

Board of Directors, 1992 - 1993

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President: Roger Feinstein
Vice President: Bonnie Carter
Secretary: Frances Seasholes
Treasurer: Burton Elliott
Past President: Peter Kastner

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William Hagar	Bart Hague
William Jones	Oliver Komar
William Leitch	Michael Malec
Susan Mirsky	Susan Regan
Vaunita Schnell	Douglas Sherman
Martin Tropp	Robin Washington
Nicholas Yannoni	

June 1992

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
June 24, 1992
Lower Falls Community Center
545 Grove Street, Newton Lower Falls

Present: Roger Feinstein, presiding, Bud Elliott, Bart Hague, Bonnie Carter, Margaret Albright, Fran Seasholes, Bill Leitch, Mike Clarke.

Membership Report: Bill reported that before receiving about 30 renewals there were 223 paid renewals in 1992 (227 at this time last year) and 144 of the 1991 membership has not yet been renewed. Of the current members 37 paid at the sustaining membership rate and 19 are Life members.

Board and Advisory lists: Roger will prepare a new list based on the annual meeting elections, & by-laws, and the Leitchs will provide the mailing labels.

Treasurer's Report: Bud is beginning his work as treasurer and indicated that after paying bills for the map, library and dinner the balance in the operating account is \$12,739.

Considerable investigation on his part resulted in recommendations for ways to save money (changing the checking account bank) and earning money (investments). There

was a VOTE to move our checking account from the Bay Bank to Pioneer Bank, which will not charge us and will provide interest on the amount we keep in the account. There was discussion on the options for placement of \$30,000, which is now in the Bank of Boston earning 3 3/4% interest. The VOTE was to place \$20,000 in Fidelity Short Term Bond Fund, which currently earns 6.72% and \$10,000 in a limited maturity government investment earning 6.16%.

Grants Committee: Bud, chair, noted that the Board had reduced the amount to be granted from \$3000 to \$2000. He has been consulting with Board member Susan Mirsky and asked for new members of this committee, to which Mike Clarke volunteered.

The Newton School Department people met on their specific requests to the Conservators for the next school year. A request for \$2000 would enable the high schools to have a school-wide environmental action day with solar energy exhibit, speakers, etc. \$250 would enable a Day Junior High group to rent canoes and obtain chemicals to do some river water test samples in connection with an on-going project. \$200 is requested by Richard Staley to start a Day Junior High after-school environmental club, which would focus on the Cheesebrook Brook. A grant of \$500 could provide Newton elementary students (and interested adults) with two bus trips to follow the route of Newton's wastewater. The school liaisons are very willing, in conjunction with any grants, to assure the Conservators of recognition, which would help increase community awareness of the organization. There was a VOTE to authorize the Grants Committee to pursue these requests up to the point of actually expending the money. There was particular interest in the elementary school bus trip and a sense that a considerably lessened amount could still encourage the high school students to plan an action day.

Map Project: Bud reported that the masters are ready for printing, and the project is on hold until school opens in the fall, at which time Newton North High School print shop will do the printing for just the cost of the paper. He suggested that we approach Arthur D. Little Company with a request to pay for the cost of paper, labels and distribution.

It was noted that the earlier map had been mailed to each Newton household and then subsequently sold at events. There are 24,000 households in Newton, and mailing at bulk mail rates would likely be 11 ¢ each. The Greater Boston Retarded Citizens is equipped to handle mailings. Mike Clarke agreed to look at the grant proposal requirements for Arthur D. Little to see whether he could do this for us.

Conservation Commission: Roger reported that the meeting did not have a quorum, and there are continuing budget and staffing problems as well as the provision of good minutes of proceedings. The Conservators need to continue being community watchdogs about conservation concerns, being present and outspoken at the Commission meetings. We noted that Peter Kastner had written a letter expressing our concerns, and it was suggested that Newton Graphic reporter Igor Greenwald be urged to write about this and that our Newsletter include information.

Conservator Walks: The cemetery walk led by Fiora Houghteling had good weather and about a dozen people. The canoe ride led by Mide Clarke had six canoes and went upstream from Nahanton Park to Powell's Island which is uninhabited (and uninhibited!). It was suggested that the fall offerings include canoe and bicycle as well as walking. Suggestions should be brought to the July meeting.

Program Ideas: The League of Women Voters study of Newton's Boards and Commissions (led by Anita Capeless) looked at tenure, appointments, frequency of meetings, publicity and minutes. This area is also of interest to Alderman Linda Gordon Kraus. Bonnie will explore whether there is a potential for a public forum or other follow-up appropriate for us to participate in.

Newsletter: There is no plan to create a summer edition, but all were urged to provide articles and there was a suggestion that we include those areas of political interest.

Ordway Park Clean-up: Bonnie reported that the city is replacing the sidewalk and thus cutting back dirt that was encroaching. The spring effort included starting a leaf composting area, and a fall effort will have to attack the maple seedlings, as last year.

Crystal Lake Canoe loading area: Mike has talked to Recreation Commissioner Russ Halloran, who will send him minutes about progress on implementing this at Livingston Cove (Lake Ave.), which is now a well used, badly eroded area. The city will police this, but the state designates it as a place that any boat without a combustion engine, which can be carried on a car, can be put into the water. It was suggested we write letters to Mr. Halloran, encouraging the landscaping aspect of this to enhance and preserve this public area.

Charles River Pathway: Bart noted that the MDC has received some recent publicity about the expansion of the pathway and that the Conservators has had a long-term interest in having the existing paths linked. Bill Geisentanner was the original planner and the Friends of Nahanton Park have had a special interest, including a boardwalk along the river. Bart will check with Bill Jones or current MDC people to clarify what actions may be planned.

Ware's Cove: Mention was made of the recent chemical use, the monitoring and the question of abutters' septic systems overflowing.

Conservators Board Meetings: Meeting are held on the fourth Wednesday of each month. Roger will determine whether we meet in both July and August this year.

