

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Minutes of the Board Meeting
June 15, 2005
Newton City Hall Room 222

Present Bill Hagar (presiding), AnnaMaria Abernathy, Dan Brody, Carol Lee Corbett, Duane Hillis, Katherine Howard, Peter Kastner, ,Ted Kuklinski (at 8:55), Anne Pearson, Eric Reenstierna, Bill Stone.cc

Approval of Minutes: The minutes for the meeting of April 20 were approved as written.

Discussion of Annual Meeting: All agreed that it had been a great success – venue, program, food. Only one member subsequently complained to Carol about the lack of strawberry shortcake; the board had voted on this change, given the lack of fresh strawberries at this season and the extra cost; we reconfirmed that decision. Everyone commended the excellent centerpieces by Anne Pearson (tomato seedlings, lettuce, herbs.) Despite sparse publicity, about 100 members attended. It was suggested and agreed that perhaps the annual meeting committee be in charge of publicity for the meeting.

Results of “Amendment to Certificate of Incorporation:” The amendment had almost unanimous enthusiastic support – only one proxy voted “no.” We have 287 paid-up members eligible to vote; 85 sent in proxies, and 47 voted at the meeting. This leaves us short of the 2/3 required by the State – 192 were needed. Upon discussion, it was decided to propose the amendment again, mailing the proxies with the annual dues request in December, announcing the vote to be held at the annual meeting. This will permit us to phone members who do not independently return the proxies in time to get the required number before the meeting. The Newsletter will announce the vote, and why it needs to be repeated.

Treasurer’s Report: Katherine and Larry met with Theresa Houk, CPA, who has offered to review our financial statements and filings on an as-needed pro bono basis. Based on the review done in the meeting, she generally agreed with our methods and statements. She will review our 990 filings (2004, and revised 2003 for Forte property restatement) before they are submitted in August 2005.

Directors’ Reports

• **Web Site (Dan Brody):** Dan described the new pages, which were praised. Bill pointed out that members giving talks may use the photographs of relevant sites.

Dan explained that competition of web providers is such that after running out of allotted disk space, we have been offered 10X the amount for a lower fee, in return for committing to two years. He accepted the offer.

Also, a planning Consultant for Waco, TX, has asked to use some of the photos, @\$100. each. Dan was applauded.

The domain name is being renewed every two years; Ted has been taking care of it, and Dan volunteered to do it henceforth.

- **Membership records:** Anne Pearson is taking over the maintenance from Jason Glasgow, who has resigned from the board. Board members expressed warm appreciation to both Jason and Anne.
- **Helen Heyn Pathway:** Duane asked whether Wells Avenue management deserves some recognition for the maintenance of the pathway. Peter responded that this was part of the deal whereby the development obtained approval. Duane will look into the history. Dan Brody asked whether funding exists to make the entire pathway passable.

Lectures and Walks: Bill Hagar led the canoe trip on June 5, with 4 canoes. Peter will lead the June 18 bike ride. Because of the extreme heat, few attended the photo walk on June 12.

New Business:

Bill Hagar is now on the Newton Center Task Force.

Katherine is on the Urban Tree Commission, and commended the work of the Newton volunteer citizen pruners. On this subject, Duane suggested that when Winchester Street is torn up, utilities should be put underground, Katherine will bring this to the upcoming Urban Tree Commission meeting. This is unlikely to happen because the City does not wish to saddle abutters with the expense of putting their lines underground.

Eric: In the TAB, mayoral candidate Mike Striar is attacking Alderman Ken Parker about the CPA expenditures for Kessler and Angino, claiming the money is needed for city services (ignoring the nature & purposes of CPA funds). Eric urges all board members to write letters to the paper on this issue.

Adjournment: at 8:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Minutes of the Board Meeting
July 20, 2005
Newton City Hall Cafeteria

Present Bill Hagar (presiding), AnnaMaria Abernathy, Jim Broderick, Dan Brody, Lucy Caldwell-Stair, Carol Lee Corbett, Modestino (Cris) Criscitiello, Margaret Doris, Duane Hillis, Katherine Howard, Anne Pearson, Eric Reenstierna, Beth Schroeder, Bill Stone.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes for the meeting of June 15 were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report: Katherine Howard distributed and explained the six-month statement.* Among the items discussed was the annual meeting expense of \$1059, which elicited comment that we may again consider for next year whether to increase the per-person charge. Katherine also noted the receipt of \$200 for use of web-site photos (see June 15 minutes), and a contribution of \$500 from Elizabeth Harper, as in past years. The IRS and MA filings are due on August 15. The report was ACCEPTED unanimously, with warm thanks to Katherine for the increasingly complex labor.

Grants Committee (Bill Hagar): The Franklin Elementary School has submitted a proposal for Grade 1 "Walking Wednesdays." The committee proposed funding the expenses for nature books (\$280) and a tree and annuals (\$200.) A MOTION to approve was SECONDED and UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED. Beth Schroeder will give guidance on plantings, and Carol Corbett will water them during the summers.

A propos, Margaret Albright asked whether someone would volunteer to speak to 1st graders about habitat. Bill Hagar volunteered to do it for the Franklin School; Duane Hillis will film the event for a NewTV program.

Angino Farm Weeds (Bill Hagar): Bill raised the issue, and the City has cut the weeds; however, the field has no been mowed. Duane Hillis suggests plowing under; Eric said he had been told it would be done, but so far this hasn't happened.

Winchester Street (Duane Hillis): The City's use of herbicides along Winchester Street is being investigated by Ken Parker. Duane is pushing for consideration of putting all utilities underground when Winchester St. is torn up for resurfacing; Katherine Howard brought it for discussion by the Tree Commission, which is working on the issue.

Fall Lecture: Ted Kuklinski is working on this, has leads.

Fall Walks: Margaret Albright suggests adding the Blue Heron Bridge (Bridge Street to Watertown Square). Another canoe trip will also be included.

Plans for Albemarle (Margarets Albright & Doris): Margaret A. brought the tentative plan for a central corridor from Day Middle School across Cheesecake Brook.* The group is working with Fran Towle, Andy Stern, and Bob deRubeis. Margaret Doris explained the issues regarding the open space (protected by the 1967 deed covenant, and woodland garden site) and parking for teachers. A CPA plan for the site will strengthen the protection. After considerable discussion, the Margarets requested 1) Conservator support for the CPA proposal for funding to plan and to build the project, and 2) Conservator help in putting the plan together.

Jim Broderick MOVED that the Conservators go on record to support Friends of Albemarle and Parks & Recreation Department's proposal for the central corridor. Eric added that we add "advocating the use of native species as far as possible." The amended motion was SECONDED and APPROVED unanimously.

New Business:

• **Ordway Park** (Jim Broderick): Jim distributed a sheet describing the "specified plantings" approved last June, and proposed "Naming Contribution to the endowed Ordway Park Renewal Fund." He had just received an offer of \$2500 to install a "large stone with scooped bird bath"*. After discussion of the maintenance involved, and West Nile virus danger, consensus was to favor a naturalistic bench instead of a bird bath. The appropriateness of any naming program with plaques was raised by Carol Lee Corbett; considerable discussion concluded with a MOTION to approve the naming program, which was SECONDED and APPROVED by a vote of 9 to 3. Next, a MOTION to accept \$2500 for a bench, either stone or wood – was SECONDED and APPROVED unanimously.

• **Comprehensive Plan for Newton:** Jim Broderick is on the committee working on open space, noted that the City's Open Space Plan has been incorporated into the comprehensive plan and changed. Institutional land and Green Newton are other parts of the planning, and he believes Conservators will wish to be aware and participate.

