

Officers, Board and Advisors, 1999-2000

Officers

President: Douglas Dickson
Vice President: Bill Hagar
Secretary: Judith Hepburn
Treasurer: Michael Collora
Past President: Michael Clarke

Directors

Margaret Albright	Stephanie Bacon
Lee Breckenridge	James Broderick
Bonnie Carter	Carol Lee Corbett
Burton Elliott	Roger Feinstein
Sally Flynn	Dwight Golann
Frank Howard	Peter Kastner
Norman Richardson	Marty Sender
Lucy Caldwell Stair	Nick Yannoni

Advisors

AnnaMaria Abernathy	Lisle Baker
Rodney Barker	John Bliss
Thelma Fleishman	Helen Heyn
Fiora Houghteling	Deborah Howard
Jean Husher	William Jones
Lawrence Kaplan	William Leitch
George Mansfield	Richard Primack
Frances Seasholes	William Shaevel
William Stevenson	Roger Swain
Verne Vance	Brian Yates

June 1999

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting,
June 23, 1999 - 7:30 PM - City Hall, Room 222

Attendance: President Doug Dickson, Margaret Albright, Jim Broderick, Carol Lee Corbett, Michael A. Collora, Bud Elliott, Dwight Golann, Judy Hepburn, Helen Heyn, Ted Kuklinski, Lucy Caldwell Stair. Guest: Michael M. Bernard

Secretary: April minutes were APPROVED as corrected. A list of board members and advisors, phone numbers and addresses was passed out.

Treasurer's Report. Mike Collora: currently we have \$12,468 at Citizens Bank, \$12,000 in a Fidelity money market, \$60,000 in T-bills and similar vehicles, \$7000 at Cambridgeport Bank and around \$1000 on deposit with the post office. T-notes and cash accounts still need to be balanced on books, which needs expertise and Quicken software. As it is not simple to diagnose and correct past errors, Bud suggested we reconstruct the books as of Jan.1, 1999 based on year-end statements. This has been set for a goal for our Sept. meeting. Mike also plans to catch up on filing Treasurer's reports with the Atty. General's Office.

Doug noted that we are very conservatively invested and perhaps should put some into more aggressive equities. Bud suggested we form a **Finance Committee** to consider appropriate tolerance for risk for a non-profit and create a proposal for the Sept. meeting. The new committee is Bud, Dwight Golann, Mike Collora and Margaret Albright. Pointing out that we don't possess enough money for such things as land acquisition (Doug), questions about the long term goals arose (Lucy). Doug proposed devoting portions of the Sept. meeting to (1) short-term goals for the year, and (2) long-term goals for money use.

Committee Reports

Conservation Commission :

- (1) Helen Heyn reported progress toward restoration of **Houghton Garden's waterways**; a notice-of-intent for work is soon forthcoming.
- (2) Helen raised an issue of **encroachment** by residents of 550 Beacon **onto Webster conservation land**: fill, parked vehicles, etc. Martha Horn told Helen it was low priority. Doug said we should express our serious concern in a letter to Martha with copies to Kruse, Ald. Lisle Baker, and the Mayor. Bud will write a letter on our behalf, Doug suggested activating the E-mail list and Judy suggested photos for our web site, newsletter, etc.
- (3) The **Soccer League's encroachment onto wetlands at Nahanton Park** was addressed at the last meeting. Martha has asked for boundary markers for the wetlands. A private high school also would like to site a soccer field on the upper meadow at Nahanton. It was universally AGREED we should oppose this early on.

Doug suggested a planning effort for that entire area, similar to the current Flowed Meadow-Rumford planning, that would take into account Nahanton, Cutler Park, the new Wells Ave. conservation land, and the private Angino property. After doing more homework, he would like to make a proposal to the mayor. Bud made a MOTION to involve the Conservators on an open-space plan for SW Newton; it was seconded and PASSED by voice vote.
- (4) Bud reported that sensible proposals were being made for use of **Wabasso-Rumford-Flowed Meadows**. While the division between Parks & Rec. and CC has not yet

been make, most of Wabasso could go to the CC as an extension of Flowed Meadow, and the Chas. R. Pathway will eventually go through there.

- (5) A bill requiring cities and towns planning new schools to clear high **barriers before taking green space** has been filed by Newton Rep. Ruth Balser. Its intent is to avoid what happened in many communities in the past . Doug asked that we formally support this; MOTION PASSED
- (6) Doug reported on the finalized **Edmands Park compromise**. BC will give \$20,000 for long-range planning, to be matched by the City. We decided that Conservators need not play any further active role. However, Bud said we should reaffirm that we'd like Edmands Park kept passive, and he agreed to draft such a letter.

Land Use:

- (1) The land use subcommittee has voted that the Conservators NOT sponsor a feasibility proposal that would link two Charles R. coves via canal (proposal by Anatole Zuckerman). While recognizing its possible merit, the committee thought Zuckerman's plan should be taken to the City's **Flowed Meadow Committee**, which is currently involved in region's planning. Also a broad range of options and strategies should be looked at before settling on one.
- (2) Bud needs an alternate to go to the next Flowed Meadow meeting on July 12; Lucy volunteered.
- (3) Bud reports that the **city's Framework Committee** (formerly Land Use Committee) has had several meetings. It is a diverse committee, but development/real estate proponents outnumber open-space proponents. They want to retain the village nature of Newton, but also want to expand the tax base through commercial development. Efforts to explore using existing buildings better were met with much skepticism. Judy asked Bud to keep board members posted this summer via E-mail.
- (4) Lucy said the **Community Preservation Act** is still hung up in the Taxation Committee; there is considerable opposition to raising such money through a real estate transfer tax. She also sent over a fact-sheet to Newton Zoning & Planning, who tabled it at their last meeting. However they are interested in knowing what other organizations have endorsed the CPA. Doug said we need to form a working group on this in Sept.
- (5) **Proposed developments** of immediate concern at **Woodland MBTA** and long-term at **Riverside** were briefly discussed. Helen voiced a need that we watch over a parcel of MDC land that might be seized for Rt. 128 access if the Riverside development goes through. Plans are to largely bypass city permitting, but the city can still play a role via traffic issues. Carol Lee brought to our attention a parking lot owned by the Mass. Pike in W. Newton Square that has been proposed for a high-rise.