Fran Seasholes, Secretary

July 1992

Newton Conservators Inc.
Board of Directors
July 22, 1992
Lower Falls Community Center
545 Grove Street, Newton Lower Falls

Present: Roger Feinstein, presiding, Lawrence Kaplan, Fran Seasholes, Helen Heyn, Peter Kastner, Bill Stevenson, Susan Regan, Marty Tropp, Margaret Albright, Catherine Brigham, Mike Clarke, Robin Washington, Ollie Komar and Nick Yannoni.

Minutes of the June 24 meeting were ACCEPTED with the correction of deleting the first sentence of the last paragraph about the meeting room,

Treasurer's Report was omitted because Bud Elliott could not be present.

Conservation Commission: Helen Heyn, retired executive of the CC, was able to provide useful background and updating information to the group, which included many members new to the Board and unfamiliar with the work of this city body. Some of the recent budget funding-level problems have been resolved by transferring accounts, but there is still no funding of an administrator. The timing of money decisions conflicts with necessary mowing on city-owned parklands. Helen volunteered her time this last year to do some crucial monitoring. Some responsibilities of the Planning and Development Department are in conflict with the goals of maintaining Newton's parks, and there may be legal issues related to maintaining proper minutes of the CC meetings. The aldermen have been offering strong support.

It was agreed that Peter and Roger would create a letter to the Mayor making the following points: thanking him for transferring money to address underfunding, noting use of the Commonwealth Fund, urging proper functioning of the Conservation Commission, noting the possible need to have Board orders on technicalities of the Fund, and suggesting ordinance changes to clarify the role of the Planning and Development Director in relation to the CC and its budget.

Membership: The Leitchs and Burt Elliott are exploring computer disk troubles in relation to our membership disk, and repair may entail an expense. Robin offered to consult with Bill Leitch on this.

Fall Walks: It was suggested that we schedule six or seven and that they include a bird walk with Ollie, canoe trip with Mike and brook walk with Robin. It was suggested that a possible fund-raiser in the future could be a tour (bus?) of Newton parks to make more people aware of them. It was suggested that keeping the names and addresses of participants on the walk would be useful when we seek funds or publicity.

Grants: The only grant made thus far has been to the new library. Ollie expressed interest in joining this subcommittee working on further recommendations.

Map: There is an agreement with the Newton North High School printing department to print the map of parks this fall. One effective way to promote it would be through news articles in the local papers showing sample maps.

Other publications: In the future perhaps the Conservators could help facilitate further guides of Newton birds, waterways etc. in short book form. The Newton geology was assisted years ago (it is considered somewhat out of date) by underwriting the cost of its printing. There are still some available for sale.

Ordway Park clean-up: We agreed to do this on Saturday, October 10, Columbus Day weekend and the weekend of Harvest Fair.

MDC Charles River Pathway: A recent Globe article indicated that there is revived interest in developing the pathway beside the river in a stretch east of Newton. The Conservators have an historic interest and see an opportunity to be supportive of opening more area to the public. Newton's capital improvement plan calls for acquiring two additional pieces of land. It was suggested that we invite the MDC's Dan Driscoll or Julia ____ to give us a presentation, perhaps in cooperation with aldermen, Charles River Watershed, neighborhood groups, etc. The original 1975 pathway plan by Geizentanner had a Ford Foundation Grant. Roger will contact the MDC, Mike Clarke and Bill Stevenson expressed interest, and two places suggested as possibilities for a meeting location were the Charles River Watershed Office or Auburndale's Church of the Messiah.

Livingston Cove - Crystal Lake: Mike reported that state money has been designated to create a boat entry area, and he has been helping promote this with Newton officials.

Conservators' focus: Conversation with new Board members addressed our purpose, service to the city, limitations (because of tax-free status) on our lobbying efforts, organizational development, poor visibility and outreach to the community, and whether we would be a more effective organization if we did fundraising to provide for a paid administrator in the future. Note was made of the Board's self-appraisal two years ago and development of a mission statement, which concentrates on land use in Newton.

Next Board meeting will be in Newton Lower Falls at 7:45 on Wednesday, August 27, 1992.

Fran Seasholes, secretary

August 1992

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors

August 26, 1992
Lower Falls Community Center
545 Grove Street, Newton Lower Falls

Present: Roger Feinstein (presiding), Helen Heyn, Margaret Albright, Mike Clarke, Susan Regan, Bill Stevenson, Bud Elliott, Fran Seasholes, Ollie Komar, Nick Yannoni, Rodney Barker, Jean Husher, Peter Kastner, Bonnie Carter.

Introductions: This included Susan's report on Ware's Cove clearing and Roger's report that he has just been on a Mayor's Committee that has advised not to cut city funding of the Jackson Homestead.

Minutes: The date of the last meeting needs to be corrected as printed, to July 22.

Treasurer's Report: Bud praised Lawrence for his work as the previous treasurer. He distributed a copy of the 1992 budget, which is now on his computer. It shows a projected surplus of \$2270, which is the primary source of award and grant money that is budgeted now at \$2765. The balance sheet shows assets of \$80,005.10. He is moving money to two accounts at Fidelity for over 6% interest. The key to the vault at Bay Bank needs to be located for him. The Annual Dinner final account showed a profit (unintended) of \$164. Our current cash flow has about a \$3000 surplus now. A donation of \$100 has been received from Save the Cove group, which we assisted through our bookkeeping.

Membership: Five new dues payments were received in July. The September Bulletin will note that members who have not paid since 1991 will be dropped from the mailing list.

Grants Committee: Bud invited people to join the committee, which will meet September 2 at his home, and Ollie and Mike volunteered. He explained the purpose as making the Conservators better known in the community by giving away some of our income each year. A pledge of \$2000 over 4 years has been made to the new library, and proposals for small projects have already been received from the Newton schools for environmental education or action. The committee will make recommendations to the Board.

Conservation Commission Budget: Helen, who is acting now as a volunteer, reported that budget transfers have been made to create level funding, and a conservation administrator position has been left unfunded. Possible use of the Newton Community Trust Fund is being explored but seems unlikely. Bids are out on park maintenance, with \$15,559 remaining in that account. Planning and Development Department head Gene Bober and others note the strategy of hoping for private funds, rather than tax funds, being hoped for to fulfill some previous functions. Roger and Peter will write a Conservators letter protesting this. The Newsletter can also publicize this and suggest letter writing.

