would be a great public relations "photo opportunity" to have a photographer take a picture of one of the officers of the Conservators passing a check to Dick Staley (for Commission and ESP), which could be published in local newspapers. Roger Feinstein as VP agreed to be "check presenter;" Peter to pursue setting this up.

Ware's Cove - The Metropolitan District Commission has agreed to fund a chemical treatment to kill off fanwort, an exotic plant that has seriously invaded the cove. The

chemical is reputed to be selective for fanwort and water lilies, but will not hurt wildlife. The Green Decade objects to the use of any chemicals as toxic. The MDC said that it would like to set up a monitoring program for the chemical's use to check its reputation before wide application elsewhere.

It was felt that Ware's Cove was small, and nearly self-contained and therefore would be a good site. The monitoring program would cost 3 times the regular application of the chemical - about \$20,000 - but the MDC is willing to cover this cost because of its need to know more. "Save Ware's Cove," a newly-started neighborhood organization concerned with the problem, would like to use our bank account/treasury temporarily for a fund-raising program it needs to begin right away. The purpose of raising funds is to cover the costs of assorted fees, testimony of Gerald Smith (a consultant hired by the group) before the Conservation Commission, and other such needs. Although there was not a quorum, the members present indicated their unanimous SUPPORT of this. Peter Kastner said he would phone a number of other Board members for their votes.

Map Project - Peter Kastner has talked with the head teacher of the Printing Dept. at Newton North High School re printing the map when it is ready. The teacher said that the school's presses could handle the proposed size and could print it in two-color, green and blue. It did not have the means to fold it, so that would need to be done elsewhere. Peter planned to get price estimates. We do not yet have a budget, but now that we have a mock-up, prices can be sought and a budget established. Peter said that he would have prices by the next meeting. It was suggested that a small printing run of perhaps 1000 or 2000 could be done at the high school quickly, in time for spring walks and annual meeting.

No Grants Committee report; no Nominating Committee report. Bart Hague agreed at the last Board meeting to serve as chair of this committee.

Annual Meeting - Peter Kastner said he would ask Fran Seasholes to head up arrangements for the annual meeting. Need a date, a place, a program speaker, and an environmentalist-of-the-year. Casual suggestions from those present for environmentalist-of-yr. were AnnaMaria Abernathy for work of monitoring commission for League of Women Voters, service on Board and president of Conservators, and environmental efforts within her own neighborhood; Louise Bruyn, who established and has led the Green Decade; and Thelma Fleishman for her efforts on the board of the Charles River Watershed Assoc., on the Conservators Board, as a long-time and hard-working member of the Conservation Commission, and for several publications about the Charles River for CRWA.

The meeting was adjourned.

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

March 1992

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board Meeting
March 25, 1992
Lower Falls Community Center (Hamilton School)
545 Grove Street

Present: Peter Kastner, presiding, Burton Elliott, Fran Seasholes, Lawrence Kaplan, Bart Hague and Bonnie Carter.

Nominating Committee: They will meet at Jean's on Saturday to continue their work.

Audit Committee: Burton has agreed to serve, and Peter will ask Bill Shaevel and Ginny Taplin or Fiora Houghteling to review Lawrence's records.

Treasurer's Report: Lawrence distributed his report and submitted further proposals on the 1992 budget, which could not be acted upon last month or this because of the lack of a quorum. The main disbursements last month were \$500 to the Environmental Science Program for scholarship help and \$500 for the map design work. Estimates for this year are to receive about \$4400 in dues and \$3000 in interest payments.

Newton Arts Center's Art in Nature proposal: Peter Schlessinger, Director, was present to explain that the NEA has given the Center a \$5000 grant to enable about three or more artists to create a non-commercial display this spring, summer and fall in a natural environment that would enhance the public's way of looking at nature. There would be minor modifications to the environment (paper wrapping, arranging of gathered wood, subtle pointers) to provide new perspectives and invite people to see things differently.

The discussion raised several questions and cautions related to disturbing the ecology, attracting large numbers of people, and setting precedence for the use of public space. The currently proposed area is adjacent to the Chestnut Hill Mall in MDC and Newton Conservation land. We referred Peter to the Newton Conservation Commission, which would have to give permission. We asked him to write a letter that could serve as a basis for the Conservators possibly offering its support.