(6) Judy agreed to draft a letter to the Alderman in support of the new Tree Protection proposal.

Parks and Recreation: At the last meeting (1) A **Little League sign compromise** was approved 8-0 at the last meeting: 2 signs at Lyons, limited size, thanking contributors, with 5 yr. review. It is hoped to make this the model for other Little Leagues in town. Dwight warned, however that NWLL has long-range plans to use revenues raised by signage to consolidate its "temporary structures" into one, larger permanent structure at Lyons (2) A proposal to explore formalizing the existing dirt pathways on the **Newton Aqueduct system** passed 8-0.

Walks: Judy reported good turn-outs for our spring-summer walks and asked for suggestions for the fall. We will try to coordinate our walks better with the Newton 2000 walks, but problems in 1999 were short notice and the apparent raiding of our past leaders/walks by the Newton 2000 Walk-A-Block group. Judy will consult with Frank Howard on future coordination.

Grants: Bill presented (1) a request from **Underwood School** for their outdoor classroom. We have funded them for 5 years and they ask for \$350 this year, mostly for bulbs; one purpose is education, i.e., not purely beautification. We approved, with a recommendation that they purchase through Newton Pride. (2) **The Environmental Science Program** have asked for \$500 for scholarships but would prefer \$1000 as in 1998. They are fully subscribed this summer. We unanimously AGREED to \$1000. (3) Doug had a letter from an Oak Hill Middle School class suggesting improvements to **Kennard**, following a class field trip; it will be forwarded to Martha.

Ordway Park. Jim passed out a new plantings map of Ordway. He thanked Doug Dickson and Frank Howard for recent planting efforts. Judy proposed we authorize funds for small bulb plantings (scilla, etc.) now since we may not have another summer meeting. Jim proposed a cap of \$150, and it was APPROVED by voice vote.

Summer meetings. We voted not to meet for the rest of summer unless something pressing comes up, at which point notification will go out.

The meeting adjourned at 10 PM.

Judith Hepburn, Secretary

July & August 1999

No meetings held.

September 1999

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting,

September 22, 1999 -7:30 PM
Lower Falls Community Center

Attending: President Doug Dickson, Jim Broderick, Bonnie Carter, Carol Lee Corbett, Bud Elliott, Sally Flynn, Dwight Golann, Bill Hagar, Judy Hepburn, Helen Heyn, Frank Howard, Peter Kastner, Ted Kuklinksi.

Secretary & Treasurer's Reports: No Treasurer's report. June minutes were APPROVED as amended.

Committee and Commission Reports:

Grants. Bill Hagar reported that it is difficult to get the high schools involved in applying for grants, but they're trying. In the last newsletter Bud Elliott encouraged others besides schools to apply. There is nothing new on the signage project.

Ordway Park. Jim has purchased 300-400 small bulbs that will be planted by volunteers, 9:30 to noon on Sept. 25. In early November there will be a clean-up. There seems to be a new threat to American beeches, and our big one has been losing branches about half way up. Arnold Arboretum says the trouble now may be mainly due to the summer's drought.

New committees. We formed a Finance Committee last meeting; it has not yet met. We need a new Newsletter Committee under Mike Clarke. Peter Kastner is taking over Publicity, and Bud Elliott will head up the Audit Committee. We still need someone to head the Annual Dinner planning. A New Program Committee will be created. We may be co-sponsoring a program with Louise Bruyn/Green Decade.

Conservation Commission, Helen reported on the upcoming agenda: hearings involving Charles R. harvesting, MA Turnpike oil spill, fencing around Houghton Garden, Boylston St., Cheesecake Brook-Charles River. Helen also gave reports on the Beacon St. trespass to the Alderman, hoping this will prompt action.

Parks and Recreation. The Board hasn't met in two months.

Corrections involving the **Parks & Rec. Mission Statement** to include more on the parks needs no further action on our part. Peter thought it might be good to put together a similar mission statement for the Conservators.

Land Use. We need someone to monitor the Board meetings; it meets a couple times a month on Tuesday evenings. There is no real movement on the Bradford development (Rt. 9 Mobil Sta.). Sarah Burnett will serve on the committee to manage Hebrew College Development, and a neighborhood group is working with the Andover-Newton cluster housing development. There are 2 large estates in south Newton, owned by Fireman, that will become a housing development; Bud will try to get more information on this.

- i. **City's Framework Committee (Land Use, Environmental):** Bud reports that low-cost housing is an issue with the Land Use Committee, which is heavily loaded in real estate interests. The Environ. Committee is active and has proposals to encourage maintenance of open space and acquisition where land is contiguous to parklands, wetlands, etc. There is a Flowed Meadow meeting on Oct. 27 in which Mike Kruse will speak on the various proposals. On Nov. 4 at Burr School at 7 PM there is a general meeting for the public.
- ii. **Urban Tree-Landscape-IPM:** The Tree Protection Ordinance is in draft and hopefully will come up in the next session. It protects trees on private property except currently occupied 1- and 2-family housing, affects all developments involving special permits, comprehensive permits or administrative plan reviews, and requires monetary replacement if on-site replacement isn't possible.
- iii. **Pedestrian-Bike Task Force:** It proposes a network of bike paths on the two aqueducts and is examining thoroughfares in the city that can support separate bike paths. The first report has been sent back for revisions. Mike Clarke remains active in this group.
- iv. **Community Preservation Act:** It is currently in the Rules Committee; Lucy is not here to report further. Doug will ask her to call Cynthia Creem and ask what we can do to further it along.