Fall Walks: A sign-up with Sunday dates and suggested walks was circulated. Dan Driscoll of the MDC will walk at area of the Charles River Pathway west of Watertown Square to Bemis Dam, pointing out the private encroachments. The survey work is proceeding and we anticipate a later public meeting with him. A flyer for the walks will be created.

Harvest Fair: Nick and Roger will repair and get our standing display to the Newton Center Green, with Peter and other volunteers agreeing to "person" it. The confirmed date is October 4. We agreed to provide old maps, the geology book, consignment books (Susan) and possibly historic photographs to sell and membership forms and newsletters to give.

Forums with Newton League of Women Voters: Bonnie is current president. We are open to working together this year, perhaps on the Charles River Pathway and the City's Boards and Commissions. The latter research was coordinated by AnnaMaria Abernathy and Anita Capeless and includes data on 15, a few of which touch the Conservators's interests. They plan first to go to the Mayor and possibly have a public meeting later.

Recycling Coordinator: It was noted that the two able volunteers (Nancy and Betsy) have become "burned out" and are retiring after managing 1000 volunteers which, among other things, provide Saturday morning staffing of the depot. Ollie will draft a letter asking Public Works Director Hickey what they are planning to do to replace this team.

Newsletter: Bonnie and Jean would be glad for assistance. Susan will write about Ware's Cove, Ollie about Nahanton Park birds, Peter bios of 3 new board members, volunteers will be solicited for the Harvest Fair booth, the Board and Advisory Committee will be listed, and copy of the letter about the Conservation Commission budget will be included.

Ordway Park: The next volunteer clean-up day is October 10. Recent mowing cost \$75.

Map: Newton North H.S. expects to print it soon, and next meeting we will discuss distribution and charges. The MBTA will be looking for various maps alerting people to T accessible walks, etc.

Discussion of having a paid administrator: Ollie again put forth the idea of supplementing our volunteer efforts with a person who would fund raise (including their own costs), and pick up on jobs not being done, including membership recruitment and publicity. Note was made of the difficulty in raising operating funds and of the potential activism of new Board members. Roger will send the recently developed mission statement and by-laws with the next minutes.

Newton-Central America tie: Ollie suggested that we consider a specific project to interest other Newtonites, namely a connection with a Central American environmental/conservation organization. "Our" birds winter in Nicaragua, and we have a sister city relationship with San Juan del Sur.

Board Organization: Some want a plan for the year and committee assignments made.

Fran Seasholes, Sec'ty

September 1992

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors
September 23, 1992
Lower Falls Community Center
545 Grove Street, Newton Lower Falls

Present: Roger Feinstein, presiding, Nick Yannoni, Margaret Albright, Susan Regan, Bud Elliott, Peter Kastner, Fran Seasholes, William Stevenson, Lawrence Kaplan, Mike Clarke, Bill Leitch, Bart Hague, Bill Hager.

Minutes: In August 26 minutes change Margaret to Susan in "Introductions" [done above]. The minutes were ACCEPTED as corrected.

Membership: Bill Leitch reported that the membership remains at just under 300 and that he needs lead time in requests for mailing labels.

Treasurer's Report: Bud distributed copies of the balances as of 9-23-92, indicating total liabilities and equity of \$79,180.81. Since January 1, 1992 total expenditures have been \$6,396.87 and income has been \$8,772.55. The Bay Bank account has been closed and \$10,000 invested in Fidelity Fund Security (average maturity 4 years) at 6.8% yield. There is \$47,000 available to invest, and it was agreed to put \$20,000 in Fidelity FLMG. It was suggested that Fred Abernathy be consulted for suggestions on the remainder. It was agreed that the treasurer would present a report in alternate months rather than each month.

Grant Committee: Bud reported on the committee's meeting on 9-2-92. Payments to the library and Environmental Science Program have been made. Four requests from the Newton Schools were reviewed, and one from Newton North H.S. for an environmental action day was REJECTED as not closely enough tied to Conservator concerns and not specific enough. Day Junior High request for canoe rental and chemical purchase related to Charles River water quality was recommended by the committee and APPROVED by the Board for \$250, with the understanding that the source of the funds would be publicized. Richard Staley's request for \$200 as seen money for a Day Junior High environmental club, which would test water in the Cheesecake Brook, was initially not recommended but then APPROVED by the Board. The request from Angier School (Educators for Living in a Nuclear Age) for \$500 to rent buses to take elementary students to two facilities related to Newton's solid waste disposal and recycling was APPROVED by the Board. It was hoped that some Conservators members might be able to accompany them and that due publicity for the organization would be given. It was

clarified that \$2000 has been APPROVED for grants in 1993. There was a VOTE on the above expenditures.

It was recommended that the committee develop a form for proposals. They will meet again later this year and present a follow-up report to the Board.

Fall Walks: It was noted that the September 20 walk was cancelled because it missed the Newsletter. The October 11 Aqueduct walk needs a leader who can be briefed by Nick and a leader is needed for the November 1 Edmands Park walk.

Harvest Fair: Peter will coordinate the sign-up for manning the booth, Susan will bring multiples of books from the Charles River Watershed (20% profit), the Newsletters will be given free, geology books sold for \$1.00, and cemetery leaflets and membership forms will be available. Mike is preparing a flyer on the Conservators and distributed his draft, which included activities and accomplishments since the Conservators were organized in 1961. Several additions were suggested, and he will continue working on this.

Ordway Park Clean-up: Ten o'clock on October tenth.

Cotton Street Cemetery Clean-up: Nine o'clock on October 17.

Map: Bud reported that the Newton North print shop promise to print our map this fall has been broken, blamed on budget cutbacks. A compromise offer is to print 2000 in black and white in November with us providing the paper. Bud obtained an estimate from a broker of \$5000 for 40,000 maps or \$2500 for 15,000 maps. The finished size is 16" x 20", folded into pocket size.

