

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, January 8, 2014
6:30 dinner, 7:30 PM meeting
153 Windsor Road, Waban –Finch/Robinson home

Present were Beth Schroeder, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Margaret Albright, Bonnie Carter, Mike Clarke, Jackie Daoust, Henry Finch, Robert Fizer, Pete Gilmore, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Duane Hillis, Katherine Howard, Ted Kuklinski, George Mansfield, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson.

Also present until 7:15: Alderman Alison Leary and David Backer.

After a lively potluck dinner, the meeting convened at 7:35, with warm thanks to Henry and Pat for their hospitality.

Approval of the Minutes of December 11, 2013: The minutes were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report: Katherine reported that we will end the year with commensurate with expenses, which were equally below budget. Beth W. commented that expenses for the newsletter will be higher, so we should consider more energetic fundraising. This led to a discussion of ways to increase awareness of the NC. Placing articles in the TAB was raised, in light of the TAB editor's willingness to run an environmental article once a month. As a start, Jackie Daoust will send in Beth S.'s article about the NC in the current Newsletter. Margaret Albright also suggested using "Village 14" and the TAB blog. Duane will speak to David Backer about ESP students as junior members. The membership committee – Duane, Margaret Doris and George - will meet about fund raising.

Ordway Park: Beth W. reported that poison ivy has been removed successfully, so a spring volunteer day will be possible.

Acquisition Committee (Duane):

- **70 Crescent Street:** a meeting at Myrtle Baptist Church was not publicized; aldermanic reuse committee will meet again on it.
- **91 Court Street:** a 40b development of 36 condos with 79 underground parking spaces has been approved. It will replace two 2-family houses.

Updates:

• **133 Dudley Road:** a neighbor has sold 9 feet of frontage, which will permit 3 houses on the lot. It is hoped that the rear area may be conserved.

Bulloughs Pond (Duane): The Bullough's Pond Association wants to replace the existing long-closed skating hut with a pavilion. Duane objected that the \$250,000 should go to dredge the pond; the City dredges periodically, as it is part of the drainage system from City Hall & library [*editor: info from the BPA's web site, "The pond's historic skating hut is falling down. It needs to be preserved and re-purposed, perhaps as an observation platform or nature center."*] Correction from Feb. minutes: Duane wanted to go on record that structures should not be permitted on park lands.

Aqueduct (Henry): a group is trying to convince the aldermen that a public hearing is not necessary to implement the MWRA offer for public access; Mike said that this had been decided years ago.

Hammond Pond meeting with Ruthanne Fuller – Thursday January 9, at 5 PM in room 209: of neighbors, City, State, and aldermen.

Jennifer Steel meeting agenda and date: Board members approved the agenda Beth S. had proposed. (see attached*) Both Beths, Duane, Chris, Henry and AnnaMaria would like to attend. Beth S. will call Jennifer Steel.

Conservation Commission nominations: Ira Wallach, the chairman, has resigned, and all but two of the other members' terms have expired in 2010 and 2011. The TAB published a request for nominations. More needs to be known about qualifications needed [*ed: Jane Sender, a lawyer and Dan Green, a developer, are the two whose terms have not expired.*]

Tree Ordinance: Katherine and George explained the background and the need to correct loopholes that permit developers to cut trees without permission; a recent draft ordinance has been held over to the new board; the Conservators will want to participate in its discussion, to support strengthening the tree ordinance.

In connection with this, George brought up the

Petition to upzone 48 properties in the Chase-Ripley-Herrick neighborhood from MR1 to SR 3: to be discussed at ZAP next Monday evening in Room 202 at 7:45 PM. After a long discussion of our concern about densification,

vs. avoiding piecemeal rezoning while a Zoning Reform is under way and our insufficient knowledge of the facts to take a position, a MOTION to have Margaret Albright compose a statement expressing the Conservators' concern about densification in Newton, to be read Monday evening by the secretary was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED. It was also suggested that a letter go to the TAB.

[ed: on Friday, the Planning Department material about this became available at <http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/56434>]

It was voted unanimously that the Newton Conservators back this change. Margaret Albright offered to write a statement that would state our general principles of conserving open space. AnnaMaria offered to attend the meeting on January 13th at city hall to read the letter. It was also suggested that a letter should go into the Newton Tab. Beth S. requested that her name would not be on the letter because she works with developers in Newton that often build this type of housing. *[ed: on Friday, the Planning Department material about this became available at <http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/56434> and the Conservator executive committee decided that evening not to have a message read on Monday, but to observe at the meeting.]*

Spring Walks: Dan Brody's request to include Ordway Park, Awtrey Dell & Dexter Woods was noted, and the need for signage. The Wilson land was also mentioned, and Henry and Mike reiterated their readiness to create the path there.

New Business:

- **Tuesday Jan.14, 7 PM at the Library: *The Charles River: A history of Greater Boston's Waterway.*** Author Ted Clarke will speak.
- **Thursday, Jan. 30, 7 Pm at the Library:** Prof. Pamela Templer will speak on climate change's effect on local trees. (Cosponsored by The Newton Tree Conservancy, Green Decade/Newton and the Newton Conservators.)
- **SJC case about taxation of conservation land:** board members had read the GLOBE report, and will continue to add signage on our properties.

Adjournment: at 9:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,
AnnaMaria Abernathy, secretary

*Agenda for future meeting with Jennifer Steel:

1. Introduce her to our organization's goals
2. Show her the publications we have created
3. Ask to be involved in the forms for each conservation area that they are creating
4. Ask about the baseline survey they are doing for each property
5. Offer our resources to help with the surveys
6. Discuss individual projects?
 - a. 133 Dudley Road – saving land in the back of the three house lots
 - b. 122 Islington – protecting the wetlands and river way
 - c. 70 Crescent Street – keeping the land as open space, community gardens, etc.
 - d. Nahanton Park – conservation restriction

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, February 12, 2014, 7:30 PM
153 Windsor Road, Waban –Finch/Robinson home

Present were Beth Schroeder, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, David Backer, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Mike Clarke, Jackie Daoust, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Robert Fizek, Pete Gilmore, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Duane Hillis, Katherine Howard, Ted Kuklinski, George Mansfield, Larry Smith.

Also present was Keith Jones, chairman of the Friends of Farlow Park.

Approval of the Minutes of January 8, 2014: The minutes were approved after the following addition: Regarding Bulloughs Pond, Duane wanted to go on record that structures should not be permitted on park lands.

Treasurer's Report: Katherine is working on the financial statements. The Audubon invoice for \$2100 will be included when it is received, and several generous gifts will be acknowledged. The 3ABC form to the City is due on March 1.

Grants: Bill described the request from the Ward School for \$380 to create a biosphere/greenhouse on an existing raised garden bed. The committee recommended approval, and a MOTION to do so was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

Bill expressed concern that no more requests for grants have been received since his letter to the schools in October.