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• **Angino Farm Commission:** Doug Dickson had sent an email (attached) listing the members the Mayor has appointed, noting that Roger Swain has declined the "farming and agriculture" position, and that "a replacement...who has experience and [can]speak with authority on farming and agriculture issues is desperately needed." Duane mentioned Vilen Feinhaus, a fine hands-on farmer, but no one with the broader qualifications was known, and Bill Stone volunteered for the slot. A MOTION to nominate Bill was SECONDED and APPROVED.

• **Dexter Road and Awtrey gifts** (Eric Reenstierna): The City has sent a \$4000 tax bill for the Dexter Road property, which is to be exempted. The Awtreys are working on the legal arrangements for the gift, which they wish completed this year.

• **Conservator Web Page:** Duane Hillis called attention to it and thanked Dan Brody for its excellence . All heartily agreed.

• **Mayor's Committee for a Sustainable Newton and High Performance Buildings Committee:** Beth Schroeder has been attending both committees and offered to allow someone else to go if they would be interested. Duane Hillis expressed an interest in going and others suggested that Frank Howard might also be interested. Beth will follow up with them.

• **Conservators Brochure:** Cris asked members to take bunches of these so they would be accessible to members as needed in case he is not available.

• **Friday Farmers' Market:** Carol called attention to the new market on Fridays, 10 AM to 2 PM at Post 440. Amy Sangiolo has offered to distribute our literature there along with the Green Decade materials.

Adjournment: at 9:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary

* Attached to the file copy of these minutes.

From: dgdickson@rcn.com
Subject: RE: Conservator Agenda for 7-20
Date: July 17, 2005 3:58:15 PM EDT
To: amabernathy@rcn.com, william.hagar@umb.edu

I'll be away for the meeting this month. I can report that the mayor has appointed the five members of the Farm Commission that he is responsible for. They have been referred to the Board of Aldermen for their approval, but given the Board's summer schedule, it is unlikely that the Commission will meet until September. The names are Roger Swain (farming and agriculture), who has declined, Peter Lewenberg (retail or wholesale business; former food wholesaler with experience in gov't and fundraising), James Harper (finance or accounting; former controller of Boston Gas with non-profit experience), Louise Bruyn (sustainable environmental practices; founder of Green Decade Coalition) and Teresa Walsh (at-large). The Conservation Commission has designated Judy Hepburn, but I haven't heard who the P&R Commission has appointed. The Newton History Museum also has a seat (this was substituted for the Historical Commission at the last minute for some reason. I understand that the Board of Aldermen rep will be Cheryl Lappin. A replacement for Roger Swain who has experience and speak with authority on farming and agriculture issues is desperately needed. Any ideas?

I'll be in Nova Scotia for 3 weeks, but will be available by email and voice mail (617-624-3138).

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Minutes of the Board Meeting
September 21, 2005
Newton City Hall Room Room 203

Those present: -- Doug Dickson, Ted Kuklinski, Margaret Albright, Dan Brody, Katherine Howard, Frank Howard, Beth Schroeder, Jim Broderick, Duane Hillis, Anne Pearson, Dan Green, Henry Finch, Bonnie Carter, Cris Criscitiello, Bill Hagar, Jim Karg

Treasurer's Report: -- Katherine Howard reported that Sept 30 financial statements would be discussed at the next meeting, and in the meantime provided a few updates. IRS state and federal filings for 2003 and 2004 had been reviewed by Theresa Houck our pro-bono CPA and filed in August - Katherine will send Theresa a map guide and gift basket as thanks for her help. A \$400 gift was received from the Chestnut Hill Garden Club, a continuation of its annual support. CPA reimbursement had been received from the City for \$11K of Angino acquisition costs incurred in 2004. Katherine reminded the group that the Conservators bank account still holds about \$32K of Farm contributions that will need to be transferred when appropriate. Also, Katherine will review minutes to confirm the amount of the Conservators pledge towards Angino, and will record it as a liability for the Sept 30 statements.

Frank Howard showed a taped report made by NewTV News, with anchor Jen Adams, of the process of controlled pollination of a large, healthy American Chestnut tree near Newton North High School. He made the point that board members should consider the newsworthiness of any activity carried out by the NC keeping in mind this TV outlet for publicity.

Need for a membership update was discussed. A reminder notice will be sent to those who have not paid dues for a year, with advice that their names will be dropped from the roll after two years. A dues notice will be included in the Nov. Newsletter.

Word has been received that the Angino Farm Commission has been formed and that members have already had their first meeting to discuss some start-up issues. There is still one seat vacant. There is as yet no member representing the NC, although William Stone has stated his willingness to serve.

Ted gave notice of a scheduled event on "Angino Farm: Newton's Agricultural History", sponsored jointly by the NC together with the Newton History Museum, to be held at the farm on Sunday, Sept 18, 2-4 PM. It was a wonderful event filled with interesting facts about the history of the farm and its recent crops.

Ted also reported that Habitat for Humanity hopes to break ground for construction of its affordable housing on the Forte property next spring if transfer of ownership and closing has been accomplished.

Volunteers from the Board were requested to serve at the Harvest Festival on Newton Centre Green on Sunday, Oct 16th. Bill Hagar will coordinate activities and set up the table.

The Fall Walks schedule has been completed by Peter Kastner and was sent out with the Newsletter.

Duane Hillis reported that the TV group has completed a program on the acquisition of Kessler Woods for October viewing. Plans for shows featuring the “The Environmental Science Summer Program” and “Dolan Pond” are in the works. It was suggested that DVD copies of shows aired thus far be offered to the Newton Free Library and possibly for sale to interested NC members.

New Business: -.In a letter received from the Solomon Schechter Day School on Wells Avenue, Carolyn Flammey, Director of Finance and Operations, Solomon Schechter Day School of Greater Boston, has requested the Newton Conservators to advise its members that it is illegal for anyone to walk across school property when following the Blue Heron Trail as it detours toward the school in order to avoid wetland areas along the Charles River. The Newton Conservators’ website has been modified to accommodate this request.

Jim Broderick announced that concern about mosquito breeding has led to abandonment of the idea of constructing a birdbath in Ordway Park. A memorial bench of some design has been suggested in its place. Neighbors have requested the removal of a dying oak tree from the park, and two bids of \$450 and \$500 have been received. He will follow up on this matter, and was given funding approval for the tree removal.

Jim Broderick also described the need for attention to Comprehensive Planning as a renewed responsibility of land trust function. He pointed out the necessity of keeping an eye on areas which might be prime areas for further development, such as land adjacent to golf courses, etc. Some of the private areas might be encouraged to have conservation restrictions on the land, and offer first purchasing rights to the City of Newton. This would provide for continued open space in these areas even if the land were sold.

Margaret Albright reported that the Parks and Recreation Committee supported her group’s Plans for Albemarle Park except for the proposed bridge over Cheesecake Brook. Apparently, the Public Works Dept would be responsible for building and maintaining such a bridge..

Bonnie Carter suggested that the Community Bulletin Board at NewTV could be used by NC to publicize its Fall Walks and other activities.

Duane Hillis recounted meetings of representatives from the Friends of Nahanton Park with the city representative about the possibility of raising funds to meet the park maintenance budget by charging a fee for use of the park facilities for special family outings, etc. This issue is yet to be worked out.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM

M.G.Criscitiello

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Minutes of the Board Meeting
October 18, 2005
Newton City Hall Room Room 203

Present Bill Hagar (presiding), AnnaMaria Abernathy, Dan Brody, Larry Burdick, Modestino (Cris) Criscitiello, Doug Dickson, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Duane Hillis, Peter Kastner, Ted Kuklinsky, Anne Pearson, Beth Schroeder.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes for the meeting of September 20 were approved as written, with warm thanks to Cris Criscitiello.