The discussion on how to proceed included having Nick check with Minutemen Regional Technical School, Mike inquiring about a grant from Arthur D. Little, soliciting financial support from Newton Businesses (especially real estate or sport stores), spending the money directly from our treasury, finding sponsors or advertisers, and checking about potential mailing costs. \$10,000 sounded like a generous estimate for being able to print and distribute the map free to all Newton households. A committee of Susan, Margaret, Peter and Nick agreed to work with Bud in the near future to explore these options and have recommendations for the next meeting.

MDC Charles River Pathway: Roger will be "screening" MDC's Dan Driscoll before a potential trip or presentation about the new activity in this area that the Conservators have a long-term interest in.

Committee Assignments: Roger would like to have a program planning committee that would propose/plan overall activities for 1993. The other committees are Grants, Finance, Audit, Annual Meeting, Newsletter, Membership, and Nominations. There was a challenge to Board members to be active between meetings and sign-up for committees.

There was discussion around program development and choosing between concentrations for action. Advocacy for preserving the Conservation Commission is important, as is monitoring the aldermanic and other bodies' decision-making on the use of public lands (like statues and Little League signs). The MDC walkways and linking neighborhoods to the Charles River are things to help promote.

There was agreement that Alderman Linda Gordan Kraus be invited to the next meeting (by Margaret) to share her concerns about land concerns in the city. Perhaps Andy Stern will be invited to a later meeting to discuss his work around deterring Little League signs.

Lyman Street Parking: Peter noted that a meeting on October 21 will be Planning Director Gene Bober's presentation to the Aldermen about creating parking in Newton Center on land beside Lyman Street (above the fire station), which is over the aqueduct and now open green space. He referred to the Conservators' stand earlier on not taking such land.

Boston Marathon statue: Mayor Mann seems to have made a private arrangement to permit the erection of a fourteen foot statue of Johnny Kelly at the corner of Walnut and Commonwealth beside Bullough's Pond. Apparently no review is required before any official group for such, but the Commonwealth Avenue Task Force or Advisory Committee original guidelines allowed for statues. There are none now, and it was the feeling of this meeting that the process for such a decision is inadequate and this proposal, with commercial aspects and blocking a natural view, is offensive. It was suggested that people write letters to the mayor as individuals.

Respectfully submitted,
Frances Seasholes, Secretary

October 1992

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
October 28, 1992
Lower Falls Community Center
545 Grove Street, Newton Lower Falls

Present: Roger Feinstein, presiding, AnnaMaria Abernathy, Arnie Glick, Mike Clarke, Bill Stevenson, Bill Jones, Nick Yannoni, Bob Krauss, Bill Hager, Helen Heyn, Fran Seasholes, Bud Elliott, Vaunita Schnell, Catherine Brigham, Susan Mirsky, Anita Capeless, Peter Kastner, Ollie Komar.

Presentation: The time between 7:45 and 9:15 was devoted to a presentation and then discussion led by Newton Alderman Linda Jordan Kraus. She focused on the open space issues she sees in the city with particular focus **on the work of the Parks and Recreation Commission** and its 8 members, appointed by the mayor. Reference was made to the study of some commissions made by the Newton League of Women Voters,

to the bias toward sports teams' use of public parks, to changes in sources of funding during tight fiscal times, and to possible changes in usage rules through the Aldermen providing legislation. She invited the Conservators and others to participate in the proposed policy changes through letters, and attending the aldermanic hearings (the next in November 18). She provided copies of the current law.

Minutes: page 2, second paragraph under "Map", deletion of phrase [done]. The minutes were APPROVED as revised.

Treasurer's Report: Bud Elliott reported that about \$340 was spent last month, and we remain in approximately the same position as last month.

Membership: Bill Hager reported for Bill Leitch that paid memberships are now [sic]. 243 people now on the mailing from list from 1990 and 1991 have now renewed. It was agreed that Roger would do as Peter had last year, by sending a letter to the membership suggesting giving gift memberships as seasonal gifts.

Conservation Commission: Helen noted that nothing has yet been done in relation to adding a paid administrator to the budget. The maintenance of grass etc. is proceeding according to the plans Helen prepared.

Fall Walks: Peter Kastner had about 6 people on his rainy walk focused on the Needham side of the Charles at Cutler Park. Mike Clarke's canoe trip in nice weather had 6 canoes focusing on Culls Island and many birds. Ollie Komar had about 5 people look for birds in the Nahanton Park garden area. Roger's aqueduct walk in fine weather had 8 people (at the beginning!). Dan Driscoll's Charles River pathway walk was postponed to November 15, and in reporting this to members Roger will ask for a map of the route to be included.

Mini-newsletter: Ollie volunteered to produce a short newsletter including Roger's letter on gift memberships, suggesting people contact the mayor and aldermen about providing for a Conservation Commission administrator, the postponed river walk.

Harvest Fair: Nick and Roger transported and set up our display, which is stored in Ginny Taplin's garage. Bill Jones volunteered to do repairs and/remodeling of it before its appearance at Springfest. There was a profit of \$76 on sale of books and maps (35 sold for \$1.00).

Map Project: Bud reported that it is still possible that Newton North's print shop can do 1500 black and white copies in December. Minutemen school cannot, the map being too large. He suggested that we either fund raise or spend out own money (\$5000 for 40,000 or \$2500 for 15,000). Margaret Albright sent us a proposal that we publish the map as a center fold in the Tab newspaper, perhaps half free space and half as an advertisement with \$2400 provided by underwriters. This would have the advantage of reaching the widest readership and thus publicity for the Conservators, who could then print a colored

version on heavier paper to give with memberships or sell. It was suggested that a target date for having the map available might be April 1.

Bud would like assistance in further exploring the printing and financing. Peter will work further with Margaret on her proposal. There was a sense that it would be preferable to structure this so it pays for itself and no consensus as to whether we want it available free. Further discussion was TABLED with the decision to make a decision at the January meeting [on] whether we have appropriate outside funding or will spend Conservators funds.

Committee assignments: Revisions to the listing on the agenda: Bill Stevenson will transfer from Grants to Program, Ollie Komar is added to Open Space. The designated Chairs are as follows and it was urged that they convene their committees. Program Planning - Nick Yannoni, Grants - Bud Elliott, Open Space - Bart Hague, Membership - Bill Leitch. Further discussion on expectations of Board members in relation to committee participation was tabled.