Membership Committee: The committee met preceding this board meeting, about increasing membership. The following were discussed:

- A catchier name, stressing the land trust [*our Newsletter already has the tag line "Newton's land trust working to preserve open space since 1961."*]
- Use Facebook, with board members as administrators so they can post on it; Jerry Riley is an active blogger and may help; Jackie will send a link to our Facebook page.
- Junior Conservators; Dave Backer will confer with Duane about this. Margaret Doris mentioned the "Kidservators@aol" from years ago.
- TAB environmental articles – Jackie had sent a message to the TAB, with no response; she will follow up before next month's meeting.

Friends of Farlow Park: Keith Jones presented at length the history of Farlow Park, Newton's famous first park, and the background of the Friends' efforts since 2004 to restore the pond and rebuild the bridge. The CPC funded a feasibility study in 2009, and the Friends have submitted a proposal for the work, requesting \$476,780 of CPA funding (from a total of \$582,380). The Friends plan to raise \$100,000 in private donations, to conform to the CPC's request that presenters raise between 15% and 20% of the funding. Mr. Jones is asking the Conservators to be the fiscal sponsor to receive these donations. (The Friends will not pursue 503c3 status, as they do not expect to exist after the project's funding.) While this is a historic preservation project, the Newton Historical Society has declined the role because they are also requesting funding from the CPC, hence the appeal to the NC. Duane suggested that the Friends turn to the large corporations located in Newton Corner for the needed \$100,000. Mr. Jones left after Beth thanked him for the presentation and told him we would discuss the matter.

Nominating Committee: Beth asked for others to join the committee so far comprising George and Margaret Albright. AnnaMaria and Pete Gilmore volunteered.

Commonwealth Golf Course Conservation Restriction Report: Larry and Beth visited with the Audubon rep. Conditions were found satisfactory except some piles of debris, which they've asked the CGC to remove. Bonnie Carter volunteered to partner with Larry on this reporting henceforth.

Signage:

- **Awtrey** Jackie is in touch with Mr. Awtrey, who wants a sign. Dan Brody will give her the QR code; Pat has the format; Pete will order the sign
- **Dexter Woods:** two signs will be ordered, to be tilted for visibility to traffic approaching from either side. Pete will order these also, and oversee their installation.

Jackie asked that we have a team this spring to remove the invasive English ivy at Awtrey. It was agreed to do this separately from the invasives removal program.

Spring Newsletter: February 24 is the deadline. Pete and Beth are writing articles, others are welcome.

Distribution of Newsletters and publications: Beth S. and others noted that they do not see newsletters displayed at the library or at City Hall; do we need larger printings?

The Trail Guides and Almanacs have been reprinted and are available in bookstores and at the Planning Department.

Updates:

- **70 Crescent Street:** The Parks & Rec. Commission has voted to act as sponsor for the CPC proposal by a neighborhood group to keep all of Crescent Street open space, but it has no control over most of the land, which Parks & Rec. has declared surplus. Commissioner DeRubeis thinks the CPC hasn't the funds needed for the open space. The Planning Department is pushing for 12,000 sq. ft. of the lot to be used for 8 units of 1500 sq. ft. affordable units. Duane urges that we support the neighbors' effort, beyond the letter we sent in to the Real Property Reuse Committee in October.
- **Newton Centre rezoning petition:** Beth requested that we not have a lengthy discussion of the issue. The e-mail discussion following the vote was a mistake not to be repeated. The board agreed that the lesson to be drawn was to refrain from voting on any issue that we have not had time to investigate fully. The board members who attended the aldermanic discussion were very glad that we did not speak.
- **The Jennifer Steele Feb. 13 meeting:** postponed because of the storm.
- **Jerry Riley's Riverside Pathway ideas:** will be presented in March

New Business:

- **Newton Resources Guide:** Katherine favors out taking a \$750 ¼ page ad in this bi-yearly publication, as we did two years ago; 25,000 copies are printed, available at City Hall and distributed by realtors to new residents. A MOTION to take the ad was SECONDED and APPROVED by the majority of the board.
- **Boston Globe grant program:** Ted recommended that Globe subscribers who haven't used the Boston Globe "\$100 grant" they received for an ad by a 501(c)(3) organization send them in, naming the Conservators. The deadline for sending them in is March 1.

Adjournment: at 9:40 PM

Respectfully submitted,
AnnaMaria Abernathy, secretary

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, March 12, 2014, 7:30 PM
153 Windsor Road, Waban –Finch/Robinson home

Present were Beth Schroeder, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Margaret Albright, David Backer, Dan Brody, Larry Burdick, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Dan Green, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Duane Hillis, Katherine Howard, Peter Kastner, Ted Kuklinski, George Mansfield, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson

Also present were Tod Cochran, Denny Nackoney (AMC, Wellesley Trails), Jerry Riley, and Bob Persons, for the Riverside Pathway

Approval of the Minutes of February 12, 2014: The minutes were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report: Katherine reported: revenue for the year 2013 was \$4000 below budget, but expenses were \$7,000 below budget; investment gains were large, and unrestricted funds increased by \$16,000; Powder Hill funds were released; \$3,000 is held for Upper Falls Greenway. The main changes in the budget are an increase in Newsletter cost and the absence of Audubon monitoring this year. She has filed the 3ABC Report.

Riverside Pathway: Jerry Riley described the $\frac{3}{4}$ mi. trail from the Lasell boathouse to the refurbished pedestrian bridge and asked the Conservators to sign on to the idea. The Riverside Station Neighborhood Coalition has asked that it be part of the development. DCR and the Conservation Commission need to agree. The Waban Area Council is setting up a Friends of Quinobequin for a mile-long trail. The board thanked the four advocates, who left. After discussion, a MOTION that the Conservators support the plan inasmuch as it is in conformance with the law and Conservation Commission decision was SECONDED and APPROVED

Approval of the budget: A MOTION to approve the budget was SECONDED and unanimously approved.

Awtrey conservation restriction report: Pete said the Audubon inspectors found infestation of Norway maples, and recommend removing them. Pete and Jackie will count the maples and pick some targets; they found one good beech tree.

Grants: Bill reported the ESP request for scholarships - \$2,000, and Green Engineers at NNHS -\$250 for a solar tree and solar leaves. Both were unanimously APPROVED.

Membership Committee: Duane suggested a separate mailing to ask members “to pass it on.” Beth W. pointed out that this is already done in each newsletter. At Margaret’s suggestion, it was decided to put a postcard listing the spring walks on the tables at the annual dinner and decide later about a mailing. Duane will continue his effort to include an insert about the Conservators in the tax bills.

Nominating Committee: George announced that Beth Wilkinson will be the nominee for president, Beth Schroeder will become past-president, and the other officers will continue to serve. Board members are urged to send recommendations of new board members to the nominating committee.

Annual banquet: May 7.