Newsletter: Ted says we need a forum to get information, ask for volunteers, etc. more frequently than in the 4 x/yr. newsletter. It was thought the Lucy already has an E-mail list of members willing to be contacted this way; Judy is to ask her. Peter says if we do mass E-mails we must find a way to safeguard our members' E-mail addresses and not make them public.

Bud requested that we use recycled paper for future newsletters, and Doug agreed this should be looked into. Mike Clarke, who was not present, had expressed a need to clean up the list (mailings are up to 750) and to set deadlines for next year's newsletters far in advance.

Goals for 1999-2000 and beyond: Recent past presidents and VP's had earlier met informally to discuss future goals. The group's conclusions, which Doug reported on, were that (1) opportunities to acquire open space, our focus in our first 20 years, are now greatly diminished, (2) our educational mission can and should continue, and (3) lack of stewardship, poor use of open space and poor maintenance could become more of an issue for us.

Level-funded budgets were cited as a big part of the problem. Some programs like the tot lot improvements have been done mainly because golf course money was earmarked for them. Peter thought there has been no coherent vision on maintenance and that we should foster the neighborhood and "friends of" groups to create identifiable projects and then coordinate them. We discussed again whether we should be an umbrella

organization for such groups: encouraging them to use our newsletter as a forum, etc. A problem is these groups often come together over an issue and then quickly disband or lose enthusiasm once the issue is past. Bud thought one goal should be to work on a regular basis with Martha Horn to create special projects like the signs. Jim thought we need to create a vision before pushing for the special projects that both Doug and Peter urged. Judy thought maybe we should convene the various friends groups to help find a common vision. Bud urged us to remember that there is still an important place for the Conservators in fostering land acquisitions. We will continue this discussion of goals at our October meeting.

We voted to hold the joint December-November meeting on Dec. 8. This meeting adjourned at 9:35 PM.

Judy Hepburn, Secretary

November - December 1999

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
Dec. 8, 1999 at 7:30 PM
Alliance Rm., Unitarian Soc. Bldg., W. Newton

Attending: President Doug Dickson, Jim Broderick, Bonnie Carter, Mike Collora, Carol Lee Corbett, Bud Elliott, Sally Flynn, Bill Hagar, Judy Hepburn, Peter Kastner, Ted Kuklinksi.

Secretary and Treasurer's Reports: The minutes of the October meeting were ACCEPTED as corrected. We have \$12,848 in Citizen's Bank and have taken in \$11,000 in excess of expenses this year. Our assets remain about the same.

Membership/Publicity: We are getting an appeal out early enough to encourage gift memberships. Our problem is a narrower base of members than necessary, because too few know about our organization. Each board member should try to get one new member.

Bill Hagar thought that, in conjunction with the new printing of our parks maps, that we should do a program of thematic walks that feature each of Newton's major parks and conservation lands; many thought that a good idea. Peter thought we should pick the Environmentalist of the Year earlier and thus publicize it better. It was suggested that Frank Howard could coordinate these activities with his video, even the walks. Bonnie said that with a \$50 membership to NewTV we could get free use of video equipment, free cable time and training. Doug announced that we may also be co-sponsoring something with Green Decade in March or April. Frank and Doug will have a meeting next week to brainstorm a better way to celebrate Arbor Day this April.

Grants: Bill had received two new proposals. **Newton North HS** asked for \$525 for a fish-environmental field study project starting in April; Bud MOTIONED approval, Carol SECONDED, and it PASSED unanimously.

Stephanie Bacon also faxed a proposal for the **Chestnut Hill Village Plan**, to coordinate Rt. 9 development, requesting \$500 to support MIT graduate students. The funding would be part of a larger \$8500 pool, not all of which relates to our mission. Doug said he was inclined to fund it but the proposal at present was not specific and needed further clarification. Bud MOTIONED for a temporary rejection pending revision, Carol SECONDED and the VOTE was unanimous.

Bud also received a two-part proposal from **Day Middle School** requesting \$500 for a canoe study of Cheesecake Brook, and \$1000 for Charles River study. Bud recommended and MOTIONED to fund the first part (\$500) and this PASSED unanimously.

Maps and brochures: The map reprinting has not yet been done. Bud says that we need to make revisions to the old map based on Martha Horn's revisions. Doug suggested getting an intern from Newton North's Graphic Arts program to help. Peter also suggested Mass. College of Art as a possible source of help. Doug also asked Peter to revise our membership brochure

Ordway Park. The Nov. 6 clean-up took place, with Frank bringing leaf blowers and a mulching mower to help. The next newsletter invites neighbors and abutters to help with Ordway maintenance. Doug thought we should make a neighborhood solicitation for labor after January 1.

Finance Committee: We have renewed our tax-exempt status. A balance sheet attachment is needed for our filing to the Atty. General's office; Mike Collora volunteered to tackle it.

Flowed Meadow: Bud reported on the city's Flowed Meadow Committee. 38 new acres are to be surplus, due to shrinking the recycling site. Parking for a canoe launch was voted down. The proposal for as many as 10 benches is down to one. An overlook platform with seating for bird/nature watching and a turtle sanctuary were recommended. The architect will make up plans to send to the mayor, but there are no big budget items.

City's Framework Committee: There will be an open meeting in Feb. or March, and we should have a statement on open space ready for it.

Parks and Recreation: The debate on signs at Hamilton Field was postponed until December.

Pedestrian/Bike Task Force: Mike Clarke, Parks and Rec, and the MWRA had held a productive meeting. MWRA would welcome a proposal to take over management of the aqueducts and provide more public access. It needs to retain the land as a backup water

delivery system, however. The Bike Report urges integration of the aqueduct systems and discusses the issue of variance.

Land Use: No Report.