Lyman Street Parking: Helen noted that the Aldermanic Committee on Public Health and Safety has put its hearing probably on December 23, so that people could have advance notice. The space is inventoried Newton open space, partly over the aqueduct, and the Conservators are already on record as strongly against changing this area to parking.

Levingston Cove: Mike announced that the Parks and Recreation Department will soon be adding landscaping to this area beside Crystal Lake.

Recycling Committee: Ollie drafted a letter to the mayor recommending a paid coordinator to take on the work that volunteers have retired from. He and Roger will send it.

Friends of MDC: Bill Jones reporting this new public-private initiative.

Political Action Section of the Newsletter: This idea was well received as a new element in the Conservators Newsletters.

Fran Seasholes, Secretary

November-December 1992

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
December 9, 1992
Lower Falls Community Center
545 Grove Street, Newton Lower Falls

Present: Roger Feinstein, presiding, Helen Heyn, Nick Yannoni, Bill Leitch, Susan Regan, Burton Elliott, Lawrence Kaplan, Bonnie Carter, Vaunita Schnell, Bill Stevenson.

Minutes of the October Meeting: Bill Stevenson and Nick Yannoni have agreed to co-chair the program committee. The minutes should be revised to place a period after the paid administrator for the Conservation Commission and drop the end of the sentence that states that the Commission has not been active lately.

Announcements: Peter Kastner is reporting to the aldermanic committee tonight about the concerns of the Conservators concerning the **attempted conversion of the public tennis courts to a mens' only tennis club** at Newton Center. Roger Feinstein will meet with the Safety Committee to advocate continued **boat access on Lake Avenue** to Livingston Cove.

Treasurer's Report: Burton Elliott reports a surplus of \$4,045.29.

Membership Report: There are now 256 members for 1992 and beyond. 113 from last year have not renewed. We were reminded that memberships expire in December. We will staple an envelope in the January newsletter and encourage the delinquent to renew. Board members are encouraged to give gift memberships. We have received the Newton Historical Society membership mailing labels. We will give them a set of our labels.

Newsletter: Contributions are due by January 8. We agreed January will be the last issue for those who have not paid their dues in the last two years.

Grants Committee: Irwin Blumer sent us a letter acknowledging our efforts to award grants to schools. Bud Elliott will send a short article to local newspapers. The grant for the recycling trip has been committed but not spent yet. The committee is starting a yearly cycle of school grants.

Map Project: Bob Faulkner of Newton North High School has printed 200 proof sheets at no charge. He is in the process of printing 2000 more in black and white. We will pay costs of \$200. The maps will still need to be folded. Bud Elliott met with the mayor, who has agreed to do a citywide mailing of the park map. We agreed to pay for the paper with an estimated cost of \$2,000.

Lyman Street Parking: Bill Jones attended a meeting of the aldermanic committee. The parking proposal has been put in the limbo of unfinished business.

Political Action: Roger Feinstein will ask Eugene Bober of the Planning Department to come to one of our meetings, perhaps January, and Roger will see if Dan Driscoll from the MDC can come to our February meeting to discuss the walkway on the Charles River. Roger will write a letter (with Helen Heyn's help) to the mayor advocating a **budget for the Conservation Commission**.

Program Committee: Nick Yannoni and Bill Stevenson will hold a meeting of the program committee in January to work on a winter and spring program.

Future Meetings: Meetings of the board are scheduled for January 27 and February 24.

Bill Stevenson, Acting Secretary

January 1993

Newton Conservators, Incorporated
Board of Directors Meeting
January 27, 1993
Lower Falls Community Center
545 Grove Street, Newton Lower Falls

Present: Roger Feinstein, presiding, Bud Elliott, Margaret Albright, Helen Heyn, Susan Regan, Bill Stevenson, Mike Clarke, Fran Seasholes, Peter Kastner, Catherine Brigham, Jean Husher, Bonnie Carter, Rodney Barker, Bill Jones.

Minutes: The December 9, 1992 minutes were ACCEPTED as written.

Treasurer's Report: Bud Elliott distributed that statement of 1992 receipts and expenditures, showing an income of \$12,806.72 and expenditures of \$7,739.69. About \$500 in additional memberships has been received since this unaudited report.

Next month he will present a proposed 1993 budget. His report further documented that we have no liabilities and equity of \$81,454.88 in a variety of accounts. Some separate accounts are designated (Ordway and Open Space), others (arboretum) need clarification. Bud was AUTHORIZED to present the report in a different format, to move and consolidate to get more interest, and to show the in and out of money for the Save the Cove group. There is a continuing search for the key to the Conservators's safety deposit box.

Membership: About \$500 in additional dues and donations from 33 people is in hand. There was agreement not to cut off in January those who had not paid in two years but to give another reminder when distributing the map.

Map project: Bud announced with pleasure that Bob Faulkner at Newton North High School had printed 2000 black and white versions of our map, and we had paid \$200 for the paper and plate. There was agreement to send the graphic arts department \$200 as a gift for this work. The organization RSVP will fold these maps free, and we will pay them \$10 a day for people to address and sort them.

Notice will be given in Newton Pride and Arts in the Parks mailings that people can obtain a free copy of the parks map by sending in a stamped envelope. We agreed to send the map to our Conservator membership and probably charge \$1.00 for it at fairs and other occasions. At Bud's recommendation, there was further APPROVAL of a further printing in color of 5000, pending finding a funding source and distribution plan.

Grants Committee: Newton teachers are without a contract and their action has stopped progress on school projects, but Maxine Rosenberg indicated that individual teachers who take their children on walks would like to have our map, and this is a further way we can publicize the Conservators. Teachers still want to take lower grade levels to recycling places and will later give us further proposals.

Leo Levi is involved with a national program for school children to plant fast-growing linden tree seedlings and has inquired about Conservators' financial help. This is of interest to us and Bud will get more information. Questions were raised about the need to replace street trees and the excessive amount of street salt now being used.