- Committee: Jackie, Margaret D., Bill, Katherine, Beth S. and Beth W.
- The board reversed its July vote requiring attendance at six meetings to remain on the board, so it will not come up at the annual meeting.
- Awards: following discussion, the a MOTION to award the following was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED:

Environmentalists of the Year: Walter Bernheimer and Peter Kastner,
for 30 years of environmental activity in Newton

Charles Johnson Maynard Award: Pete Gilmore

Directors’ Awards: Andree and Richard Wilson, Bud Elliott

Land Management:

- **Signage:** Pete will order the signs after snow melts.
- **Paths:** also await the snow melting
- **Ordway:** Beth W. said Nate Cenis has done tree work, removed the chips and will bring fresh ones in on a Saturday morning in May when volunteers can schedule to help with clean up and spreading chips.

Media: The spring Newsletter is ready; 100 extra copies have been printed for distribution in City Hall and libraries.

Events:

- May 17 – 30 mile Freewalkers **Greenbelt Walk** ends at 8 PM at Riverside. A MOTION that the Conservators support and participate in the Greenbelt Walk on May 17. This was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

- **Bike Newton:** Henry said there will be another Bike Newton event, possibly on May 11.
- **June 12:** Brooks Mathewson, “The Search for Salamanders” at the Library – Conservators are co-sponsors.

New Business:

- **Tree Ordinance changes:** Katherine explained the shortcomings of the current tree ordinance and the loophole through which developers cut down trees. The Programs and Services Committee will be discussing two proposals to improve the ordinance. A MOTION that the Conservators support the efforts of the Tree Commission to tighten the tree ordinance was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

Updates:

- **Hammond Pond meeting:** The DCR will not dredge, but will remove some water lilies; new filters will stop the silting.
- **Farlow Park:** upon discussion, it was decided to respond that the group needs a long term plan before we can consider supporting as fiscal sponsor.

Adjournment: at 9:50 PM

Respectfully submitted,
AnnaMaria Abernathy, secretary

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, April 9, 2014, 7:30 PM
Nahanton Park Nature Center, Newton

Present were Beth Schroeder, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, David Backer, Dan Brody, Mike Clarke, Jackie Daoust, Pete Gilmore, Dan Green, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Duane Hillis, Ted Kuklinski, George Mansfield, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson

Approval of the Minutes of March 12, 2014: The minutes were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report: Beth S. read Katherine's message:

- Background: **Upper Falls Greenway** donations to date are \$4635 (3K from Northland, plus private donations). TripAdvisor has committed to donating an additional \$5000. We need to approve release of \$3525 now to Park & Rec Dept (Carol Schein) for three park benches, and approximately (no more than) \$4000 to Parks & Rec for two information kiosks that will be sponsored by the Trip Advisor donation once their donation arrives. This vote now will allow the kiosks to be installed by the time of the ribbon cutting. A MOTION to release \$3525 now and approve the future release of up to \$4000 was **SECONDED** and unanimously **APPROVED**. UFG has expressed its thanks to the Conservators for our sponsorship, and has been diligently carrying out its responsibilities minimizing NC workload.

- The **audit committee** will meet on April 16. It will discuss issues raised recently by Dan Brody - whether we should board designate some of our unrestricted net assets as a "quasi endowment" and apply investment and spending policies to it, as large nonprofits do.

- Related, a MOTION to reconvene a **Finance Committee** was **SECONDED** and unanimously **APPROVED**. Volunteers to serve on the committee are Dan Brody, Jane Sender, Chris Hepburn and Mike Clarke.

Tree Ordinance: Beth W. explained the proposed changes (see appended) to define "occupancy" so developers cannot sidestep the ordinance. A MOTION to endorse the changes was **SECONDED** and unanimously **APPROVED**.

A propos, the DCR has been cutting large numbers pine trees and oaks at the Leo J. Martin golf course. The tree ordinance applies to the Newton portion, and Beth W. will write to Marc Welch inquiring about this.

Structures in public open spaces: Duane reiterated that we should support landscaping rather than constructions currently under discussion for Farlow Park and Bullough's Pond. Board members agreed that we should be positive, to support greening efforts and not be known for opposition to projects. Dan Green noted the positive element in the Hammond Pond Boardwalk project: funding is included to help the health of the pond, which would otherwise eutrophicate in a few years.

Grants: No requests, but Ben McGraw, teacher at Brown Middle School, has been put in touch with NSHS group about the wetlands near the schools..

Annual banquet May 7: •Presenters of some of the awards were decided, with possible alternates. Bud Elliott/Margaret Doris, or George; Wilsons/Henry, or Dan Green.

- ESP director and student director will have a display and be invited to join us for dinner as Larry Smith's guests.
- business cards and brochures will be on the tables, and Beth S. will ask members to take them and ask a friend to join the Newton Conservators.

Land Management:

- **Signage:** Pete will look into getting the signs done and supervise the installation at Dexter and Awtrey Dell. The possibility of adding a sign at the Crystal Lake walkway was raised, and will be looked into.
- **Paths:** Jackie and Pete will organize creating the Awtrey walk; Dave and Duane will help.
- **Ordway:** cleanup is scheduled for May 3. Beth W. asked to be relieved of Ordway oversight, and Dan Green volunteered to take it on.

Media: Jackie has not succeeded in contacting the TAB about articles; Beth W. will do it. Jackie will list the announcement of our annual meeting on the TAB's Calendar. Ted reminded that we have \$600 credit usable for an ad in GLOBE WEST.

Jerry Riley has volunteered to post individual items on the Village 14 blog.

Newton Life Magazine has gone out of business.

Events:

- The first **Invasives pull** is April 19, at Nahanton Park. Alison sent the schedule to the TAB Calendar. Because volunteers often work into the afternoon, Beth W. suggested we authorize buying 2 pizzas/site when appropriate. A MOTION to this effect was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

- **Brooks Mathewson** June 12 lecture has been cancelled.
- **Oct. 21 Russ Cohen lecture on Wild Edibles** Conservators will co-sponsor.

Meeting with Jennifer Steel: Beth S. listed possible dates, and April 15, 10AM will be requested. Beth will circulate an email about it.

Updates:

- **Quinobequin Trail:** Dan Brody is considering whether it should be in the next edition of the Walking Trails Guide. A number of changes need to be considered and volunteers to do the considerable work. He will begin with organizing a committee for this.
- **Zoning Reform:** Phase 1 is currently working on reorganizing the ordinance to make it more comprehensible. Mike and Henry are on the advisory committee for this phase. Phase 2 will deal with substantive changes; they hope to be named also for that committee. It is important for Conservators to be involved then.

New Business:

- **Zervas School expansion:** ½ acre of parkland (Pete calls it “wooded wetland”) abutting the school used to be part of Cold Spring Park, now is legally a part of Zervas land. Neighbors have contacted Pete; he will contact school committee member Steve Siegel, who is a neighbor and a structural engineer.
- **Dudley Road:** Duane heard from Carolyn Kraft a rumor that changes may be considered on the almost 600,000 sq. ft. lot that is currently in Chapter 61.
- **Kennard Park:** Carolyn Kraft met Heather Heimarck, Director of the Landscape Institute at the Boston Architectural College and a colleague. This group may take on Kennard as a project to look at the original landscape design and make suggestions of how it can be restored and enhanced.