ESP: Bill reported an email from David Backer inquiring whether the Conservators would take the ESP under its wing to permit them to raise funds using our 501-3(C) designation. After considerable discussion, it was decided to put the item on the aenda for the next meeting, with David Becker in attendance.

Treasurer's Report: was not given, as Katherine was unexpectedly delayed.

Membership Update: Ann circulated a list of 71 names of persons who had not renewed for 2 or more years. It included the names of city officials and political figures who receive the newsletter regardless of membership, and some members favored sending them a letter saying we hope they enjoy the newsletter and hope they might join. However, it was decided write only to delinquent members and ask them to re-join the Conservators.

Angino Farm: Larry said some \$40,000 in gifts are being acknowledged and being held pending selection of the farm group. The Farm Commission met the preceding evening. Only the Farm Group had responded to the commission's Request for Interest. The commission is still short two members – an expert farmer is needed, and no member of the Parks & Recreation Commission is willing to join; Margaret said that Shannon Ames, a P&R employee, would be an ideal member, but the ordinance specifies a commissioner. Doug commented that the commission has accomplished much it will be possible to plant next spring. • **Membership records:** Anne Pearson is taking over the maintenance from Jason Glasgow, who has resigned from the board. Board members expressed warm appreciation to both Jason and Anne.

Ordway Park: Jim Broderick has asked to retire from Ordway Park responsibilities, which include maintenance, fundraising, and supervising the ongoing improvements. Cris and Beth, the land management committee, will keep an eye on the park, and Bill will seek a neighbor to join in working there.

Awtrey Gift: Doug inquired whether that transaction has been finalized; Eric will be asked about it.

Fall Walks and Talk:

•**Aqueduct walk:** was very well attended, ca. 18. We noted the need to arrange to have a sign up sheet and maps available at each walk; in their absence, some walkers said they would work through the web site.

•**Aqueduct bike ride:** the Boston Globe reporter who accompanied Henry and is writing a piece for the coming West section [see appended] had asked for some of the photos on our web site; she was told the \$100 charge, but ended up using those of the Globe photographer, who took many photos. The question of whether to waive our fee became moot, though it was discussed, and consensus was not to waive the fee.

•**Aqueduct easements:** Henry raised the question of right to walk on privately owned portions of the aqueduct. Doug advocates taking this issue up now, since a project needing funding may be involved, and available CPA funds will be decreasing each year. He observed that the Sudbury aqueduct is no longer needed as emergency back-up, and MWRA may be going to surplus it; should we be communicating with them about this? And what is the City's interest in its Cochituate aqueduct?

Duane suggested that he, Doug, Henry, and perhaps Dan Green and Frank Stieger (retired engineer who was on the walk, is expert on the aqueducts) get together about this.

Fall Talk: Ted asked Cris to introduce Marian Larson on Nov. 15, and asked board members to arrive early to help greet the audience.

Grants: The Bowen School has requested a grant of \$1,100 (of ca. \$4000) for plants for 2006. Richard Primack is an advisor to this project. The grants committee will ask for more details, as well as outcome of CPA application.

Oct. 9 GLOBE on Land Preservation: Bill called attention to this article, noting extensive construction in many communities. Peter mentioned that the Comprehensive Planning Committee's report will begin publication in December.

Nahanton Park: Duane reported on Judy Dore's assignment to raise money to support the Nature Center at Nahanton Park, some \$10,000/year. Peter noted that the Conservators had opposed this building, but Mayor Mann had insisted; the Senior Center & Parks Dept. users pay no fees, and with level funding of the Parks Dept., the problem has become acute. The building is too small to be rentable for functions.

New Business:

Friends of Houghton Garden: (Doug) A new group (not Chestnut Hill Garden Club) has asked us to hold their moneys until they decide whether to sponsor them. He suggests we approve in principle and ask them to contact Katherine about it. It was decided to put it on the agenda for next month, with Katherine present.

Charles River Conservancy (CRC): Renata von Tscharnier is asking groups like the NC to weigh in regarding a glitch in legislative funding for traffic calming measures on Nonantum Road. The Legislature had approved funding, but it was omitted in the final legislation. She asks that we support what the CRC is advocating. A MOTION to agree in principle, to get the information, and to draft a letter and circulate it to the board for approval was APPROVED, with one vote against.

Williams School Outdoor Classroom: Ted received a request for a letter of support for the CPA request from the Williams School. The sense of the meeting was not to single out one of many similar proposals, none of which we have been involved with directly.

Albemarle Park CPA application: Margaret noted that last summer our board showed interest in the project; now the application is ready, and she thinks it makes sense for us to support it, especially the preservation of Avery Woods. The main change has been including the triangular area in the central corridor, to protect this open space from parking. Dough suggested that the Conservators should weigh in at the working session, when we can see the proposal.

Adjournment:.. at 10:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary

Attachment:

Boston.com The Boston Globe WEST section
SKY ABOVE, HISTORY BELOW, AQUEDUCT TRAILS LURE FANS
Biking, hiking enjoyed by outdoors enthusiasts

By Kristen Green, Globe Correspondent | October 23, 2005

Leading the way down a well-worn path, Henry J. Finch at first seems to be walking through people's backyards. Then the path widens, and the houses fade into the distance.

The seasoned trail guide arrives at a favorite spot, a quiet ravine surrounded by graceful pines where the only noises he can hear are birds twittering and planes flying far above. Under his feet runs 150 years of history -- an aqueduct that once funneled millions of gallons of water into Boston.

"It's nice to have a neat little place close to home," said the 56-year-old architect from Newton. "I like the way it's a little bit hidden."

The tops of some underground aqueducts that cut through Boston's western suburbs have essentially become grassy nature corridors bordered by flowers, bushes, and trees. And they are attracting hikers, bikers, and cross-country skiers.

The trails' fans say they are little-known gems that provide a different perspective on their communities and are a welcome addition, a conduit even, to existing official trails.

While some of the aqueduct trails are posted with "No Trespassing" signs, officials generally look the other way when the trails are used by residents who are simply getting a daily fix of fresh air.

Finch, a bearded man with wire-rimmed glasses, has introduced dozens of people to the trails, including his wife, Pat Robinson. He now acts as a guide for the citizens' group Newton Conservators, leading biking and

walking tours on the trails that the group promotes on its Internet site.

"People have been coming through here since I was a kid," he said.

One popular set of trails runs along the Cochituate Aqueduct, which transported water from Lake Cochituate to metropolitan Boston through Wayland, Natick, Wellesley, and Newton. Other trails run along the Sudbury Aqueduct, which once carried water from a reservoir in Framingham to Boston through Sherborn, Natick, Wellesley, and Needham. Two other aqueducts, the Weston and the Hultman, have also been used by trail enthusiasts.

Exercising with friends or his wife, Finch has explored every inch of the aqueduct trails around his home, piecing together a 15-mile route along the Cochituate and Sudbury in Newton, Wellesley, and Needham. He veers off the path when necessary to avoid chain-link fences, Interstate 95, and T stops, using roads to reach the next segment of trail.

In more than two decades running and biking the paths, Finch said, until recently only one person has asked him to get off the trail.

But before a bike ride he led on the trails two weeks ago, Finch received an anonymous note in the mail from someone who claimed to own property on the trail and expressed concern about Finch leading rides there. When Finch gave the tour, he avoided one stretch that passes within 30 feet of houses, as he always does when he bikes that trail.

The state built the 17-mile Cochituate Aqueduct in 1848 and the 22-mile-long Sudbury Aqueduct 30 years later. Both were built of brick and designed to carry water to metropolitan Boston by gravity. As the city grew, the capacity of the aqueducts became insufficient and new ones were built.