Urban Tree Preservation: The Aldermen passed the ordinance 13-10 after much debate, but Allan Ciccone filed a motion for reconsideration. It is important to write letters and make phone calls in support; the matter may come up again at the next Board of Aldermen meeting, Dec. 20.

Community Preservation Act: It passed in the MA House of Rep. but was amended, Jim Broderick reports. He has not seen the details yet, however.

Judy Hepburn, Secretary

January 2000

Newton Conservators
Board of Directors Meeting
Meeting of January 26, 2000
Newton City Hall

Attending: Doug Dickson (presiding), Margaret Albright, Jim Broderick, Lucy Caldwell-Stair, Bonnie Carter, Mike Clarke, Mike Collora, Sally Flynn, Judy Hepburn, Ted Kuklinski.

Secretary's and Treasurer's Reports. The minutes of the December meeting were APPROVED. Mike Collora reported a balance of \$15,952 with one check outstanding, net worth of \$102,575. 127 members have renewed or joined.

After study by the Finance Committee, Mike proposed we put up to half of our liquid assets (about \$40,000) into a 4-in-1 indexed fund at Fidelity and made the motion, Bonnie SECONDED it and it PASSED unanimously. Doug, Mike Clarke, Bud Elliott and Mike Collora will be signatories on the fund. Doug requested a full report on our insurance liability (for Ordway, walks) for next meeting.

Annual Banquet. Suggestions for speaker included author Diana Muir (Doug), Fred Winthrop, retiring head of the Trustees of Reservation (Sally), and Bob Durand, who had a conflict last year (Mike Cl.). Mike wondered if Fred could be a candidate for Environmentalist of the Year. He does not live in Newton, which is preferred but not mandated. Sally suggested Wed., May 31 for banquet date, with a second choice May 24, pending the speaker's preference, and that was APPROVED.

Grants. There were no new requests. A letter of thanks was sent by the Day Middle School Blue Team for their Cheesecake Brook funding.

Ordway Park. The Arnold Arboretum staff told Jim there is no particular disease affecting American beech, but our tree may be reaching its max. 150 year age. We need to watch to see which branches leaf out this spring and should also tackle underbrush then.

Walks. We will have a theme of "Rediscover Newton's Open Spaces" this spring, to coordinate with the new printing of maps. Judy will let Bud know about this when he is back from Belize. We'll also try for something on walks in the next newsletter at the end of Feb.-early March. Mike Cl. volunteered a canoe trip on 10 April.

Membership/Publicity. We are gaining publicity by cosponsoring Green Decade's March environmental speaker at the library; topic is managing our landscapes without pesticides. GD has also asked us to help develop ideas on how to celebrate Arbor Day in late April.

We were approached by Diana Muir, author of "Reflections in Bulloughs Pond," out in March. We will promote the book and review it for the next newsletter. With an included slip to be filled out by purchasers of the book, we will be given 40% of sales price.

Lucy reported on the **planned March membership drive**. The December drive had not made the distinction between membership vs. extra contribution. Every membership now ends in March, and in the past 1/3 to 1/2 respond. Doug said we need to embark on a further campaign after the appeal and make personal contact. Ted thought a notice of when those in arrears can expect to lose the newsletter would help.

Parks and Recreation. Newton West Little League's proposal for a sign for Hamilton Field met with much neighborhood opposition and so did not come up at the last meeting. Stewardship of parklands is a new charge for Parks & Rec., coming from the state level. We need a **consistent sign policy**, but the problem is that NNLL and NELL have special permits by default, should this be in perpetuity, etc.

Russ Halloran is retiring on June 1. We should decide whether to concur with Halloran's recommendation to move existing personnel up, or to request a full nationwide search for his replacement.

Community Preservation Act. Two versions have passed, one each in House and Senate. Jim Broderick thought the Senate version was better, in that the House version was too flexible and susceptible to control by local Aldermen. Both versions have 10% set-asides for affordable housing, open space, and historical preservation and allow money usage for management & maintenance. The Senate version has a fourth set-aside for sports recreation land. Jim recommended that we write to the mayor to suggest a Community Preservation Act Exploratory Committee be formed. (He will write a draft.)

Other agenda items and announcements.

- (1) The meeting with **Chandler Pond** representatives is delayed. A group has formed to renovate the pond, following its dredging, and they want our support.
- (2) The **Newton Tree Ordinance** has finally passed.
- (3) Presley Associates will very shortly do a balloon study for us over the back side of **Newton-Andover hill**, to insure that the view to Blue Hills is not obstructed; cost is \$1000 or less.
- (4) Ted reports that the Newton Development Block Grant, with proposals for **improving Dolan Pond**, is up for funding in the next cycle and has a high priority. A letter of support from us will be helpful to the process.
- (5) Bud reports that all of **Flowed Meadow** will go to the Conservation Commission. There is a small 1/2 acre parcel that is to be given in good will to Carpasso's, who already have a gazebo there. Bud thinks that we should at least insist on a conservation restriction on this land. Doug thought we should write this to the Mayor.

Meeting adjourned at 10 PM.

Judy Hepburn, Secretary

February, 2000

Newton Conservators
Board of Directors Meeting
Meeting of February 23, 2000
Boston College, Devlin Hall

Attending: Doug Dickson (presiding), Jim Broderick, Bonnie Carter, Mike Collora, Bud Elliott, Jason Glasgow, Bill Hagar, Judy Hepburn, Frank Howard.

Secretary and Treasurer's Reports. The minutes of the December meeting were APPROVED with one correction. Mike Collora reported overall assets of \$102,911, of which \$26,735 is liquid and \$69,614 is invested. Two liquid assets come due soon (total \$17,000) and plans are to put \$30,000 in the Fidelity fund. He filed the annual report but needs the address for Ordway Park to request an exemption from taxes. Mike will review our insurance and report on it next time.