Adjournment: at 9:10 PM

Respectfully submitted,
AnnaMaria Abernathy, secretary

OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO TREE ORDINANCE

CURRENT	PROPOSED
EXEMPT LOT CRITERIA	
At time of tree removal <u>or</u> At time of issuance of exterior work permit	At time of tree removal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be occupied (no definition of occupied) • <i>No wait period required.</i> • <i>No requirement to be occupied once trees are removed.</i> • Must be owned by the same person for 12 months from date of certificate of exemption, if certificate was filed as part of exterior construction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be occupied (<u>as defined below</u>). • At time of tree removal must be owned by the same person for 90 days leading up to removal . • The existing home must remain as a dwelling with person(s) living in it for 18 consecutive months following date of tree removal. • Must be owned by the same person for 18 consecutive months following date of tree removal.
OCCUPIED LOT CRITERIA	
NO DEFINITION or CRITERIA <i>**making enforcement nearly impossible**</i>	At time of tree removal
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lot must have legally constructed dwelling. • Dwelling must be a permanent structure. • Dwelling must be used primarily as a residence. • Dwelling is legally being lived in. • Must have legally permitted and functioning water, sanitary sewer, and electrical service.

OTHER KEY CHANGES

- Burden of proof of occupancy will be on the property owner. Tree Warden may require proof to prove that dwelling is being lived in. Tree Warden determines criteria of appropriate proof.
- Residential properties (4 or less families) meeting Occupied Lot and Exempt Lot criteria are exempt as they are under current ordinance. The primary difference is strong language and clear criteria that must be met that makes enforcement possible, deters scofflaws, and puts in place clear steps to insure compliance.
- If existing dwelling (whose ownership has not changed for at least 90 days) is vacated or will be vacated, due to renovations, the property will no longer qualify as exempt. The property owner will be required to file an application for tree permit. The property owner may request a waiver of the tree replacement requirements by making a request in writing to the Tree Warden. To be granted this waiver the property owner must own the property for 18 consecutive months following the date it becomes legally occupied and the property must be continuously occupied during the same 18 consecutive months.
- If an Exempt Lot is sold within 18 months following tree removal the new property owner must file for a Tree Permit and must comply with replacement requirements.
- If a lot that has been granted a replacement waiver is sold or becomes un-occupied during the 18 months following occupancy the person issued the waiver will be responsible to replace trees lost.

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, June 11, 2014, 7:30 PM
Nahanton Park Nature Center, Newton

Present were Beth Wilkinson, presiding; David Backer, Pete Gilmore, Bill Hagar, Duane Hillis, Katherine Howard, George Mansfield

Approval of the Minutes of April 9, 2014: The minutes were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report: Katherine reviewed the Q1 financial statement; there were no surprises. The Annual Meeting will be on the Q2 statement; she noted that its sponsorship revenue was down slightly (though Charles River Canoe & Kayak continued its generous sponsorship); while its expenses were somewhat higher. She had filed the IRS "postcard" tax return for 2013 and filed for an extension to August 15 for the state Form PC filing. A Finance Committee meeting will be scheduled for mid-August.

Annual Awards: The awards to Wally Bernheimer and to the Wilsons will be given at the September meeting if the recipients are available then.

Land Management:

Awtrey: Beth has talked with the Awtreys. They want only a plain sign and not a stone path. The two issues should be kept separate. Pete will arrange for the signs. Beth will meet with the Awtreys to discuss future plans.

Wilson: George has looked, and repairs are needed, including advice on how to stabilize a path and some tree removal.

Ordway Gift Money: Katherine said Dan Green would become contact person. Needed: leaf litter removed from path; check for poison ivy. Also, there is a question about whether the water connection is turned on; Beth W. will check with City.

Dexter Woods: Pete asked about boundaries; Henry has plot plans. George said the markers cannot be found; map at Assessor's office to be checked.

Media and publicity: The Newton Tree Commission wants to publish an article about the changes to the Private Tree Ordinance, and that will be the first item published in the Tab under our agreement with Emily Costello. . We desire bonds with other organizations, will start with the Tree Commission and the Tree Conservancy. Also think about Historic Newton and Green Decade (Beth W. has discussed with Marcia Cooper, GD president). Pete will investigate reaching out to the birders?

Friends' Groups: Suggestion of giving grants, e.g., 2 grants of \$500/each per year?

Trail Guides and Trail Marking (Dan Brody):

Trail Guides

Guide was reworked 1 ½ years ago; more needs to be done: e.g., add Upper Falls Greenway and possibly also Quinobequin Road, Charles River Riverside path, Charles R. from Auburndale Cove to Moody Street. Changes to older maps also needed; some trails haven't been thoroughly reviewed in many years.

Passed around sign-up sheet for board members to volunteer to walk trails and suggest edits to map or guide. Suggestion to recruit Boy Scouts to walk the trails and mark up the trail guide.

Of 1000 copies printed, some 500 remain. Until rest are sold, consider inserting 1-page addendum with Upper Falls Greenway map.

Trail Marking and QR Code Project

Stage 1 (Heyn, Norumbega, Webster) is complete. DCR gave permission to post stickers in Hammond Pond Reservation and on DCR signs at Heyn.

Stage 2 is to go back to Conservation Commission for permission to post stickers in additional conservation areas. Fall would be a good time to approach the

Conservation Commission. (Editor's Note: after meeting, Jennifer Steel approached us with info on Conservation Commission's plan for new permanent signs including our map plus QR code. To be discussed at July board meeting.)

Stage 3 is to pick a couple of long-distance trails, such as aqueducts, and install trail markers with QR codes. Similar to Wellesley system of maps, kiosks, and markers. Talk to Jennifer Steel about assembling list of owners of sections not publicly owned.

Message from Jennifer Steel: She is in favor of dense development at Austin, Crescent and Court St., as more environmentally conscious.

Annual Meeting recap: Congratulations on its success; question about length of business meeting before the speaker.

Amazon Smile program: Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of eligible *AmazonSmile* purchases to the charitable organization of one's choice.

If we do this, do we also want to support the Mobile Book Fair and Newtonville Books by linking to our web site? Dan Brody will follow up.

Adjournment: at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Backer and Katherine Howard, sec. pro tem

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting
 Wednesday, July 9, 2014, 7:30 PM
 Nahanton Park Nature Center, Newton

Present were Beth Wilkinson, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Margaret Albright, David Backer, Dan Brody, Margaret Doris, Robert Fizek, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Duane Hillis, Katherine Howard, Ted Kuklinski, George Mansfield, Larry Smith.