The Cochituate, which the state abandoned in 1951, was handed over to the towns and cities it passes through, said Tom Lindberg, a spokesman for the Massachusetts Water

Resources Authority. Newton uses the aqueduct to carry sewage to the Deer Island treatment plant, said Jeremy Solomon, a city spokesman.

The Sudbury Aqueduct, which was taken offline in 1978, is still owned by the MWRA, and it could be used in "a dire situation," Lindberg said. The water that flowed through it would have to be boiled to be potable, he said.

Significant portions of the aqueduct pass through private land, which the MWRA uses with easement rights.

Lindberg said there are liability concerns, but the agency generally does not mind when people use the trail.

"There's always been unauthorized, informal access to those areas, and they have not, to date, caused a problem," Lindberg said.

Robinson and Finch said that in the few areas of Newton where the aqueduct cuts through private land with easement rights, most residents have accepted the trails that pass next to their decks. Some have even incorporated the paths into their landscaping, laying mulch and pieces of slate along them.

"It's just kind of understood that's part of the trail," said Robinson.

The path runs 50 feet from the front porch of Nancy and Modestino Criscitiello's Newton home. Modestino Criscitiello said 50 to 150 people walk their dogs or stroll by with children in strollers in a 24-hour period.

"We don't mind it at all," said Criscitiello, a 79-year-old retired physician. "We find it pleasant because we get a chance to say hello to neighbors and friends."

Robinson and Finch want more people to be exposed to the trails. The couple and others who belong to Newton Conservators want to post signs and to create an official trail map, a move the Criscitiellos support.

Solomon, the Newton spokesman, said that if the Conservators, a group that advocates for the city's open spaces, brings a proposal before the city to mark and maintain the trails in the city, officials would consider it.

Some Natick residents are hoping to do the same with the Sudbury Aqueduct in their town.

Tim Collins, chairman of the Natick Trails Committee and founder of Natick Walks, a town wellness program, said he runs into perhaps a dozen people every time he hits the Sudbury Aqueduct trails that snake through Natick.

"Right now, the public is trespassing on MWRA land and MWRA kind of turns a blind eye to it," he said.

The trails, hemmed in by trees on both sides, are heavily used not just for recreational purposes, but also to reach a destination. Children walk the paths to get to Memorial Elementary School on Eliot Street, he said.

"It's a beautiful walk along the wilderness," said Collins, who sometimes brings his three children on the trail.

Collins said he wants to be able to post signs on the trails and maintain them so that more people can use them. But until the MWRA gives formal permission to use the 1-mile segment of the aqueduct it owns in town, their existence can't legally be publicized and Collins's group can't lead guided walks. The path is currently denoted on the group's brochures with a dotted line signifying a future trail.

The aqueduct right-of-way also runs through a large, private estate owned by the Hunnewell family. Parts of the aqueduct on that property are off limits, but the family has granted access to another segment, Collins said.

The MWRA said it is willing to entertain offers from communities that want to take the trails off their hands,

if the communities will promise to maintain and accept liability for them.

A 1999 study conducted by Beals and Thomas Inc. for the MWRA and MetroWest Growth Management Committee, a collaborative of nine communities, found that the best use of the aqueducts would be in linking parcels of open space. The study, which considered how MWRA property throughout the region should be used, suggested that "friends" organizations could help foot the bill for maintaining trails.

Lindberg, the MWRA spokesman, said the authority does not want to be in the parks business.

"Somebody has to step forward with the resources to help us," Lindberg said. "We have some of the most beautiful lands in the Commonwealth, but we're not a parks agency."

Some towns have already moved to make the trails official.

Weston agreed in January to maintain trails near the Weston Reservoir along the Weston Aqueduct, which is also owned by MWRA and kept on standby status like the Sudbury.

In Wellesley, trails along the Cochituate Aqueduct are now maintained by the town, laid out in printed maps, and marked with kiosks.

Wellesley Trails Committee member Denny Nackoney said the committee is still negotiating with the MWRA to maintain the Wellesley portion of the Sudbury Aqueduct.

One of his favorite things about the aqueduct trails is the way they connect to other trails and enhance the town's trail system.

He likes the fact that the aqueduct trails are flat, completely off road, and easy to walk. Spotting wildlife like deer and coyotes is not unusual, and people on the trails can admire conservation land that isn't visible from the road, Nackoney said.

"They just provide a different way of looking at your town."

Willie Voss, a 76-year-old Newton resident, made his way down Newton's Cochituate Aqueduct trail with his two daughters and seven grandchildren one recent fall day, a walk he typically does three times a week.

"I enjoy it, getting away from the street and cars," he said.

Finch makes a point of getting on the trails four or five days a week. He looks forward to his regular encounters with wildlife, and sometimes brings along a basket to collect wild mushrooms.

"It's right in the suburbs," Robinson said, "yet here is this avenue of green grass going through."

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Newton Conservators, Inc.
Minutes of the Board Meeting
November 16, 2005, 7:30 PM
Newton City Hall Room Room 222

Present Bill Hagar (presiding), AnnaMaria Abernathy, Dan Brody, Larry Burdick, Carol Lee Corbett, Modestino (Cris) Criscitiello, Dan Green, Duane Hillis, Frank Howard, Katherine Howard, Ted Kuklinsky, Anne Pearson, Eric Reenstierna, Beth Schroeder, William Stone.

Also attending: Michelle Hanss and Cynthia Barnett from the Friends of Houghton Garden, David Backer and Leeann Simons from the Environmental Science Program, and Florrie Funk from the Conservators' land management committee.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes for the meeting of October 18 were approved as written.

Friends of Houghton Garden: Michelle Hanss explained that the FOHG began about 3 years ago, after the Chestnut Hill Garden Club (CHGC) obtained funds to restore the garden. A major effort is under way in preparation for the Garden Club of America's meeting there in 2007. The group has been asked to leave the umbrella of the CHGC, and is requesting the Conservators to provide a bridge until it gets its own 501(c)(3) status. After considerable discussion, Duane MOVED that we tentatively agree to take on the sponsorship as a bridge to the group's own 501(c)(3), pending legal council approval and proper transfer of funds with CHGC. The motion was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

Environmental Science Program: David Backer would like to use the Conservators' 501(c)(3) status to facilitate more fund raising; all bookkeeping is done by the Planning Department. His response to whether he planned to get the 501(c)(3) in ESP's own name was, not for several years. Board members wanted guarantees that we would not need to account for how grants were expended, or present budgets and prepared detailed financial reports. There was some concern about the Conservators' financial involvement with a City run program. Dan Green volunteered to bring the issue up at the Conservation Commission meeting, with its lawyers. A MOTION by Carol that the matter be held until the next meeting was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

Treasurer's Report: Katherine distributed the report (attached to file copy of these minutes) noting that reimbursement from the CPA for expenses related to the Angino Farm accounted for an increase of \$6000+ in unrestricted funds and in total net assets. The a MOTION to approve the report was APPROVED unanimously.

Carol read the Franklin School's "thank you" note for the Newton Conservators' grant for their environmental garden project.

Florrie Funk's Weed Wrench request: Beth introduced Florrie, a member of the land management team that each Tuesday and Thursday works on surveying all the open spaces in the city. To help attack the problem of invasive species, Florrie would like some Weed Wrenches. These come in four sizes, priced from \$82 to \$189 plus shipping (see weedwrench.com) Board members reacted favorably, and agreed that the request be made in form of a grant application.

Election Results and CPA: Bill Hagar commented that the Conservators had become the whipping boy for Mike Striar's mayoral campaign, and that his and Eric's letter correcting Striar's misleading statements about Kessler Woods was printed only after the election. Everyone agreed that we need to continue to advocate our positions and publicize the facts of important land acquisitions.