Membership. Lucy Caldwell-Stair has traded membership lists with the Trustees of Reservation, Chas. R. Watershed, and gotten the tax list and new residents list. Mike and Doug addressed the problem of lack of distinguishing aspects to the various levels of membership, and how we might deal with this in acknowledgments. Doug had recently

been asked about tax deductibility. Judy thought we should mention that membership is fully deductible directly in the appeal.

Grants: No new requests.

Ordway Park. Jim Broderick will select a May clean-up date.

Banquet/Board nominations. The banquet will be on Tuesday, May 23 and Bob Durand is our **speaker**. Noyes Hall will again be the site. Mike planned to ask the Mayor to introduce Durand. We still need an Environmentalist of the Year. Proposed include: Bulloughs Pond author Diane Muir, Fred Winthrop of Trustees of Reservation, Carole Stapleton for work beyond her Parks & Rec. duties, Marty Sender for the Purgatory Cove clean-up, and Bob Zimmerman of CWRA. We will finalize the choice of Environmentalist of the Year at our March (next) meeting.

Bill has volunteered for the **Nominating Committee** for next year. Doug will ask Stephanie Bacon to serve also. Phil Shabecoff who reviewed the book by Muir for the newsletter was suggested as a potential new board member; also Jason Glasgow.

Land Use.

- (1) The hearing on the **Bradford property (Rt. 9 Mobil Sta.)** raised issues including toxic wastes. They can rightfully put in 40 units but need 19 more to cover costs of remediation and wetlands buffer. Mike wrote a letter dealing with a range of pertinent issues. Susan Basham concurred that the Conservation Comm. had to deal with these issues before any permits are given. The proposal includes restoration of the historic gas station as a club house.
- (2) On **Institution Hill**, Terraces has not yet filed anything, though they were anxious in the fall. They may be rethinking their proposal. This development could potentially obstruct the view. Health Management filed a proposal that looks fine.
- (3) We need to keep an eye on a **triangle of land in W. Newton** that the Mass. Turnpike would like to sell to pay for the Big Dig; used now for commuter parking.
- (4) A **new open space plan** is not on the top of Mike Kruse or Martha Horn's to-do list. Martha hasn't even been able to get to the sign project yet. Doug said we should meet with Mike Kruse to volunteer our input on the open space plan.
- (5) **Woodland MBTA development:** the developer has pulled out, says Martha Horn.

Publicity: Printed material: We only have about 75 maps left. We can produce the current map as needed for about \$3 each.

Doug and Bud met with Martha regarding new maps. She has lots of material that can make it up-to-date. A problem is expense. Jim knows a place on Lexington St., Waltham

that prints large pieces much cheaper than most. Bud thought we should strive more than a map, and for a booklet that also has historical sites, geology, etc., and be a real resource for Newton. He thought we could get a city grant to help out. Doug thought we could fund this outright.

Bud wants to get together with Mike Kruse, who is doing something like this now for the Mayor, and coordinate the effort. He asked that we in principal AUTHORIZE this, which was AGREED. Nothing has yet been done to bring our organization's brochure up to date.

Web page: Ted Kuklinski has registered <www.NewtonConservators.org>. Ted, Peter and Frank volunteered to assist Mike Clarke in improving the web page. Judy suggested an improvement might be to make it more interactive with the membership by adding a message board for comments.

Framework Committee. Bud came directly from that meeting and announced that the final draft is a great document, with much focus on environmentally sound land use. It will probably be sent to the Mayor in completed form in the spring. Positive recommendations include a land bank trust, a strategy to ID and acquire open space, adequate funding for maintenance, and long term zoning and taxing so as to preserve private open space, protection of rivers and trees, and mitigation to reduce the impact of development.

Goals. We earlier discussed setting short-term and long-term goals for at least the next few years. Mentioned were promoting bike paths, supporting Charles R. path extension, work on open space plan, preplanning for currently private space that might be suddenly put on the market (Bud says this is addressed to a degree in the framework plan.), protecting smaller parcels adjunct to existing open spaces. Fred Winthrop might be a source of advice to us.

We need to create a constituency for land conservation and increase public awareness. A regular column on local environmental news in the Newton Tab might be one way but requires a large network of people to produce it. Phil Chabakoff could coordinate the effort. Doug will supply an attachment regarding potential goals that will be sent out with the March agenda.

Adjourned at 9:38 PM

Judy Hepburn, Secretary

Newton Conservators 2000-2001 Goals

Advocacy

1. Support passage of and work to implement Community Preservation Act
2. Support development of Comprehensive Plan with a strong open space component.

3. Strengthen process and content of Open Space Plan revision for 2000.
4. Advocate restructuring of Parks and Recreation.
5. Support open space advocates to fill openings on Con Com, P&R Com, Golf Board.

Open Space Program

1. Investigate use of aqueducts for bicycle-pedestrian paths.
2. Develop contingency plans for privately-owned open space.
3. Fund Ordway Park improvement plan.
4. Gain funding and support for Edmands Park renewal plan.
5. Support continued funding and construction of Charles River Pathway.
6. Support transfer of Flowed Meadow to Conservation Commission and implementation of Flowed Meadow Planning Group recommendations.
7. Consider funding effort to develop integrated plan for use and long-term management and improvement of Norumbega, Cove, Flowed Meadow, Wabasso Street and adjacent properties in the north and Nahanton, Wells Avenue and adjacent properties in the south.
8. Support ongoing improvement of Dolan Pond with CDBG funds.
9. Investigate potential acquisitions of Angino Farm (or parts thereof) by city.
10. Explore acquisition options for part or all of Kessler Woods.
11. Support ongoing work to improve Hammond Pond, Chandler Pond, Houghton Gardens and other open spaces throughout the city and adjacent to it.
12. Investigate funding options for reclamation of the city's historic cemeteries.
13. Support creation of Powder House Hill Park adjacent to Newton Centre Green.