Approval of the Minutes of June 11, 2014: The minutes were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report: **Treasurer's Report:** The forms PC and 990 are 95% done, and will be submitted to the board soon for review, as filing date is August 15. The June 30 financial statements are almost done. There was a brief problem with a negative bank balance on June 30, but the issue has since been resolved. A Finance Committee meeting was tentatively scheduled for August 13.

Annual Meeting: Post 440 has been reserved for May 6, 2015. The board discussed several speakers that had been suggested by board members and advisors, and agreed on the preferential order in which to invite one. Of the four suggestions, it was agreed that John Edward Huth would be better as co-sponsored speaker at the Library.

Interactions with the City: Beth W. met with Jennifer Steel two days earlier.

- The City will draw its own maps, based on its GIS files, so Conservator maps will not be needed.
- The City is reviewing all their CRs; we will provide copies of the 4 or 5 they do not have in their files.
- Lisle Baker has asked whether NC would hold the CR for the Waban Hill Reservoir if the City obtains it. A quid pro quo, following past practice, might be that if/when the CR expires, the land would remain open space. A discussion of the conditions and costs followed..
- Dave Backer expanded on the thanks for NC support that Jennifer Steel had expressed. Our support was especially appreciated because costs have risen, and only 34 students enrolled this year, vs. 38 last year.
- Ms. Steel is interested in building a community of "green folks." She would like to start with a task force to brain storm on community action, and spoke of forums to learn what citizens would like. Margaret Albright commented that she and Katy Marchi have been talking along these lines, about a Newton Community Foundation of all the non-profit civic groups in the city.

Crystal Lake:

- The Crystal Lake Conservancy is concerned about the beach at 230 Lake Avenue. Concerns that sand has been added are not provable, according to Ms. Steel. Other issues, about the path easement, don't concern the Con. Com, but Parks & Rec. and Conservators. The owners at 230 have furniture on the beach. Two documents differ about whether the easement boundary is only for the path or extends to the beach. Beth W. and Jane Sender will meet with the owner about it.
- Ms. Steel would like the Conservators' signs at each end of the easement soon. Beth will suggest a wording for it that will state use is "between dawn and dusk." It should be less offensive than the current owner's big red "private property-keep out."

Membership and Land Use leadership Duane would like other board members to chair these committees, and asks other board members to consider the roles. He continues to be active in getting NC insert into the tax bill mailings. Margaret Doris added that Bob DeRubeis is interested in cooperating with us on this.

Newsletter online notification: A member has asked that those receiving the Newsletter online be notified when it comes out. It was agreed that a notice can go out, giving the URL at which to access the Newsletter. Ted already notifies recipients of his ENewsletter. He and Beth will re-synchronize the membership list with his list, as it was last done a year ago.

Amazon Smile program and links to local non-profits: Dan Brown has not heard back from Newtonville Books or NEMobile Bookfair, so we will wait on wider announcements.

Signup sheet for board members to volunteer to walk trails and suggest edits to map or guide: Dan passed the list around again. He will post it online. Beth W. hopes to join the walkers over the summer.

New Business:

Concern was voiced over the proposals for dense housing on Wells Avenue, where heavy traffic already affects access to the surrounding conservation areas.

Adjournment: at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, September 10, 2014, 7:30 PM
Newton City Hall Cafeteria

Present were Beth Wilkinson, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, David Backer, Dan Brown, Margaret Doris, Bill Hagar, Katherine Howard, Ted Kuklinski, George Mansfield, Beth Schroeder, Larry Smith.

Also present were Haynes Miller, and at the beginning, Wally Bernheimer.

Introductions: Board members introduced themselves to Haynes Miller, who is considering joining the board.

Beth Wilkinson opened the meeting with the information that Mr. Bernheimer was present to receive the Directors' Award announced at the annual meeting, while Andree and Richard Wilson were not coming. She asked AnnaMaria to present the award, which reads "*For his long tenure advocating for open space on the Parks and Recreation Commission and for his leadership in saving Newton's natural areas from development.*" AnnaMaria spoke of his 34+ years on the Parks and Recreation Commission, 4 as chair and 7 as vice-chair. He was often the lone voice for passive recreation and open space on a commission focused only on active recreation. Mr. Bernheimer expressed his appreciation of the recognition, and spoke of the importance of the Conservators' work and the importance of grass roots advocacy work.

Duane Hillis resignation: Beth W. announced that Duane resigned earlier in the day, despite her best efforts to persuade him to stay. He does not want to occupy a seat on the board because he does not have time for Conservator activity at present. Board members hoped he would rejoin when he has time, as he did once before.

Approval of the Minutes of July 9, 2014: The minutes were approved, with the corrected spelling of Dan Brody's name.

Annual Meeting: Beth W. reported that she had reached Robert Warren. His schedule seems clear for him to speak at our annual meeting on May 6. Beth will verify this in the coming week.

Work on Dexter Woods: Beth W. reported on the discussions over the summer with neighbors of Dexter Woods after a large red oak fell near the porch of a resident, and the resolution to cut down one and lighten the load on the other oaks that lean over the street. NateCenis counseled and did the work at a nonprofit rate. (See the full discussion in Beth's August 6 email to the board.) He also sprayed the poison ivy so that volunteers may work at the site in fall or next spring. This discussion brought Beth to a

New Business item #1, her desire to include in the newsletter and the annual renewal letter an appeal for extra **contributions designated for maintenance of our properties.** Board members agreed.

Interactions with the City are going well, as the Conservators are being considered partners, holding CRs.

• **City Signs & Maps:** Dan Brody reported on a very productive meeting that he and Beth Wilkinson had earlier in the day with Jennifer Steele (Newton environmental planner) and Doug Greenfield (Newton GIS coordinator). Doug has scanned all of the Conservators trail guide maps into the city's GIS system. He will be happy to make any needed edits to trail locations and other features. Dan asked for volunteers to walk the trails and supply edits. Many board members have already signed up, and Dan will circulate the list to the entire board, asking for the work to be completed this fall. (See – **appended to these minutes - details about this and about the QR codes on signs at conservation areas.)

In addition to volunteers to walk the trails, Dan asked for an ad hoc task force to help write the new descriptions and decide on any to add or remove. Beth S. volunteered. Others are invited to let Dan and Beth know if they are interested.

• **Waban Hill Reservoir:** Alderman Baker has asked for help in writing the CR for the Waban Reservoir, which he hopes the City will acquire. Willis Wang does not have time, but found a friend of a friend, Leigh Gilligan, who volunteers to work pro bono. She has asked us to sign a letter of agreement, but it turns out that the matter is not far enough along. Ted agreed to work on the issue with Alderman Baker, Beth W., and Ms. Gilligan.

Letter from Waltham CPC re Waltham properties: Beth W. received a request from the Waltham Planning Dept. that NC hold 2 CRs in

Waltham. She has responded “no.” Ted will inquire at the Waltham Land Trust (our equivalent in Waltham) about this..

DCR meeting called by Rep. Balseer for Sept. 12: has been postponed.