Web site – Conservator trail maps: The board expressed interest in the possibility of putting the maps on the web site, to increase map sales, memberships, and interest in Newton's open spaces. Duane and Bill will follow up this option and discuss the issue with Judy Hepburn who prepared the structural backbone of the maps.

Angino Farm: The Newton Community Farm group has been chosen to run the farm. Now fundraising will resume, with NC as the recipients.

Eric noted as follows:

- Ald. Lappin sees a problem with our occupying space in the building because the building may not meet building codes for use for public meetings.
- Farm tools were purchased with the help of the Conservators for \$1,000, There may be a disagreement between the City and us about who actually owns the tools; but the purpose of purchasing the tools was to keep them at the farm, and that has been accomplished, regardless of ownership
- The Parks & Rec. Commission has a vacancy from Ward 7, so needs a member who would like to represent it on the Farm Commission.

Awtrey Property: Eric reported that Jason Rosenberg is now handling the gift of ½ acre, which the Awtreys would like to finalize before year's end. Our attorney Jenny Outman now works for the State and hence no longer has malpractice insurance; Beth will ask a lawyer neighbor who might help.

New business:

- Anne has had a request to use our database to hand-pick some names for a fundraiser. The board reconfirmed the policy that we must give permission; we exchange lists only rarely, with groups sharing our goals.
- Bill thanked all who helped with the previous evening's lecture, "Living with Wildlife" - Ted, Beth, Cris, Dane, and Frank Howard.

Adjournment: at 9:50 PM

Respectfully submitted,
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Minutes of the Board Meeting
December 14, 2005, 7:30 PM
Newton City Hall Room Room 222

Present Bill Hagar (presiding), AnnaMaria Abernathy, Dan Brody, Larry Burdick, Modestino (Cris) Criscitiello, Henry Finch, Dan Green, Duane Hillis, Frank Howard, Peter Kastner, Anne Pearson, Eric Reenstierna, Beth Schroeder.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes for the meeting of November 16 were approved as written.

Treasurer's notes: Katherine was unable to attend, but sent a message:

- Marc Welch of the Forestry Dept. suggested trying a few Weed Wrenches in our rocky conditions, before purchasing a large number of them. The board agreed to authorize Florrie Funk to spend up to \$300 for a small and a larger Weed Wrench for testing.
- Donations are coming in from the special Angino fundraising mailing done by the Farm Group (FG).
- Larry reported that Katherine is currently reviewing our insurance coverage.
- He and Katherine are also discussing how NC can reimburse the FG for expenses; he has suggested to FG that they authorize a member to make requests to us, and we authorize Katherine to pay; upon hearing from FG, we can vote on this next month.

Land Management/Acquisition – Awtrey Property: Eric described the ½ acre being donated, and distributed a plan (attached to the file copy of these minutes) The Awtreys offer to pay \$10,000 for upkeep of the land; all expenses associated with recording the deed and a survey; a flat stone marker announcing the pathway on the easement to the lot, and stepping-stones delineating it.

Our lawyer, Peter Alpert, has raised several questions regarding liability, access (because Sargent Park is a private way), test for hazardous waste (21E), and ensuring that the conditions of the deed are met. After considerable discussion, A MOTION to accept the gift, subject to satisfying the land acquisition committee's concerns, and authorizing our representative not to go forward if there seems to be too much liability. This was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

Beth suggested that in future, at least 50% of the board should inspect a property before we vote on it. Everyone agreed, and this policy was adopted

Kessler Woods: Cris, who had spoken with Mr. Southworth, explained that the original townhouse was found not feasible; the current proposal is 5' taller and has a smaller footprint. Discussion concluded that this sounds desirable, but that we

need to see the plan. Cris will invite Mr. Southworth to come to our next meeting.

Eric then reported on some Brookline neighbors' proposal to extend the Rivers Act frontage requirements to 1000' for Saw Mill Brook, which runs between the two Cornerstone properties at Kessler Woods, and which would effectively knock out the whole development. We agreed that the proposal has no chance of passage, but Ruth Balsler would like us to write a letter of opposition to the relevant committee of the state legislature. A MOTION that we write the letter to keep the Rivers Act for its intended purpose was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED. Eric and Bill will write the letter.

Membership: Peter will mail the renewal letter on Monday evening, and would welcome help. He requested permission to send them via first class, which will cost about \$100; the board agreed to this.

CPA proposal for NewTurf at Newton South High School: Bill opened with an email from a non-member asking our stand on the artificial turf. A lengthy discussion showed most members oppose "plastic grass", though the advantages were also noted; all agreed that funding for the fields should come from the School Department, not the CPA. After several votes on motions against use of synthetic turf in general, and against use of CPA funds for school projects, Dan Green MOVED that the Conservators oppose the use of \$2.9 million of CPA funds for synthetic fields at NSHS, and that the previous motions be expunged. This motion passed with 12 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 abstention. Bill will draft the letter and circulate it; members will respond directly to him, not "Reply to all."

Web Site: Newton Conservator Trail Maps: Dan Brody read an email from Judy Hepburn approving putting the maps she had developed on the web site. She wrote "I have no objection to putting the maps I drew on the website as long as it doesn't hurt sales of the booklet (and if its main function is now merely as a free gift to new members, that's fine too). She had hoped the booklets would be a "cash cow", and if sales have dropped off anyway, she has no objection.* Therefore a MOTION to put all the maps on the web was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED. *Frank Howard reported that sales were brisk at Newton bookstores as he had to drop off additional copies during the past week.

Grants: Duane asked that we reimburse David Backer for the \$170 spent on disposable video cameras for the ESP; the photographs are being used in his NewTV program. The board agreed unanimously.

New business:

- Beth: The Land Management team has been meeting weekly. Before their January 5 meeting, she would like us to send her any of the following that we know: 1) the names of all the “Friends of..” groups and 2) lists of plants & animals seen in various sites, as well as 3) clean-up dates of the sites
- Larry Burdick offered a copy of the Environmental Impact Statement book for the new Chestnut Hill Square proposal on route 9.
- AnnaMaria will circulate by email the list of committees, with the request that members bring it up to date with necessary corrections.
- Dan Brody read an email from Colin Shaw, correcting the history of the Charles River Path/Wells Ave. in our booklet: the land was owned by Robert Gould Shaw II, not his cousin, the famous Col. Robert Gould Shaw. Dan has corrected the entry, and put the entire email on <http://www.newtonconservators.org/shawletter.htm>
- Bill Hagar reported an email from an Advanced Placement biology class at NNHS. For an environmental science project they are interested in leading two walks next spring, and asked what the qualifications are to be tour leaders. The board members welcomed the idea of increased student participation and Chris and Bill will contact the students and their teacher.
- Duane is working on a TV program about the aqueducts, and invites input of all sorts.

Adjournment: at 9:35 PM

Respectfully submitted,
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Minutes of the Board Meeting
January 18, 2006 7:40 PM
Newton City Hall Room Room 203

Present Bill Hagar (presiding), AnnaMaria Abernathy, Margaret Albright, Larry Burdick, Carol Lee Corbett, Modestino (Cris) Criscitiello, Doug Dickson, Henry Finch, Dan Green, Duane Hillis, Katherine Howard, Peter Kastner, Ted Kuklinski, Anne Pearson, Eric Reenstierna, Beth Schroeder. *Bill: I thought I saw Margaret Doris, though she didn't sign in – can you confirm?*

Approval of Minutes: The minutes for the meeting of December 14 were approved as written.