Education

1. Revise and upgrade open space maps.
2. Develop cable programs and articles on Newton's open spaces.
3. Fund new signage in conservation areas by matching city dollars.

Administrative

1. Grow membership by 25%
2. Find ways to achieve greater participation of members in program activities.
3. Explore creation of fund dedicated by managing city's open space (e.g., NSF).
4. Develop higher return of invested funds.

March 2000

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
Meeting of March 29,2000 at 7:30 PM
Newton City Hall

Attending: Doug Dickson (presiding), Margaret Albright, Jim Broderick, Lucy Caldwell Stair, Bonnie Carter, Carol Lee Corbett, Sally Flynn, Bill Hagar, Judy Hepburn, Peter Kastner, Ted Kuklinski.

Secretary and Treasurer's Reports. The Feb. minutes were APPROVED with one correction. Mike submitted to Doug a finance report which differed little from the previous month. We now have \$30,000 invested in Fidelity 4-in-1 Index Fund and took in \$4000 in membership dues.

Membership. The mailing to new names (from traded lists) and for renewals is ready to go out. Doug asked Lucy to coordinate with Bud on the maps, which are promised in the mailing. Margaret thought that we should especially mail newsletters to abutters/neighbors whenever issues like Institution Hill come up.

Ordway Park - Newsletter. May 20 is the spring clean up. We will announce it in the next newsletter, which Mike will do when he gets back. Peter will do articles on the speaker, environmentalist of the year, and the Halloran/Hickey retirements.

Parks and Recreation. The present top tier in the Dept. has done a good job in recreation but not in park management. It was thought we should urge hiring someone with more background in park management. Peter said we need a letter to the mayor praising the current employees for past work done and that they should be considered for higher positions, but that we need a search worthy of a great city. The city should reflect on the skills that are needed at Parks and Rec. and look for a leader with broad experience and training in complex management issues.

Newton citizens have had to get involved in the Tree Commission, equipping playgrounds, etc. because Parks & Rec. has failed to do this. Bonnie thought the Mission Statement should be at the core of our request. Jim thought we should push for real restructuring at Parks and Rec., or else the new hire would be locked into an existing situation. Doug agreed that we should take a position and voice our private concerns to the mayor. Mike Clarke will be asked to draft a letter to (1) encourage a broad based search, and (2) say this should be an opportunity to reflect on the structure of Parks and Rec.

An opening on the Parks and Rec Commission, due to Anthony Batista retiring, was just filled by largely unknown person who has just moved back to the city from Needham, purely on Russ Halloran's suggestion. She was, however, a former Commissioner about 12 years ago. This is symptomatic of the current flawed procedure of filling such positions without any public notice or input. We will approach the mayor to address this on-going problem.

Banquet. The dinner is Tuesday, May 23, the menu chicken, and the Mayor will introduce our speaker, Bob Durand. We will recognize Russ Halloran and Jim Hickey on their retirements and invite their spouses as guests. Sally recommended keeping the price at \$20, though the hall rental has doubled in recent years (to \$640) and the catering alone is \$15/head. This will require a slight subsidy, which was approved. Stephanie Bacon will assist Sally and act as understudy to take over planning the Banquet for next year. May 3, 7:30 PM there will be a mailing at Sally's house at 33 Whitney Rd., Newtonville. Lucy thought we could ask those who've sent E-mail addresses to help out as well.

After discussion of nominees and the past guidelines used, we VOTED unanimously to name Marty Sender as **Environmental of the Year**, for his tireless work in cleaning up Wares Cove and repeatedly finding the funding to harvest alien water chestnuts invading the Charles River. Others to be kept in mind for future years are the Tree Commission and Fred Abernathy for his activity over the tower issue.

Grants. No new ones came in.

2000-2001 Goals. After discussing the 25 potential goals that Doug sent to all Board Members, we came to the conclusion to **focus on six areas:**

Advocacy Goals:

(1) Support passage of and work to implement Community Preservation Act, as a means to an end. (2) Strengthen the process and content of the Open Space Plan Revision for 2000. (3) Create a report card on Parks and Open Space, with a first step in cataloguing open spaces, public and private, and (4) developing contingency plans for privately owned space. (5) Specific immediate projects are acquisition options for part of all of Kessler Wood, potential acquisition of Angino Farm (or parts thereof) by the City, and other specific projects as they come up.

We should also focus on (6) **education goals** that include revision and upgrading of the open space map plus develop a new booklet form, developing cable programs and news articles about Newton's open spaces, and funding new signage in Conservation Areas through matching city funds.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Judy Hepburn, Secretary

April 2000

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
Meeting of April 26, 2000 at 7:30 PM
Newton City Hall

Attending. **Board:** Doug Dickson (presiding), Margaret Albright, Stephanie Bacon, Jim Broderick, Mike Clarke, Carol Lee Corbett, Bud Elliott, Sally Flynn, Bill Hagar, Bart Hague, Judy Hepburn, Helen Heyn, Frank Howard, Peter Kastner, Ted Kuklinski.

Members: Sarah Barnett, Vaunita Schnell.

Secretary and Treasurer's Reports. The March minutes were APPROVED with two corrections. A treasurer's report was handed out. We have collected about \$5000 in dues to date and have a \$10,000 treasury bill maturing soon. Bud moved to invest an added \$10,000 in the 4-in-1 Fund, and it was VOTED IN unanimously.

The insurance policy report was postponed until next month. Margaret will ask her spouse to review our existing policies. We also received a bill on the Newton-Andover balloon study for \$1600 (a little higher than budgeted). Furthermore the developers have delayed and made revisions to their plan after this work was scheduled, which caught us and the Bowen-Thompson neighborhood group by surprise. Mike Clarke will try to arrange a meeting with the involved parties

Annual Meeting & Dinner. Sally says the arrangements are all set. Peter will find out if the speaker needs audiovisual aids and will see to publicity for the banquet (e.g., Tab, Globe's Weekly West). Bonnie will work with Frank to videotape the meeting for NewTV. Neither Russ Halloran nor Jim Hickey can attend, though we will present them with certificates of appreciation.