The Grants Committee will meet again when the teachers have a contract.

Program Committee: Roger reported that Chair Nick Yannoni is out of town, but the committee had so far proposed only continued participation in the city's Spring Fest and Harvest Fair. There was discussion but little interest in our becoming exhibitors at the Boston annual Flower Show.

Livingston Cove: Mike reported that this park beside Crystal Lake is due for upgrading due to erosion and will have a permanent path and black iron fence beside the road.

Guest - Eugene Bober, Director of Newton's Planning and Development

Department: Mr. Bober spent an hour and a half in discussion on a variety of mutual concerns. He praised the landscape design work of Ken Eisenbraun of his staff, giving the example of the space around the new library and the spaces around new Needham Street businesses. He was/is in disagreement with the Conservators about structures on playgrounds (Little League) and heard our recommendation that structures go through a design-review process. In questioning the decision process in public use of open space, he suggested that we be more specific on what legislation or process we recommend. He feels that there is not a large constituency in Newton to keep "walking around" land but that recreation groups have been vocal.

Plans for the expansion of the Charles River Pathway (walkway) by the MDC (in Watertown to Waltham) and implementation of the Giesentanner plan in Newton are of mutual interest. Lobbying for pedestrian paths (Commonwealth Ave., aqueduct, links for walking and biking between village areas) can include Jody Young who is the transportation consultant for the city. The Planning Department's computer maps can be useful.

The Conservation Commission has the same funding as last year, with the Planning Dept. providing 12 hours of staff time.

There is some hope that funding related to the Commonwealth Ave. Golf Course can increase park maintenance and make conservation land accessible. Since Helen Heyn retired some jobs have not had people designated to be responsible for them. Of the 20 people in the Planning Department, 19 are federally funded and cannot work on open space, 4 work with development, 3 specifically economic development (Needham Street being a major recent effort), and there is a 12 hour position as preservation planner. The staff covers 14 boards and commissions. It would take a full time person to make the Charles River Pathway happen, and conflicts in usage will be one area to be negotiated. Bill Jones of the MDC suggested that Newton offer to work under MDC direction, in as much as he cannot take on further tasks while handling the follow-through on plans already made. There was agreement to "keep in touch."

Fran Seasholes, Secretary.

February 1993

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors
February 24, 1993
Lower Falls Community Center
545 Grove Street, Newton Lower Falls

Present: Roger Feinstein (presiding), Helen Heyn, Margaret Albright, Susan Regan, Bill Hager, Lawrence Kaplan, Nick Yannoni, Bill Leitch, Fran Seasholes, Jean Husher, Peter Kastner.

Minutes: Minutes of the January meeting were ACCEPTED with typographical corrections.

Treasurer's Report: Bud Elliott presented copies of a proposed **1993 budget**, with comparable figures for 1990 and 1991 and 1992. It was considered realistic, conservative and was APPROVED with appreciation for his work. Lower interest rates mean less income, and membership income is projected to hold steady. Total income is projected to be \$11,755 and expenses \$9032. It anticipated \$1000 in income from the sale of maps now on hand, and grants at the level approved for 1992. Bud needs further help in

locating the safe deposit box key, identifying some separate funds, and advice on investing some of our cash.

Membership: Bill Leitch reported that paid 1993 memberships were now at 172 (plus some just handed to him), and there are 138 people who are one year in arrears. There has been an increase in the average amount sent in, with 43 at the "sustaining" rate and 20 "life memberships." Any change in the rate would have to be presented to the annual meeting for a vote. New membership envelopes will be printed, and some will be enclosed with the next newsletter along with the map to stimulate dues payment.

Newton Open Space Map: Bud picked up 2000 final black and white maps from Newton North High School for a total cost to us of \$400. The RSVP group is folding them.

Bud Elliott led the discussion on distribution of the maps, which will be further discussed later. There was agreement on providing them free to members with a newsletter (or annual meeting invitation) mailing, some free for pick-up at the Planning and/or Recreation Departments and for teachers who make class use of them for walks. The Newton Pride mailing indicated that one can receive it free by providing (to Bud) a stamped, addressed envelope, and Bud has already processed 25 this way. No agreement on citywide free distribution or selling them for \$1.00 was reached.

Program Committee: Nick Yannoni indicated that the committee had not met but would, to discuss the **annual meeting** and other suggestions. The Boston College Law School auditorium (Center Street) can be used without cost if we have a lecture format. There was a suggestion that Richard Stomberg, formerly of Newton Highlands and the Mass. Horticultural Society, speaks effectively on the rain forests.

At the next Board meeting Dan Driscoll of the MDC will be our guest. He is also giving a presentation on the Charles River Pathway locally on March 3.

Audit Committee: Margaret Albright and Bill Hager will review the 1992 books with Lawrence Kaplan.

Announcements: Roger will investigate a rumor that **Cold Springs Park** is to add another soccer field. Peter Kastner attended a hearing on the **refreshment stand projected for Auburndale Park** and short of being able to prevent this development, asked that it go before a design review process. The Mayor's commission on handicapped access is applying for grants and matching funds from the **Friends of Nahanton Park** to create a 700 foot path (stone dust) that would be wheelchair accessible and end with a platform beside the river at Nahanton Park.

Guest: Leo Levi: Leo is the force behind the **Newton Pride Committee**, and he reviewed the various projects undertaken in the last four years. He strongly advocates communication among local groups working in related environmental areas and involving children. Private funding is enabling the schools to have 3rd, 4th and 5th

graders have a tree curriculum and to provide 1700 kids with seedlings to plant. The National Tree Trust is funding a program of distributing 6000 seedlings of five kinds of trees with Newton acquiring 2000 of these, which will spend their first year in a tree farm. Leo has arranged for the Turnpike Authority to handle 1000 of these for planting as it cuts through Newton. Newton has been named one of three cities for a pilot tree-seed program in classrooms, with a video to promote it elsewhere. The focus of planting new trees becomes clearer when it is noted that, on average, cities plant only one tree for every eleven taken down...and the December 12, 1992 storm damaged thousands of Newton trees. The Street Tree Survey increased awareness of the need for more diversity in the plantings. Leo is hoping that many Newton organizations will sponsor trees, assuming the responsibility for watering and maintaining them on school grounds, private land, etc. on an annual basis. Earth Day and Arbor Day are natural times to focus on the goal of planting more trees than ever. We have many unique "heritage trees" of particular age or beauty, which are being "located." We have received a FEMA (federal) grant of \$270,000 to clean up storm damage to street trees, and this will focus on Commonwealth Avenue. Ann Arbor, Michigan offers a model of an endowment fund for maintaining and planting trees. He noted that there is lack of coordination between city departments (engineering, planning, parks) that deal with trees, and there is to be a March training related to damaging of tree roots, pruning, salt, etc.