Tom Southworth Update of Kessler Woods (one hour): Mr. Southworth showed posters to explain the Cornerstone project. He expects the aldermanic public hearing will be on March 14. The Planning and Development Board has reviewed the plans and suggested minor changes, which Cornerstone followed. The general appearance of the buildings is unchanged, but the three town houses along LaGrange Street have been removed, and three units added in the large building complex (the exterior is unchanged, as the units replace features on the interior.) The result is 10 townhouses, and 5 to 10% less coverage of the site. The condo development has 14.5 acres for its use, but any open space portion not used will revert to the City. Cornerstone will contribute \$75,000 for trails and \$250,000 for the sewer. Mr. Southworth stressed that 60% of the open space on the site has been preserved; without this acquisition, circa 56 house lots would have been created. Discussion centered on the trails, which have not been thought about, and about which the Conservators weighed in with suggestions. Duane said that one trail should definitely go over the sewer line as this would also facilitate possible repairs. . Henry was very interested in having an upper trail along the top edge of the complex while some other members were interested in having an up and back trail to the top edge of the complex. This also would provide trail access to members of the complex. Carol asked whether green buildings are planned; Mr. Southworth could say nothing about this subject.

Treasurer's Report: Katherine reported orally:

Treasurer's Report: Katherine reported orally:

- Dues and gifts in '05 were \$17,000, vs. \$18,500 budgeted.
- 203 responses have been received so far to the year end membership mailing .
- Expenses were \$8000 vs. \$18,000 budgeted.
- Unrestricted net assets increased by \$16,000, to total \$146,000.
- We are holding \$43,000 of Farm money for their use.

- Ordway Park: 21,000 in Endowment Fund and 1,500 in Improvement Fund.
- The Awtrey parcel gift went through at end of December, including a \$10,000 contribution for its maintenance and upkeep.
- Form ABC must be filed by March 1 with the Assessor's Office; it will now show the Awtrey property in addition to Ordway and Prospect Park properties.

Friends of Houghton Garden: Katherine brought up the question of managing their account that we had postponed from December. Peter Alpert will be consulted about the legal requirements, and a MOTION that we agree to hold and manage the group's money until they get their 501(c)(3) was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

Angino Farm Update: Larry reported the Farm Group's decision at its last meeting on authorizing the president and or treasurer to request payment of farm related expenses, and suggested we do the same regarding payments. Thereupon Doug MOVED that the board authorize the president and/or treasurer to pay Angino Farm related expenses in accordance with the operation of the Farm and any restriction on the funds. The motion was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED. A second MOTION that checks over \$10,000 must have two signatures was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

Larry reported that a 3-year contract between the City's Farm Commission and Newton Community Farm, Inc., is about to be signed, and that several persons have applied for the position of farmer.

Also, the Bowen School plans to apply for a grant to hold an educational program at the farm in the fall. Because CPA funds cannot go for transportation, the Bowen group would like to apply to the Pomroy Foundation for \$2000 to bus the students.. The Foundation gives grants only to 501(c)(3) organizations. Therefore, upon discussion, a MOTION was made that as an extension of our offer to be the fiscal intermediary for the Farm Group we agree to assist the Farm Group in obtaining funds from private foundations; this motion was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

Newsletter: Doug announced that the deadline for the next newsletter is February 3, and that this is his second-to-last issue; a new editor must be found for the June issue. The lead article this time will be on the underground utilities task force.

Committee Membership Updates: The following changes were noted:
Audit Committee: Margaret Albright, Dan Green, and Peter Kastner will join Chair Larry Burdick. Land Management: Cris Criscitiello and Beth Schroeder as co-chairs replace Jon Regosin. Members are Larry Burdick, Debbie Howard, Florrie Funk, Pete Gilmore, Don Lubin. Ted Kuklinski. The new Aqueduct Committee

has Chair Henry Finch with members Cris Criscitiello and Duane Hillis. Under Liaisons, add the Mayor's Committee for Sustainable Newton: Beth Schroeder.

Membership: Anne reported that of some 540 renewal letters mailed by Peter, about 200 have responded.

Spring Activities:

- **Walks:** Peter will prepare the schedule in time for the February Newsletter. Cris said the Land Management Committee would like to lead one walk.
- **Spring Lecture:** Ted asked for suggestions.

Albemarle Update: Margaret said that at a meeting last week, Friends of Albemarle and city officials heard from the City's legal department that the Public Works Department has jurisdiction over the pedestrian bridge over Cheesecake Brook. Bob Rooney proposed that a third phase be added, to handle the stormwater all along the road while it is being repaved and adding a new walking trail; Rooney wants the Albemarle group to double their request before the CPC; the Public Works Dept. and Parks and Recreation Dept. will be co-applicants for this request. State funds may be available for the bike trail. Margaret asked for Conservator support. The board agreed to this unified plan, and Bill Hagar will write the letter of support for the CPC meeting on January 25.

New business:

- **Newton Biodiversity Day:** Beth inquired whether it still exists, saying the land management committee wishes to be involved; Ted will find out dates and inform her.
- **Annual Meeting:** Carol asked for suggestions for speaker. Peter suggested Michael Dukakis, to talk about national environmental policy.
- **NewTV:** Cris said the environmental programmers plan a couple of programs based on last November's lecture, one on the aqueducts, and one on Dolan Pond.
- **Webster Park:** Ted reported that Harvey Epstein informs him that the closing on the Forte property is imminent, and Habitat expects to break ground this spring.
- **Boston Globe Calendar:** last week listed the NC web site for the maps.

Adjournment: at 9:50 PM

Respectfully submitted,
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Minutes of the Board Meeting
February 15, 7:30 PM
Newton City Hall Cafeteria

Present Bill Hagar (presiding), AnnaMaria Abernathy, Margaret Albright, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Carol Lee Corbett, Modestino (Cris) Criscitiello, Doug Dickson, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Dan Green, Frank Howard, Katherine Howard, Peter Kastner, Ted Kuklinski, Anne Pearson, Beth Schroeder.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes for the meeting of January 18 were approved as written.

Albemarle Update: Margaret Albright showed Curtis Betts' aerial view of the site. Work to be done is in three projects: 1) CDBG funds are paying to remove invasives from the deep portion of the brook with a fence. The other two projects, which are requesting CPA funding for the design phase are
2) The central corridor : aligning the bridge with the pathway, and improvements to it from the brook to Day Junior High School, which is under jurisdiction of the Parks & Recreation Department (\$40,000)
3) The Cheesecake Brook Greenway improvements from Watertown St. to the Charles River., under Public Works (\$25,000).
The engineering firm Weston & Sampson will be in charge of all three projects.

Margaret Doris added that the DPW is obligated to make repairs on #2, so it is urgent to get that project under way in order to integrate it with the DPW work; making it bicycle-friendly makes it eligible for federal and state contributions. She also noted that this project is getting representatives from different City departments to talk to each other, e.g., School and Parks & Recreation.

Treasurer's Report: Katherine reviewed the report that she had sent to the board via e-mail. She would like someone to take over the work on working with our insurance policies; she will ask Larry Burdick, but if he declines, she hopes someone else will volunteer.

Membership: Peter reported that we have 288 paid up members, plus 132 who had paid through December 2005, and 80 from 2004. He will send a letter to the lapsed members on March 1, using the form that is in the Newsletter.

Durant-Kenrick Homestead: Bill reported the majority of board members' email responses were positive regarding his "draft letter" supporting Brooke Lipsitt's

request that we support the Newton Historical Society's application to the CPC for city acquisition of the house and adjoining lot. The letter was sent to the CPC. (Copy appended to the file copy of these minutes.)