New Audit & Nominating Committees. Margaret Albright will chair an Audit Committee, which will also include Bud Elliot and Betty Clarke. The Nominating Committee will be Jim Broderick (chair), Bill Hagar, Stephanie Bacon, Roger Feinstein, Doug Dickson (ex-officio). We have seven or more openings for new board members.

We discussed taking off Board members and Advisors who aren't active. Having advisors on the stationary is useful (Peter K.) but currently we have a lot of advisors. Discussion included setting a maximum (Bud E.), biting the bullet and eliminating some advisors (Mike Cl.), and merely not adding more (Peter K). Doug thought this is a sensitive issue and that we should proceed cautiously here. Advisors often say they'd like to do more (Frank H.), and it was suggested we ought to ask them, perhaps by sending around a checklist of things advisors might like to help with (Judy H.).

Membership. Margaret knows of free membership-list software for nonprofits called E-Base that can be used to send merged E-mail to the membership. She will work with Lucy and Mike to see if this will work for us.

Grants. A request was received from Helen Samuels to create a **library fund in Leo Levi's name**, for acquisition of materials on gardening and beautification. Newton Pride has put up \$1000 and they're asking \$500 or more from us as a pre-commitment before greater fund-raising efforts. Peter MOVED we should fund the immediate request for \$500; which PASSED unanimously.

Bill H. reports no new grant requests, and we discussed the problem of **dwindling requests from Newton schools**. Frank H. noted that the pressure of MCAS exams is cutting time and interest for these extra research projects, especially at the middle and high school level. It was suggested we should shift our grant-orientation from the schools to broader interests, perhaps by setting up our own on-going or annual library fund (Bud H.). Other potential projects were brought up, including: approaching the city again about the signage project (Peter K.), need for money for construction at Houghton Garden (Helen H.), and more adult education (Carol C.). The Grants Committee will review the effectiveness of the current program and report on it in June.

Ordway Park. A volunteer clean-up is scheduled for May 20. Jim presented two bids on park maintenance contracts (from Lupien and Kevin Newman). Bud MOVED that we accept the lower bid from Newman (\$785 for spring work, \$200 for fall work). Frank SECONDED it, and the motion PASSED unopposed.

Community Preservation Act. There has been no activity on the proposed legislation, and we need action before June (It has until December to be passed). Jim sent out 19 letters of support. Doug said he'd talk to the new editor of the Tab, and Bud will use contacts at ELM to get publicity for this issue.

Flowed Meadow. A NIMBY petition signed by 106 Audurndale residents was presented in opposition of the Committee's report and recommendations, so there is to be another public meeting on May 10 at the Burr School. Peter thought we should urge that there be adequate policing and a management budget as part of this plan, to make it more acceptable. Our position will be that greater usage generally decreases crime (e.g., Dan Driscoll report on the Charles R. Walk).

Parks and Recreation. The **mission statement** was approved and an information manual is coming soon. The Mayor approved Jenny DiVito's appointment to the Board. Doug wrote a letter to him, urging the Mayor to have a conversation with her on the balance of passive vs. recreational use. Doug also spoke to Ald. Ken Parker (of the Programs & Service Committee) to remind the Mayor of his obligation to take this balance into account in appointments. The system to appoint Commissioners has not been working well and has been delegated to the Departments, and hard questions have not been asked before renewing terms.

Conservation Commission. Two important upcoming issues are: (1) 545 M St., requiring blasting along **Hammond Pond** to develop a house. Stephanie reports strong neighborhood opposition will be there. (2) the **Bradford Development** (Rt. 9 Jenny station)/issues of drainage to Hahn Brook. Sarah Barrett warned that Bradford wants to get its special permit in return for cleaning up the toxic site, with no knowledge yet on costs, benefits, etc. As currently worded, the City might get very much in return and wouldn't know this until *after* Bradford takes title. Some of their proposed houses are within the 100 ft. buffer zone. Helen commented that drainage has been horrible since Hampton Place was built and any improvement to Hahn Brook was very desirable. The plan comes up before Land Use next week and there will be a public meeting in May.

Framework Committee. The draft is essentially finished and is on the City's Web site, under Planning Department.

Other.

(1) Bart Hague asked the board to help find a successor to himself (for term ending June 30) on **Newton's Golf Course Management Committee**. It needs someone who represents the open-space aesthetic point of view, not just golfing activity. He would like to see a more active winter program of sledding and cross-country skiing

developed. Doug would like someone who would direct more of the income from the golf course go into park maintenance & the Conservation Commission. Ed Daily or Eric Reinsteina were suggested as people who might be approached.

- (2) Vaunita Schnell urged us to watch open space/wetland issues regarding the **Newton South High School expansion**, which is being pushed through quickly. They'd like to start construction in Fall-2001. They would like to develop parking on areas now in trees and grass and level a knoll of trees for a new building. Doug asked Vaunita to give him talking points for a letter. Other suggestions included respect for conservation issues (Peter K.) and whether student parking policy could be modified so that fewer paved lots were needed (Judy H.)

- (3) Ted Kuklinski discussed the upcoming **Biodiversity Day**.

Adjournment at 10:15 PM.

Judy Hepburn, Secretary

May 2000

President's Report

by Doug Dickson

May 23, 2000

Noyes Hall, Andover-Newton Theological School

Today marks the beginning of the 40th year in the history of this distinguished organization. This time next year, we will celebrate our 40th anniversary, the Newton Conservators having been founded in 1961. Our mission is identical to the one set out by the visionaries (some of whom are with us tonight) who created the Newton Conservators in 1961. But the backdrop of issues and opportunities is different.

Those of you who have read our newsletter this year will know that I regard this as a transitional period in our history. We must change with the times and the times have indeed changed. We have fewer opportunities to acquire and preserve open space. Even if we had the money, the community is largely built out. But plenty of challenges remain and our mission is just as viable in this environment as it was 40 years ago when the preservation of several hundred acres of open space and many other accomplishments were still in our future.

Setting priorities for this new phase of our history has occupied a significant amount of our attention this year. The board of directors has identified six goals for the coming year or two:

1. Create a land bank for acquisition, preservation and maintenance of public open space, hopefully augmented by passage of the Community Preservation Act.

2. Strengthen the process (including broad community input) and content (taking into account current conditions and opportunities) of the year 2000 Open Space Plan revision.
3. Create and publish an easy-to-use parks and public open space report card to focus attention on maintenance, utilization profiles and improvement priorities.
4. Develop a set of options and contingency plans for preserving selected parcels of private open space so the city is prepared well in advance of unforeseen events that could threaten them. (At the top of this list I would put Kessler Woods and the Angino farm property, followed the golf courses). We also need to focus continuing attention on the Sudbury aqueduct and the MBTA stations where development is proposed.)
5. Expand education programs to improve awareness, use and appreciation of public open spaces through various media, including revised maps, cable programs, and news articles.
6. Continue an active program of support, sponsorship and advocacy for open space, waterway and land use initiatives throughout our community and region on an as-needed basis. This obviously includes proposals as they emerge, but should also anticipate pressure from corridors of activity, such as Route 9 and Needham Street, where by the nature of the areas, development issues are complex and achieving balance between commercial and environmental interests is difficult.

To support these goals, we have continued our focus this year on building the infrastructure of the organization. Our membership continues to grow, thanks to the great ideas and hard work of our membership chair, Lucy Caldwell Stair.

Our web site continues to grow in content, thanks to Mike Clarke's assiduous updating and adding of information. Ted Kuklinski acquired our new URL — www.newtonconservators.com — and set us up on a free web hosting service to facilitate location and use of our site. When you see the ads on our lead-in page, remember that they are paying for the service so we don't have to—and remember that you don't have to read them.

We took our first tentative step this year in broadening our investment strategy, placing some of our money in a diversified index fund to improve the return on our total portfolio and our stewardship of this important resource. Most of our money continues to be held in treasury notes and certificates of deposit. Thanks to Dwight Golann and Mike Collora for providing both advice and action.

We are in the process and updating and expanding our open space maps and hope to have these available this fall. Bud Elliott is taking the lead on this project.

Many other board members have contributed to our success this year: Peter Kastner managing our publicity machine, Mike Clarke, Bonnie Carter and others writing, editing and mailing our informative newsletter, Jim Broderick masterminding our restoration of Ordway Park, Judy Hepburn creating our spring and fall walks program, Bill Hagar and Bud Elliott coordinating our grants program.

The Conservators took positions on a number of open space and land use issues this year, including the constellation of developments here at Andover Newton Theological School. We have been particularly concerned about preserving the view to the Blue Hills from the southern end of the quadrangle, the only such view still accessible to the public from Newton's hills.

We have voiced our concern about the encroachment on wetlands by the Bradford development along Route 9 in Thompsonville and have gained agreement by the developer to place the wetland area itself under a conservation restriction.

We helped gain passage of the landmark Tree Preservation Ordinance, the first to require replacement of trees lost to private development in the state and well beyond.

We played an active role in the development of a framework plan that will lead in the next phase to a new Comprehensive Plan for the city. Thanks to Bud Elliott and Norm Richardson for ably representing the Conservators in this process and prevailing in the end over a roomful of development interests. We were also active in the Flowed Meadow Planning Group. With support from Mike Clarke, Peter Kastner and our Environmentalist of the Year, Marty Sender, this remarkable piece of property will be transferred from the DPW to the Conservation Commission, where it will be managed as a passive recreation area.

And, of course, what would a year be like if we didn't have a Little League sign proposal to oppose. And oppose we did--this time at Hamilton Field. Though this year's episode was successfully resolved, the challenge remains to undo the damage from past mishandling by elected officials of requests for signs on two Little League fields, where as a result, large numbers of commercial signs disrupt the beauty and serenity of our parks.

We have also taken positions on matters before the Conservation Commission and the Parks and Recreation Commission too numerous to itemize here. We continue to monitor the work of those boards in addition to the Land Use Committee of the Board of Aldermen, the Urban Tree Commission, the Landscape Advisory Council, the Commonwealth Golf Course Board, the IPM Advisory Committee and others. The Zoning Board of Appeals adopted rules and regulations for Comprehensive Permits last fall at our urging (thanks to Mike Clarke for initiating and seeing that project through to completion) and the Parks and Recreation Commission Manual is now in final form (thanks again to Mike).

This year, we co-sponsored a symposium on pesticide-free gardening with the Green Decade Coalition and shared newsletter content with the Charles River Watershed Association. We are a part of the coalition pressing for passage of the Community Preservation Act. Our relationships with other environmental and open space groups are strong and we intend to build on these to achieve greater regional impact. The issues we face in Newton are identical to those facing our neighbors and there is strength to be gained in increasing our numbers through joint projects and mutual support. The Chandler Pond Association in Brighton, the Green Space Coalition in Brookline, and the Waltham Land Trust are organizations with whom we have emerging relationships. Our local Friends groups continue to be important allies and formation of others is a priority, particularly in the Flowed Meadow/Auburndale Park area.

Thanks to your participation, the Newton Conservators is a strong organization, hewing today as it has in the past to its mission to promote the protection and preservation of natural areas, including parks, playgrounds, forests and streams, for recreation, education and scientific study. It is my pleasure to pronounce the organization in good health and ready to take on the challenges that await us in this new century. With your continued support, we will match over the next forty years the enviable achievements of our predecessors during the initial forty.