Annual Dinner: We agreed to nominate Thelma Fleishman as **Environmentalist of the Year** for her voicing of open space values on the Newton Conservation Commission for several years. In the discussion of possible speakers we named about 5 possibilities, and Bart and Peter will ask in the order of our preference. We will meet at the Andover Newton Theological School Noyes Hall again for dinner on Wednesday, May 13, 1992. Fran will continue with the arrangements for the meal, invitations and reservations.

Grant Awards: Burton indicated that their committee has met with Tom Guin, Jim Johnson and Maxine Rosenberg of the Newton Schools for their assistance in requesting proposals from teachers. It is suggested that we provide \$1000 to each high school and \$1000 to the elementary schools. They will bring further report to the April meeting.

Spring Walks: Peter reported that Roger is lining up people to lead walks, starting on Sunday, April 26. It was noted that new signs have appeared on the aqueduct saying "no trespassing," and Peter's inquiry indicated a problem with people dumping on that land. He will write a letter inviting key people responsible for the aqueduct to join us in a walk, and questioning the signs.

Ware's Cove: Peter noted that approval for clearing up the fanwort has been granted, and the Green Decade publication indicated a softening of their anti-herbicide position.

Little League - park land: Peter attended the Conservation Commission meeting to speak against the Little league desire to put up a precast concrete structure at the Albemarle Playground as a concession stand - storage building. Apparently the Recreation Commission does have the right to give permission for this, and despite neighborhood concern the Planning Department has proposed a site and plantings. The Legal Department and Alderman Linda Kraus are pursuing aspects of this, and we asked Peter to write a letter to Mayor Mann complimenting him on his support of the neighbors and expressing concern that the Recreation Commission has this power. He will also write an op-ed piece for the Newton Graphic on the Conservators' broad philosophical position against intrusions on public lands. The league of Women Voters is studying Newton's Boards and Commissions.

Map Project: Burton showed a handsome mock-up of the new map of Newton's parks and conservation area. It folds into 10 sections on both sides of a large sheet and includes an index and Conservators' membership form. It will be on heavy white stock with printing in blue and two colors of green on the maps. We tentatively suggested selling it for \$1.00. The graphics are costing between \$1600 and \$2000 and commercial printing will be \$2400 for 15,000, but it is possible that the printing can be done at the high school.

Newsletter: Bonnie set the deadline for material as April 6. There will be information on the walks, annual meeting, Little League and composting.

Change of Meeting Place: Peter asked that we explore other options of a free meeting place for our monthly meetings. Some expressed satisfaction with this space in the Newton Lower Falls Community Center.

Fran Seasholes,
Secretary

April 1992

Newton Conservators Inc.
Board Meeting
April 22, 1992
Lower Falls Community Center (Hamilton School)

545 Grove Street

Present: Peter Kastner, presiding, Lawrence Kaplan, Fran Seasholes, Mike Clarke, Catherine Brigham, Jean Husher, Bill Leitch, Roger Feinstein, Bart Hague.

Minutes of March 25: Corrections; under Map Project correct spelling of handsome and the map selling price of \$1.00 and the printing of 15,000 [not 1500]. ACCEPTED as corrected.

Annual Meeting: Fran reviewed the invitation and dinner arrangements. Thelma Fleishman was pleased to be named Environmentalist of the Year, and Jean will arrange for a plaque, while Peter will put articles in the Newton Graphic and Tab newspapers. Mark Primack will be the **speaker**.

Membership: Bill reported that there are 222 current paid members vs. 227 at this time last year. We were reminded that dues are for a calendar year. The mailing list included 180 not renewed in 1991 and 130 not paid since 1989 or 1990. Those not up-to-date should be alerted with a pink slip in the next mailing.

Nominations: Jean presented the names of those who have agreed to be officers and Board members next year, and Peter offered information on the qualification of several new people. There are spaces for 3 other Board members.