Update: Land-use/property: Ald. Alison Leary has notified us that the mayor has not signed on to the Cochituate Aqueduct trail proposal.

Walks: Sept. 28 -Beth W. and Marc Welch will lead a tree walk for Historic Newton, starting at the Newton Centre Playground at 2 pm. Also on Sept. 28, Conservator Canoe trip led by Bill Hagar at 1 PM. (The board decided not to participate this year in the Newton Community Farm’s fall festival on that day.)

Oct. 5: Nahanton Park bird walk, 8 AM (Haynes Miller)

Also Oct. 5: Girl Scout walk with Conservators; River trail from Forte Park to Blue Heron Bridge; Eric Olson will lead; Margaret Doris will do publicity.

New Business #2:

- Beth W. asks board input on what they think about what we are doing, should be doing, or should not be doing this year.
- Four-Story Parking Structure proposal for Cypress-Parker St. lots: Beth S. brought up the proposal and its horror.
- Zervas School: George said he was asked to attend a meeting last week of the Board of Aldermen meeting as a committee of the whole about the potential loss of a 45-tree canopy with the taking of three properties. Of the 45 trees that are more than 8” diameter, half are 18” or more. The Newton Highlands Neighborhood Council’s “Plan B” would avoid the land taking. George thinks the City people are unwilling to consider any change. The committee voted 11 in favor, 12 abstaining. The full Board will meet on Monday Sept. 15.

Katherine said the Tree Commission wrote to the planning group that tree protection needs to be considered; only Alison Leary responded.

Adjournment: at 9:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary

****Maps – description by Dan Brody:**

We will be able to use the city GIS system as the basis for creating the new edition of the trail guide. Doug can create a “layer” of data in the system for features (such as place names, location of benches, etc.) that we want included on the maps but that the city would not otherwise need. Doug will then produce a pdf or similar output file of each area we want to include in the guide. He can manipulate the colors at our request; we may want to consider using more than two colors in the next edition, to better differentiate features such as streams and ponds. We will make any further edits that are needed to the individual files, such as adding the circled numbers of adjacent conservation areas. This approach will allow us to use current data from the city GIS system, without having to deal with the expense and difficulty of dealing with complex GIS software ourselves.

The city will be using maps from this system on the new metal signs it is creating for posting at the trailheads of each conservation area. Each sign will also have a QR code that smartphone users can scan to get more information about the area. We agreed that the sign for each area would have a unique QR “landing” page, located on the Conservators website, similar to the ones we created for the pilot test that involved Webster, Norumbega, and Heyn. The landing page is a simple list of links to other website pages about the area, including (as appropriate), the Conservators trail map of the area, the Conservators page about the area, the DCR page about the area, and information about the area on the city website. Beth and Dan agreed that the Conservators website will host a landing page for each conservation area, including ones that don’t appear in our trail guide.

| **DRAFT**

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting
 Wednesday, October 8, 2014, 7:30 PM
 At the home of Henry Finch

Present: Beth Wilkinson, presiding; David Backer, Henry Finch, Robert Fizek, Pete Gilmore, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, George Mansfield, Beth Schroeder, Larry Smith.

Minutes. Minutes of the September meeting were approved.

| **Treasurer's Report.** Katherine reported on the 9/30/14 financial statements, which had been distributed via email. Membership revenue is behind budget, and discussion ensued of how to address our apparent membership decline (see separate Membership topic).

DCR Meeting. Beth W noted she and Dan Brody will meet October 9th with DCR staff, Jennifer Steele, and Rep. Ruth Balsler to review three Newton projects that Rep. Balsler was able to have included in the state's Environmental Bond Bill: 1) Crystal Lake – \$150K for water quality improvement; (2) Hammond Pond - \$100K for water quality improvement; and (3) Charles River pathway - \$250K for pedestrian/bike path between Rtes 9 and 16 (i.e., Quinobequin Road). The group discussed issues, such as whether Hammond Pond dredging would be recommended, and what kind of pathway might be proposed for Quinobequin, and agreed there is much review still to be done, but it is good that this communication has started. It was agreed we would ask Dan Brody to report back on the Quinobequin plans.

Conservation Restriction Review. The group reviewed plans to monitor 8 areas. It was noted Newton Conservators holds 8 CRs for City property, plus 3 for Conservators property (yet we are monitoring only 8 properties – reconciliation and explanation needed). The group agreed that Directors will do the CR monitoring in 2014 and 2015, and Audubon support will not be needed at least during that period. Next monitoring will be done in Fall 2014. Assignments are:

Angino – Bill Hagar
Crystal Lake – Henry Finch and Robert Fizek
Ordway – Dan Greene
Dexter Woods – George Mansfield
Webster Park – Ted Kuklinski and Eric Olson
Commonwealth Golf Course – Larry Smith
Awtrey Woods – Pete Gilmore
Wilmerding/Elgin Street – Chris Hepburn.

Girl Scout Walk. The Oct. 5th nature walk at Charles River pathway was a great success, with a large turnout of about 70. Eric Olson and Beth split the group in two; the scouts learned characteristics of plants and insects and were able to experience removing some invasive vines from trees, and Beth gave newsletters to the parents.

Native Plant Talk at Arnold Arboretum. Beth W and Eric Olson attended this forum that presented views of three biologists on whether we should care about natives and invasives. Eric's perspective is that "it is all about the food chain," meaning that native insects cannot eat the exotic plants - to them it is like trying to eat "green plastic."

Trails project. In Dan Brody's absence Beth W reminded the directors to proceed with their

agreed/chosen walks to check and improve the maps on each area. We should note inaccuracies and also things that should be added to the trail guide.

Membership. Beth W and Katherine will meet to review the membership data and to try to determine why we have had a decline. It was agreed that we need to do an early and strong membership renewal effort this year, with follow-up in March of non-renewers, and that Katherine would remind individually any director who is behind in renewal. Other suggestions to be pursued include: realtor packet (i.e. Welcome Wagon), more frequent and varied communications (there is a theory that doing 7 high-value contacts per year is most effective), and how to contact/re-engage expired members.

Priorities. Beth W proposed that we need to discuss priorities – it was agreed this will be teed up for discussion at the next board meeting. Executive Committee will make a list of items for discussion. Beth proposed that a major spring/May event with exciting activities would energize the group and attract new members; it could include multiple outdoor activities such as birding, kayaking, plants, and invasives, and could highlight one area such as Quinobequin, Cold Spring Park or Nahanton Park. We also discussed giving our Walks better publicity and, for that matter, doing the walks planning/scheduling well in advance, such as in the fall for the spring walks and in the spring for the fall walks.

Russ Cohen library program Oct 21 on edibles/foraging, we are co-sponsors.

Robert Warren is speaker for May 2015 Annual Meeting. Confirmation was sent to him recently but he has been difficult to contact.

Waban Hill Reservoir lawyer is on board; update on project status was not available.