Frances Seasholes, Secretary

March 1993

The Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors
March 24, 1993
Meeting at Seasholes'

Present: Roger Feinstein, presiding, Peter Kastner, Helen Heyn, Bill Hager, Bud Elliott, Catherine Brigham, Fran Seasholes, Nick Yannoni, Bill Stevens, Robin Williams, Sue Regan, Margaret Albright, Lawrence Kaplan, Bonnie Carter.

Minutes: The minutes of the February 24 meeting were ACCEPTED.

Treasurer's Report: Bud had computer problems, so will have a report at the next meeting.

Membership: Bud reported for Bill Leitch that 321 members have paid 1992 or 1993 dues and that many renewers had upgraded their contribution. The fact that the Conservators operate on a calendar basis needs clarification for members, especially those who send dues in November or December. There was a suggestion that 2 or 5 year memberships be offered, that we actively seek new members, and use the map as a recruiting tool. The membership committee now is Bill Hager and Bill Leitch.

Maps: Bud reported that those who have requested it, sending stamped envelopes, have been sent the map and the Conservators history as prepared by Mike Clarke. It is available for free distribution at some city offices, but we will probably ask \$1.00 when at fairs, etc. The whole membership will receive a copy with one of the upcoming mailings (walk list, annual meeting notice or Newsletter). The supply is now in Bud's basement.

Nominating Committee: Special note was made of the good recruitment done by last year's committee. The current nominating committee is Peter Kastner, Jean Husher, Margaret Albright and Mike Clarke.

Park Structures: There was discussion and dismay about the "improvements" for Lyons and Cabot parks of **Little League refreshment stands** and the process for city approval of such structures, which are for limited use by private groups. The League of Women Voters has similar land use positions to the Conservators. The Parks and Recreation Dept. tends to respond to requests from groups that claim large memberships and give less priority to maintaining open space for the public. It was agreed that a delegation of Roger, Bud and Margaret would seek an appointment with the mayor and/or Mr. Halloran to promote our perspective.

Mailings: Roger will do a mailing right away to promote the April 10 canoe outing. The **Newsletter** (with flyer on spring walks and probably the map) will go out in mid-April, and the **annual meeting notice** will go out at the end of April.

Programs: Nick presented a draft of ideas from the program committee's March 22 meeting and the schedule for **spring walks** was outlined as follows: May 2 - Elm Bank with Robert McArthur, May 9 - a 9 a.m. bird walk with Jean Thompson (unconfirmed), May 23 - Hammond/Webster Woods with Lawrence Kaplan, May 30 - Newton Cemetery with Fiora Houghteling (unconfirmed), June 6 - Aqueduct walk with Nick Yannoni, June 13 - Cold Spring Brook system with Robin Washington, June 20 - Charles River bike with Peter Kastner.

With the exception of the canoe and bird trips these are scheduled for 2 p.m. on Sundays. Roger also proposes to schedule Dan Driscoll for the Charles River walkway, perhaps on Sunday morning April 25, before afternoon Earth Day activities.

It was agreed to ask Dan Driscoll, MDC, to present a slide talk as the program aspect of the annual meeting.

The city's **Spring Fest** is Sunday, May 16, and we will plan to have our display and literature.

Annual Dinner: Fran is making arrangements with Andover Newton Theological Seminary to use Noyes Hall again. The date is Wednesday, June 2. Dan Driscoll of MDC will be asked to give a **slide talk** on the plans for the Charles River Pathway. The suggestion for **Environmentalist of the Year** was (Ms) Terry O'Halloran (Theresa), who

worked on the Washington Street Park next to the turnpike in Newtonville, other improvements, and last summer's boat trip on the Charles River between Newton and the Galleria Mall in Cambridge as a model of transportation without using cars.

It was also suggested that 2 special guests be invited and recognized: Judy Dorr and Carol Stapleton of the Parks and Recreation Department.

Grants: This committee met on March 18 and Bud presented suggestions for distributing the grants money that is budgeted (\$3000). There was AGREEMENT on the continuing grant to the library, the summer Environmental Science Program, and a Day Junior High School trip related to recycling. There was strong support for funding a school contest of poetry and art related to Newton's green spaces, with prize money.

There was no decision of the following requests: a high school environmental day, photovoltaic panels on the high school (Green Decade), a study of elevated phosphate levels in Crystal Lake (Mike Clarke to clarify later), Newton Pride's projects on tree planting, the arboretum & Nahanton Park boardwalk. There was considerable interest in creating a brochure to help people locate the special trees in the city that have been chosen for their age or particular interest.

The grants committee will be meeting with Maxine Rosenberg of the schools about requests, now that the teachers have their contract and will take time to consider projects. There was some interest in offering 10-15 foot trees to neighborhood associations that might want to plant and maintain such in a key location, one value of this being visible recognition of the Conservators, particularly perhaps in areas where we now have little membership. We may approach the Neighborhood network (Susan Mirsky) on this.

Fran Seasholes

April 1993

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors Monthly Meeting
April 28, 1993
Boston College Law School
Center Street, Newton Center

Present: Roger Feinstein, presiding, Peter Kastner, Nick Yannoni, Lawrence Kaplan, Bonnie Carter, Robin Washington, Bud Elliott, Bill Stevenson, Margaret Albright, Michael Clarke, Fran Seasholes, Jean Husher, Bart Hague.

Minutes of the March 24 meeting were ACCEPTED with corrections of Stevenson and Washington in attendance.