Advisory Council: The nominating committee expressed concern that non-attendance at Board meetings had meant a lack of a quorum for votes at some meetings, and yet those people who were absent could be helpful to the Conservators still if we created a separate group of non-voting supporters. This group could include past active Board members, Aldermen with a special interest and whose opinions we value, etc. We VOTED on establishing an advisory council (without clarification of specific responsibilities or criteria, with a suggested limit of 15-20 people). We VOTED on 14 names now, and Peter will send them letter confirming their position.

Conservators Audit: Those assigned to review the treasurer's book for 1991 will meet at the Kaplans at 9:00 on May 2.

Treasurer's Report: Lawrence distributed the April report and the **proposed budget**, and there was discussion, including note that the Attorney General's report cost \$25 and map design \$500. The proposal is to increase our grants from the \$700 of this year to \$4000 in 1992, which should require some fund-raising. The budget does not include the map costs, but \$600 has been received in donations and some of the ultimate costs will be recovered by selling it. Its costs are estimated at \$2000, and it was agreed to designate that amount from the \$4000 grant item. There is strong agreement that the map is a very important service and source of community awareness of the Conservators.

We noted that we are lacking written guidelines and procedures related to grants, including the school. Some requests apparently have already been received. We

VOTED on a budget of \$7165 for 1992. The June meeting should include a discussion of the grants proposal.

Spring Walks: The full schedule of guided walks was reviewed.

Ordway Park Clean-up: Deborah Howard, Peter and Bonnie checked what is needed (minimal raking, creation of a natural compost area, and some clipping of new growth) and have set May 2 for volunteer work there.

Map Project: The final drawings are complete, and there are expected to be samples in color at the May 13 annual dinner meeting. Burton has been working on this. At the June meeting a decision will be made as to whether we wait until fall, when the North High School could print and fold it for free, or proceed with paying \$2400 for the commercial printing of 15,000. The cost of the graphics is \$1600.

Site for Board Meetings: We have met in city buildings for the last two years with the thought of thus encouraging non-Board members to feel free to attend, but this has not happened. Because of tight city finances, a charge of \$15-\$20 will now be made for this Lower Falls Community Center or the Nahanton Park building, which we have used, and the new library also makes a considerable charge. People will check whether there would be a charge to meet in Eliot Church or Church of the Redeemer or another setting. The previous pattern had been to rotate among Board member homes. No decision was made.

Springfest: We decided to drop our having a Conservators display at this May 17 event at City Hall. The display board and photo quiz is in need of some repair, and we do not yet have our maps. The suggestion was made that at the Harvest Fair or similar event where we take our display we might offer various kinds of guidebooks for sale that we could have on consignment.

Earth Day: There is to be an Auburndale walk and "fair" this Sunday.

Chestnut Hill Garden Club: Cathy reported that this group had recently cleaned up the Chestnut Hill T stop and Star Market area with gratifying results.

Appreciation to Peter: This being Peter's last day to chair a regular Board Meeting, we expressed great appreciation for his two years of leadership and he reflected on how busy lots of people have been.

Fran Seasholes, Secretary

Annual Meeting - May 1992

Newton Conservators, Incorporated
Annual Meeting
May 13, 1992

The annual meeting dinner was held in Noyes Hall of Andover Newton Theological School with reservations for 95 and about 88 in attendance.

The Environmentalist of the Year Award was presented to Thelma Fleishman by current and past presidents Peter Kastner and Jean Husher.

Preseident Peter Kastner summarized the work of the year and Treasurer Lawrence Kaplan presented the Treasurer's Report which was ACCEPTED BY VOTE. A question was raised about getting a better rate of interest on our investments. Bill Leitch reported on the membership which is about 300, similar to a year ago, but with a large number of people giving extra contributions. Jean Husher gave the Nominating Committee report and had those officers and Board members present stand. The secretary was asked to cast one BALLOT in support of the slate. An Advisory Council has been instituted and the names of those nominated were given.

President-elect Roger Feinstein introduced keynote speaker Mark Primack, director of the Boston Greenspace Alliance, who spoke of the value to society of urban natural areas.

It was announced that a Conservators Picnic will be held at Kennard Park on Sunday, June 21st.

Respectfully submitted,
Frances C. Seasholes,
Secretary