Book Stores. Possibility of arrangement to publicize our local book stores is not proceeding at this time as the bookstores did not respond.

Amazon Smile. We are now registered and know that at least two people (Beth W and Ted K) have assigned their purchases to be credited to us. The Board discussed and then agreed we should notify our members via the newsletter along the lines of “if you shop at Amazon, here is another way you can support us...”

Newsletter ideas. Beth W asked for suggestions; she would like to add a “Book Corner” for book reports; reviews of Richard Primack’s “Walden Warming” and Doug Tallamy’s “Bringing Nature Home” are planned.

Harvest Fair is Sunday Oct 19. Directors should sign up via AnnaMaria’s email to help staff our table.

Adjournment: 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Katherine Howard

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, November 12, 2014, 7:30 PM
Home of AnnaMaria Abernathy
45 Islington Road, Auburndale

Present were Beth Wilkinson, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, David Backer, Dan Brody, Pete Gilmore, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ted Kuklinski, George Mansfield, Beth Schroeder, Larry Smith.

Also present for the first portion of the meeting was Alderman Lisle Baker.

Conservation Restriction for Waban Hill Reservoir: Beth W. opened with the fact that the Wetlands Protection Act forbids filling in the pond.

Alderman Baker then gave details about the site (many at the Waban Hill Reservoir Advisory Group's Report – see

<http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/52513>. It is also reproduced in the Parks & Rec. Dept's proposal to the CPC, see http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/planning/cpa/projects/waban_hill.asp))

- Newton passed a Home Rule Petition asking that the State be permitted to sell the Reservoir to Newton.
- An appraisal was done: \$404,000.
- The dam is structurally sound, but requires some repairs and must be inspected every 2 years.
- Maintenance cost is estimated at \$15,000/yr., which Parks & Rec. Dept. probably would be able to absorb.

* Capital costs, ie., improvements, are estimated at \$420,000; plus “20% contingency” of \$180K, plus \$30K for a master plan = \$1,073,446. This includes \$30K for conservation restriction enforcement, presumably by the Conservators, (Ald. Baker acknowledged that the Conservators are the only obvious group in Newton for this.)

The last point led to a discussion of how long this \$30K would last, and whether it might be part of the invested endowment that has the potential to grow more than an escrow acct. earning interest.

After Ald. Baker left, there was more discussion, ending with a MOTION that the Conservators are willing to hold the CR, assuming satisfactory provisions/wording, which was SECONDED and APPROVED

unanimously. Attorney Leigh Gilligan has agreed to do pro bono work on our behalf.

Finance Proposal by Dan Brody: Dan summarized the Endowment and Spending Policy plan, which had been sent to the board and is appended to these minutes. After a brief discussion, a MOTION to adopt the plan was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

Treasurer's Report: Katherine said the Annual Report to the Secretary of State was filed on time by November 1. Two board members have begun shopping through Amazon Smile, and \$22 was received. At Harvest Fair, two new members joined, and some 17 signed indicating interest. Three guides and three almanacs were sold.

Membership: Beth said renewal letters will go to the 240 current paid-up members. Last year 130 members did not renew. A letter will go to them and to others who have dropped in the past 5 years, with a special note. Beth brought copies of the newsletter for members to take for friends/neighbors. As before NC will include Tree Conservancy renewal forms, and the NTC will add a renewal form for NC in their letter.

Holiday Potluck? Board members agreed to have one in January.

Update on Trails Project: Dan Brody reported that he working well with the City's GIS on the mapping. Using the City's maps as base, Doug Greenfield from the City's IT department will be able to add layers on our maps, indicating features such as intersections of trails.

Other Updates:

•**Trails project:** Beth Schroeder has done Oakdale and Martin & Frank Barney. Paul Coletti maintains Frank Barney beautifully; Oakdale Woods is full of fallen trees. So is Awtrey, said Beth W.

• **DCR Meeting with Rep. Balsler:** It was a good meeting, with DCR reporting on their proposed plans for Hammond Pond and Quinobequin and discussing who will check out Crystal Lake
Dan Driscoll explained that Purgatory Cove will continue to have invasive aquatic plants no matter what is done to remove them, as it is a former farmland, heavily fertilized. Larry Smith reported that chemical treatment has been approved again.

• **Sudbury Aqueduct:** It still awaits the mayor's signature. James Freas, acting Planning Dept. head, is getting a group to review the proposed action, and Andreae Downs is going to the Area Councils to get their approval.

• **Newsletter articles:** Richard Primack will write the lead article in next month's Newsletter.

Grants: Newton South Farm Grant Proposal: The request for \$500 to improve the greenhouse had been recommended by members of the grant committee and approved by board members. A MOTION to grant the request was SECONDED and APPROVED unanimously.

New Business:

- **The CPC Nov. 20 meeting** will discuss funding guidelines. It would be good for a board member to attend, as we have in past.
- **Kessler Woods:** the developer of the multi-family project has petitioned to amend its permit in order to build one large 80-unit structure instead of smaller units. Advantages would be a decrease in the land coverage and less blasting. But more units are requested. See <http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/61368> for the petition. NC will study.

Adjournment: at 9:40 PM

Respectfully submitted,
AnnaMaria Abernathy, secretary

Newton Conservators Endowment Investment and Spending Policy

Proposed by Dan Brody
Version 3, October 2014

Background

Newton Conservators currently has almost \$200,000 in unrestricted financial net assets (excluding the value of the land we own). This money, accumulated over many years, is not dedicated to any particular use. We are legally free to spend as much of this money as we want in any year. However, I think we should treat a substantial portion of this money as "board-designated endowment." We would invest and manage the endowment so that its real value grows with inflation over time, while some of the annual investment returns are used to fund important one-time projects.

Almost all non-profits with endowments have a “spending policy” that determines how much of the endowment can be spent each year. A Google search for “endowment spending policy” yields tens of thousands of hits. [This paper](#) provides a good overview of the issue. Here’s an example of such a policy, from an organization on whose board I serve:

The School has a policy of appropriating for distribution each year 5% of its endowment fund’s average fair value over the prior 13 quarters through the calendar year-end preceding the fiscal year in which the distribution is planned.

Over the past decade, [the average spending rate](#) of all US colleges and universities averaged 4.5%

To be more cautious, I suggest that we set the spending rate at 4% of the average of the last three year-end balances. If we had had such a policy in effect for CY2014, we would show a “payout” of about \$7,000 in current-year income from this source. This would make our budget look a lot stronger, which I believe is a better reflection of our real financial situation. And the 4% spending rate is low enough that the real value of the quasi-endowment fund is almost certain to grow over the long term even if we spent all of this payout each year.

The amount available for spending each year will fluctuate with the stock market. To prevent problems in years when the amount must fall, I propose that we budget and spend this money only for one-time projects. We would continue to fund our current operations from membership renewals, gifts, and other ongoing income.