Henry explained the situation: the family wishes the home and land be preserved, and the Newton Historical Society wants to make it a museum for teaching history of the revolutionary period. It needs much restoration. Doug said the CPC will hear the request for \$78,000 at the end of March – to study what is needed and to fund the conservation easement. The property is at the intersection of Waverly and Kenrick Streets.

Dan Green preferred developing the lot, with the historic trees preserved; this would raise \$1+ million for the house. If the neighbors want to keep the lot open, they should come up with the funding to maintain it.

Spring Activities – Lecture: Ted is working on it.

Publicity for our events was discussed. Because there is a new policy of not having Newsletters in the library, other outlets are needed.

- Margaret Doris planned to put information into some elementary school newsletters.
- Carol wants to send information to the churches.
- Margaret Doris brought up the idea of submitting certain newsletter articles to the TAB.

Frank Howard pointed out that the Conservators have information on their activities posted on the web site, and lecture DVDs at the library.

- Doug suggested that we need a communications and outreach committee and the two Margarets volunteered.

Spring Walks: Peter will prepare the schedule for the April Newsletter.

Names discussed for Annual Awards, final decisions to come next month:

(1) **Environmentalist of the Year:** Duane Hillis and Jon Regosin and Eric Reenstierna for their efforts to acquire and operate the Angino Farm.

(2) **Charles Maynard Johnson** for Biodiversity: Frank Howard for his work on the Chestnut Tree project and Jon Regosin for his work on the vernal pools.

(3) **Directors' Award:** Awtreys.

Annual Meeting Date: Ted will investigate whether Post 440 is available on the proposed date of Wednesday, May 31, 2006 [*The Date has been approved!*] Henry

observed the Windsor Club in Waban as another possibility for future Annual Meetings.

Annual Meeting Speaker & topics: possibilities, in order of preference:

(1) Peter Mead, on the green space over the Big Dig - Doug will investigate;
(2) A speaker on the Boston Harbor National Park; (3) Simon Perkins on Wind Farms, and (4) former Governor Mike Dukakis on an environmental topic.

Privacy Policy: Ann said we need to have a policy. We offer the option of “do not give my name...” on the membership envelopes and on the web site. It was agreed that we do not share our list until after the next renewal cycle, when all members will have had the option. Margaret Doris suggested putting a positive spin on the choice, in the sense of “occasionally we exchange lists with similarly minded organizations. Please check here if you do not wish this.”

Angino Farm Update: is in the February/March Newsletter. The letter sent to the CPC supporting the project was passed around, and is appended to these minutes.

New Business:

• **Electronic Newsletter delivery:** Peter pointed out, and others agreed, that the hard copy sent by mail may be read by several members of a household. Also, members could be offered a choice. Doug suggested combining the Newton Nature Notes and the Newsletter on line. He proposed brainstorming - about this and about the next Newsletter editor – with Eric, Dan Brody, and Cris.

• **Newsletter to Winchester Street residents:** Bill distributed 90 copies to the homes on Winchester Street, and received several enthusiastic phone calls from members who had not yet received their copy in the mail.

• **Newton North High School projects:** Cris has spoken with Mr. Snow, a science teacher. Two students have written papers about NC and would like to lead a walk for their fellow students. Cris will meet with them. Cris also asked Mr. Snow whether he is interested in involving students in some of our projects.

• **TV programs on DVDs:** Carol suggested we put our TV programs on DVDs and sell them.

• **Land Management Committee:** Beth said that they visit sites every Tuesday, accompanied by Mr. Don Lubin, an expert on ferns. She suggests we make him an advisor. The elections committee will discuss adding his name for approval at the annual meeting.

•**Needham group:** Doug received an Email from Sam Bass Warner, formerly of Cambridge and now in Needham, planning to organize a group like ours and to mark the trails. He is being referred to Wellesley for their trail maps.

• **New Post Office rules:** Bonnie noted that bulk mail no longer has to be sorted by zip; that the opening must be at the bottom, and no staples are permitted.

Adjournment: at 9:40 pm

Respectfully submitted,
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary

Attachment – next page:

Newton Conservators, Inc.

PO Box 590011, Newton Centre, MA 02459
www.newtonconservators.org

Community Preservation Committee
c/o Planning and Development Department
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459

February 9, 2006

Dear Members of the CPA Committee

The Newton Conservators support the Newton Historical Society in exploring options for the transfer of stewardship of the Durant Kenrick Homestead at 286 Waverley Avenue, and the adjoining open lot, as a general museum for the people of Newton. This house dates back to the 18th century and would be used to provide educational experiences to students and residents of Newton.

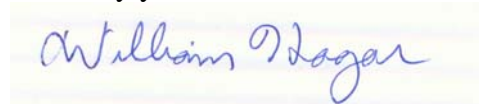
Until recently, this house was occupied by only two families and their descendants for the past two hundred years. The house is one of the oldest houses in Newton and has been home for many generations of the Durant and Kenrick families. The house and lot are tremendous resources for the City of Newton: It would serve as an educational site to provide descriptions and experiences on many aspects of 18th-century life for the people of Newton and surrounding communities.

In addition, the Newton Conservators are very interested in preserving the tree filled, open space adjacent to the house. This adjacent tree filled area better sets the house in Colonial Times, and also provides onlookers with old forest specimen trees including a huge beech tree. The lot is around twenty thousand square feet, and has trees planted by one of the first arborist in the Boston area. The following embedded picture shows the front of the house and the tree filled adjacent lot.



It is very important to preserve open space areas in Newton for the benefit of its residents. It is especially beneficial when the open space is part of the preservation of a historical landmark such as the Durant Kenrick Homestead. We look forward to your assistance with this project.

Sincerely yours,



William Hagar
President

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Minutes of the Board Meeting
March 15, 7:30 PM
Newton City Hall Cafeteria

Present Bill Hagar (presiding), AnnaMaria Abernathy, Dan Brody, Lalor Burdick, Carol Lee Corbett, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Dan Green, Duane Hillis, Frank Howard, Katherine Howard, Peter Kastner, Ted Kuklinski, Anne Pearson, Eric Reenstierna, Bill Stone.

Also attending and introduced was Renee Gurry, an interested Conservator.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes for the meeting of February 15 were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report: Katherine announced that

- Larry Burdick is taking over the handling of our insurance policies. This was met with cheers.
- American Legion Post 440 has confirmed our reservation for May 31;
- Michelle Hahn called to say that the \$18,000 that the Chestnut Hill Garden Club had held for the Friends of Houghton Garden is being sent to us; we will be responsible for the funds until the Friends get their own 501(c) 3 certification;
- she has renewed our Land Trust Alliance membership;
- regarding the Winchester Street project, Mark Welch, forestry member of the Public Works department, is ready to cooperate with a neighborhood group.

In response to this, Bill Hagar, Duane, and Gertrude Lanman, an interested neighbor, will meet with Mr. Welch.

Annual Meeting: Ted reported that the room had been arranged through the good offices of Alderman Salvucci. Duane will accept the payments, and the invitation will request advance payment, to avoid the burden of checking and receiving at the door. Carol will ask the caterer for larger portions.

Regarding the amendment for which we did not receive approval from the required 2/3 of the membership, Larry will investigate with the State whether a repeat vote can be avoided, since a good faith effort had been made to acquire signatures.

Annual Meeting speaker has not been settled; Doug continues to work on it.

Annual Awards: After discussion, the following MOTIONS were SECONDED and unanimously approved:

(1) **Environmentalist of the Year:** Duane Hillis, Eric Reenstierna, and Jon Regosin for their work to acquire the Angino Farm and to establish its operation.

(2) Charles Maynard Johnson Award for Biodiversity: Frank Howard for his work on the Chestnut Tree project.