Treasurer's Report: Bud Elliott distributed copies of his report and noted that we are about \$3000 ahead of where we were last year, with memberships coming in at a good pace. The report was ACCEPTED.

Membership: Bill Leitch sent in his report that there are 260 members paid for 1883, 88 not paid since 1992, 55 not paid since 1991, and 90 on the membership list who last paid before 1991.

Bill Leitch, who has been keeping the membership lists with his wife Betsy, is resigning from the Board, and it was suggested that he be asked to join the Advisory Committee. Mike Clarke will consider taking on the computerized disks, but other members are needed for the job of recruiting new members, and the Treasurer has enough to do without taking on membership tasks.

Election of dues-payers as members: The by-laws call for this. It was suggested that the Nominating Committee move at the annual meeting that those who have paid 1993 dues be official members of the organization. Some members are not fully aware that we operate on the fiscal year basis, and there is confusion on when to pay. It was suggested that a full list of paid members be distributed to all members. No decisions were made, but the next Membership Chairman will be alerted to these points.

Map distribution: Bud reported that the new map will be distributed free to all members who have paid in 1991, 1992 and 1993. They will be available for \$1.00 at fairs, etc. and free when Bud is sent a stamped self-addressed envelope to those who see the notice in Newton Pride and Arts in the Parks mailings. With the latter Bud also includes Mike Clarke's Conservators history & mission statement. The map supply is stored in Bud's basement.

Nominating Committee: Peter reported that all but three current Board members (Doug Sherman, Catherine Brigham and Bill Leitch) have agreed to return, and the officers will remain. This is considered valuable since there was such a large turnover last year. New members are being recruited.

Annual Meeting: Fran reported that arrangements with Andover Newton and the dinner have been made, duplicating the format of the last few years. It will be on Wednesday, June 2 with Dan Driscoll presenting a slide show and **Environmental** awards being given to AnnaMaria Abernathy and Theresa O'Halloran.

Springfest: people signed up to man our table/display at this event on City Hall grounds on Sunday, May 16. Robin expressed willingness to transport the large display to Bill Jones for repair, if his offer still holds. Peter offered to obtain books again to sell on consignment, and the maps will be sold. We will also have a flyer on the Newton Historic Cemetery.

Newsletter: Bonnie and Jean have completed it, and with the help of Fiora Houghteling, Susan Regan and Linda Morrison it was mailed today along with a flyer of the spring walks. Because the Newton Historical Society was added, the mailing was of 761.

Spring Walks: A listing of the walks went out with the newsletter and has been sent to newspapers. A second leader may be needed for large groups, and it was suggested that publicity photos be taken (5 x 7 glossy black and whites preferred) to give to the press.

Ordway Park Clean-up: The morning of Saturday, May 15 (10-12) has been designated. Last fall's leaf compost pile has reduced itself appropriately.

Grants Committee: Bud reported that Star Share coupons are ready for mid-May use and can be done twice more this year.

There has been little progress with the school grants because of a teacher work action, but Susan Mirsky and Bud met with Maxine Rosenberg and have developed a statement on what kind of projects the Conservators would consider funding. It was suggested that wider publicity (news release, circulation through the School Department?) be given to the fact that we are receiving proposals.

There were many suggestions related to the idea of providing grants of up to \$500 to neighborhood associations for the planting (or salvaging) of trees (or shrubs), and a couple groups have already expressed interest. Susan Mirsky brought the idea to the coalition of neighborhood groups where it was well received. Roger spoke to the Waban Association, and Julie Ramsey of the Newton Lower Falls Improvement Association is interested. There are differences of opinion as to whether a plaque mentioning the Conservators is appropriate on such trees or improvements, but publicity to the organization would be expected.

There were no votes on grants but a Grants Committee meeting, open to all interested, will be held on Wednesday, May 26 at Bud Elliott's home to work on recommendations to the Board.

Intrusions of Park land: Peter and Margaret have attended recent meetings/aldermanic hearings around the pattern of the Parks and Recreation Commission approving a variety of structures and semi-private usages in public parks. The many requests have recently alerted commissioners to the conflict between passive and active uses, open space and structured space, and whether "improvements" are that. This is something of a turning point in that a group has been formed to establish some standards for usage to avoid "spot zoning." Peter suggests that the Conservators work with Wally Bernheimer of this subcommittee of the Commission on developing a plan. It was agreed that the charge to the Parks and Recreation Commission is too narrow, in that it does not include the retention of open space. It was suggested that we speak to the mayor of our concern.

The development of the **Charles River Pathway** through Newton and the development/planning of **park use** are two key issues for the Conservators to focus on in upcoming months.

Next Board Meeting: Wednesday June 23, 1993...probably at Boston College Law School again. (Since the annual meeting is June 2 the regular May Board meeting is cancelled and the date being used for a Grants Committee meeting.)

Fran Seasholes, Secretary

Annual Meeting. June 1993

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Annual Dinner Meeting
June 2, 1993

Eighty-three people were in attendance in Noyes Hall of Andover Newton Theological School for the annual dinner meeting.

President Roger Feinstein presented Environmentalist of the Year awards to AnnaMaria Abernathy and Theresa O'Halloran on behalf of the Conservators and citations to them from the Massachusetts Senate.

In the business meeting treasurer Bud Elliott reported that we have assets of \$81,454.52, an increase of \$5000 over last year, and plans for providing grants. Peter Kastner presented the nominations for Directors, Officers and Advisors (largely unchanged) and there was a VOTE to accept. Bill Leitch reported that 301 people are up-to date in their memberships with 63 of these being sustaining or life members. Particular recognition was given to the excellent newsletters.

The speaker of the evening was Dan Driscoll, planner with the Metropolitan District Commission, who showed slides of the banks of the upper Charles River where pathway access is to be expanded. The master plan calls for multi-use, some parts paved and others not, and 275 properties identified for acquisition. Surveys of the MDC boundaries in this effort to restore parkland reveal some alarming encroachments by abutters. There was considerable interest and approval expressed by the members for Dan Driscoll's work.

Respectfully submitted,
Frances C. Seasholes
Secretary