The Finance Committee, in consultation with the Treasurer, would propose a budget each year including one or more projects to be funded from the endowment payout. The budget would be subject to review, modification, and approval by the Board. In the event of a sustained market downturn, the Board could decide to reduce or even eliminate spending from the endowment for one or more years in order to avoid having to sell assets at depressed values. Any available endowment payout funds not budgeted, or budgeted but not spent, in a particular year would be carried forward and could be included in the budget for a future year. This would allow the endowment to be used to fund a larger project than could be covered by a single year’s payout.

To assure that the endowment generates the maximum return that is consistent with fiscal prudence and the annual spending needs, an Investment Subcommittee would annually recommend to the Finance Committee the percentages of the Conservators’ assets that should be invested in each “asset class” including (but not limited to) the following: [bonds; domestic stocks; and international stocks](#). All investments should be in widely-diversified, low-cost mutual funds such as index funds. Because the endowment will be used only for one-time projects, investment of endowment funds can be directed towards maximizing long-term yield even if the result will be a high level of volatility.

Comment [D1]: See below for how to determine how much to hold in short-term assets.

Proposed Board Policy on Investments

The Treasurer shall hold any funds which are to be spent within a specific time frame in investments with maturities no longer than the period until the funds will be needed.

The Treasurer shall hold in money market funds, insured bank accounts, and other safe and liquid cash assets the total of the following:

- any funds held by the Conservators on behalf of another organization
- an amount equal to one year’s operating budget

The balance of the Conservators’ assets shall be considered to be board-designated endowment, and shall be invested in accord with this policy. At any time, the Board may determine that the mission of the Conservators is best served by appropriating for expenditure some or all of the board-designated endowment.

The Board directs that the board-designated endowment shall be invested using the following asset allocation mix, subject to annual modification by the Finance Committee:

Domestic Equity Funds	60%
International Equity Funds	25%
Investment Grade Bond Funds	15%
Total	100%

All investments shall be in widely-diversified, low-cost mutual funds such as index funds. The Finance Committee shall approve the selection of mutual funds to be used.

The Board determines that it is prudent to include in the annual budget an amount up to 4% of the average of the last three year-end balances of the board-designated endowment. The Finance Committee, in consultation with the Treasurer, shall propose a budget each year including one or more one-time projects to be funded from the endowment payout. Any available endowment payout not budgeted, or budgeted but not spent, in a particular year would be carried forward and could be included in the budget for a future year.

Transition provision: Board-designated endowment funds that are held in money-market funds or other short-term investments as of the date of the adoption of this policy shall be invested according to this policy within twelve months, with approximately one fourth of such funds to be invested every three months.

DRAFT

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, December 10, 2014, 7:30 PM
Home of Henry Finch and Pat Robinson
153 Windsor Road, Waban

Present were Beth Wilkinson, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Margaret Albright, David Backer, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ted Kuklinski, George Mansfield, Beth Schroeder.

Also present were guests Mat Calabro and Ron Joseph.

Introductions: Beth W. introduced Mt Calabro and Ron Joseph, who are interested in the Conservators and possibly joining the board.

Approval of minutes of Nov. 12 meeting: The minutes were approved after the addition of Chris Hepburn among the attendees.

Treasurer's Report: Katherine said all our filings are up to date.

Pot Luck January 14, 2015: at the Finch/Robinson home. Members will let AnnaMaria know what they are bringing, so adjustments may be made if needed. Henry asks that two people stay on to help clean up.

Conservation Restriction for Waban Hill Reservoir: Beth W. learned that Senior Planner Katy Holmes had learned that the pond is lined (**with what?**) and therefore is not a pond and thus may be filled in without a Conservation Commission ruling. This led to a discussion of whether active recreation is conceivable, and how that might affect our CR.

Beth also said, relating to the \$30,000 for conservation restriction that is in the proposal before the CPC, that Alice Ingerson suggests that the conservators make a proposal for funds for monitoring all the CRs on our land acquired with CPC funds. A lengthy discussion followed, concluding with the decision to specify needs for \$25,000.

Beth agreed to send members the draft of the revised statement that she would read at the CPC meeting the following evening.

Kessler Woods Update: Beth heard from Aldermen Ruthanne Fuller and Deb Crossley that the petition for the revised plan is superior to the original one. With one tall building instead of several smaller ones, 40% less ledge will be removed. Beth will ask board members who worked on the paths at the time to review the new plan.

Preliminary Budget Discussions: Katherine asked members to send her input about expenses for projects they foresee for 2015. Dan said the Trail Guide probably would be republished in 2016. He sees clearing the overgrown Saw Mill Brook Trail as one possible project; Dave will send an email about the internship proposal.

Membership: Beth said a note to the 130 non-members who have been receiving the Newsletter asking them to join if they would like to continue receiving it, mentioning that otherwise they can access it online. We have 230 paid-up members. Beth has also sent a letter to 240 who have lapsed over the past five years, suggesting they rejoin. She thanked Bonnie for doing the mailing, and Bonnie responded that Beth had done a major effort on it, and that AnnaMaria and Linda Morrison had helped.

Multi-activity event next June: Beth suggested a multi-activity half-day event at Nahanton Park, to bring members together and bring new ones. Possible activities are canoe/kayak, hiking, kids' scavenger hunt, invasives pull, **others were mentioned – what?** The week-end of June 6-7 was chosen, with Saturday scheduled and Sunday as rain date. Board members were enthusiastic; all are asked to think of ideas for the event. **I looked for a calendar – Newton's Cultural Affairs calendar is blank for June, but it doesn't include events we want to know about.**

Oak Hill Pathway: Dan had suggested dropping the pathway from our Trail Guide because it is now completely overgrown at the first 15', and no trail shows for the way up after that. Katherine suggested it would be nice to reclaim it, given the history of the Bigelow House and the Peabody School building condos. Dan suggested talking to Jennifer Steel about making it passable when signs are being put at all the paths **Is it paths, or conservation areas?** Ted said this is a good project for a Boy Scout Eagle troop.

Updates:

• **Envirothon:** The Newton North High School Envirothon team has asked us to sponsor a second team to a competition, as the school is limited to one team of 10 members. Eight board members had responded enthusiastically, **Beth, had you already sent our response? Also: I don't think we need mention The Mass. Butterfly Club and Solar Newton suggestions. Nor the 2nd water meter question.**

• **Annual Meeting Speaker confirmed:** In an email about Kessler Woods, Robert Warren confirmed that he will speak at our May 6 meeting.

• **Trails Project:** Dan will send out again the list of trails to be surveyed, for members to adopt. He spoke of the need for an accurate GPS, and Henry agreed to research it.

New Business:

• **Newton Cultural Alliance:** Ted told us that the NCA originally was for music and art organizations, but is now open to more interests. The premier membership (\$250/year) would give us visibility and publicity for our events. There was general agreement and a MOTION to join the Alliance was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

Adjournment: at 9:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,
AnnaMaria Abernathy, secretary