(3) Directors' Award: The Awtrey family for their gift and efforts to get neighbors to add to it; and Jim Broderick for his work on Ordway Park and establishment of the endowment for its maintenance.

Spring Activities – Lecture: Program on CPA Highlights. Ted plans a panel discussion “CPA in Newton – has it been worth it?” by four members of the Community Preservation Committee, Bob Ricchi from the Planning Department, and possibly Alderman member of the aldermanic CPA committee Steve Linsky. Some of the project directors will also make very short succinct presentations. The program will serve as our Spring Lecture and will be recorded to become one of our environmental shows on NewTV.

Re NewTV, Duane announced that a new server at NewTV will enable viewers to view programs on demand..

Spring Activities – Walks: Peter still had three open dates. Beth had said the land management committee will take one; a tour in cooperation with the Albemarle group of Albemarle/Cheesecake Brook is another. Henry will do the aqueduct walk on May 28 and a Cutler Park hike another day. Duane will film the aqueduct walk. Carol Smith Burney offers her new wildflower guide (free) and may do a June walk. Peter also mentioned that Larry Kaplan is interested in an activity about Hammond Pond.

Kessler Woods Update: Bill Hagar reported on the March 14 aldermanic land use committee public hearing at which Brookline abutters voiced their objections. Dan Green explained that the projected changes, making the central building taller, will require a zone change, in exchange for which we should ask for additional benefits.

Durant Kenrick Homestead: On March 3, the CPC unanimously approved the Newton History Museum’s application for a \$77,500 needs assessment for making it a pre-Revolutionary War history museum.

Bigelow Middle School Grant Application: A proposal for a spring woodland garden to be used for outdoor classes requests a \$500 grant. Discussion concluded that more detail about the educational program is needed; also that a poster presentation for our annual meeting would be welcome. A MOTION to approve the grant with some comments was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

Need for an Education/Outreach Committee:

Schools are sending requests to lead walks; it was agreed that we should give them our walks list and steer them to the ESP for training. Other suggestions:

- Duane: give ESP additional funds for this added task.
- Peter: tap our advisors for help.
- Henry: expand the walks to winter and summer.

Conclusion: Bill and other members will direct students to appropriate advisors.

Newton South High School Environmental Club has asked the Conservators for an Earth Day Activity on April 25, specifically a guided walk of the Kennard property. Bill will forward the request to Larry to for his input of the timing of the walk.

Environmental Science Program: is in the process of applying for the 501(c)3 status.

New Business:

• **Synthetic turf:** Frank read a memo from wife Debby (appended to the file copy of these minutes) about a lecture by Steve LeGros that expounded on the disadvantages of synthetic turf; she will get more information. Ted cited the Brookline Greenpeace web site on the subject:

<http://www.brooklinegreenspace.org/PDF/Artificial%20Turf.pdf>

• **Hemlock Gorge/Echo Bridge:** The closing of the bridge and Brian Yates' message asking members to lobby was discussed. Jim will write to the MWRA and Boston Globe & TAB. *[The bridge has reopened with temporary fencing.]*

• **Angino Farm Update:** Larry announced that Greg Maslow will be the farmer, and work will begin this spring; also that \$13,000 of shares have been sold.

• **Land Trust:** Larry learned at a Land Trust conference that we may need to be certified as a land trust.

• **Aqueducts:** Henry has met with a land lawyer about the easements over the 7 or 8 privately owned parcels; they seem to be only for the pipes, so hope for continuous access rests on the "right of adverse possession."

• **Newsletter:** Eric announced that the group that brainstormed (Peter, Eric, Dan Brody, and Cris) has decided to coordinate the Nature Notes with our newsletter; AND that he has volunteered to take over as editor. This announcement was met with loud cheers of thanks and with great sighs of relief.

Adjournment: at 9:40 pm

Respectfully submitted,
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary

**Newton Conservators, Inc.—
Minutes of the Board Meeting
April 19, 7:30 PM
Newton City Hall Room 202**

Present Bill Hagar (presiding), AnnaMaria Abernathy, Lalor Burdick, Carol Lee Corbett, M.G. Criscitiello, Doug Dickson, Dan Green, Duane Hillis, Katherine Howard, Peter Kastner, Ted Kuklinski, Anne Pearson, Eric Reenstierna, Beth Schoeder.

Also attending and introduced was Florrie Funk.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes for the meeting of March 15 were approved with the following corrections by AnnaMaria:

Present: Lalor Burdick, not Lawlor

Spring Activities – Lecture: Ted, not Eric in line 1; Ricchi, not Ricci in line 3: last line add words after “will”: “serve as our Spring Lecture on April 20 (7-9 PM) and”.

Treasurer’s Report: Katherine will send the First Quarter reports by email; they are almost ready, after delays owing to a Quicken file corruption. She will get extensions for the May 15 federal Form 990 and state Form PC filing deadlines.

Katherine next brought up the

Newton Tree Conservancy: this is an outgrowth of the Tree Commission, on which she and Doug serve. As the administrator of the new group, Katherine asked for Conservator support. After explanation and very brief discussion, a MOTION that the Conservators provide administrative support and oversight until the new group obtains its own 501(C) 3 was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

Nominating Committee: Peter reported that all the officers are staying on; we are losing Jon Regosin and Doug; also leaving are Jim Broderick, Lucy Caldwell-Stair and Mike Clarke. Peter recommends Florrie Funk and Carole Herman for board membership; he also is waiting to hear from Rebecca Smilley. Peter will be away for 3 weeks, so Bill Hagar and Beth will phone the advisors to inquire whether they wish to remain or leave as the list is becoming unwieldy, and some may be ready to step down. In conjunction with this, Doug suggested that next year we study how to best use the advisor pool.

April 20 Program on CPA Highlights: Duane reported that things are under control. 1) Doug will give the introduction and overview; 2) Project by project review; 3) What happens next? 4) Questions and answers.

Annual Meeting: Doug announced that Lynn Wolff and Peter Smith will speak about “The Rose Kennedy Greenway: Healing Boston’s Downtown,”

It was agreed not to put stamps on the return envelopes for the invitation. Anne Pearson will prepare the labels, and Bill will take the invitations to the printer. Duane will receive the return mailings and keep track of the number of members coming to the annual meeting.

Environmental Science Program: David Backer has written to Bill Hagar that this year’s group is very active, and that scholarships are needed. A MOTION to grant \$2000 (as last year) was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED. The group’s 501(C) 3 has not yet been established; Dan Green explained that they are working on marketing materials, and asked that, through this summer, we have an informal agreement to permit donations made out to NC “for ESP.” A MOTION that we provide the avenue for funding for four months, through the end of August, was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED

Ordway Park: Neighbors would like to make gifts in memory of a long-time supporter; Bill Hagar will investigate possibilities, possibly for general maintenance or for purchase of ferns.

Other Business:

•**Next board meeting:** Cris Criscitiello volunteered to take the minutes on June 21.

•**Newton Serves:** Margaret Albright announced that on April 30 a giant cleanup of Cheesecake Brook is scheduled.

•**Angino update:** Larry reported that work is proceeding. He told us that the soil will be turned over using a loaned tractor from a farmer in Dover, but a truck and trailer were needed to bring it up. (This has happened as the field is now plowed). Larry will put us on the farm’s email list.

•**Pomroy Foundation:** we need to get in touch by Monday to be considered for a grant; Larry will take care of this.

•**Conservator archives:** Carol would like someone else to volunteer to be the archivist; there are about 5 boxes, for which a dry basement is needed.

Adjournment at 8:10 PM in order to go to the Programs and Services Committee meeting about putting renewal of the Community Preservation Act on the ballot.

Respectfully submitted,
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary

