

DRAFT

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, January 11, 2017 7:30 PM  
Home of AnnaMaria Abernathy  
45 Islington Road, Auburndale

Present were Beth Wilkinson, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Henry Finch, Mike Gilmore, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Ted Kuklinski, George Mansfield.

The meeting began at 7:45 PM.

**Approval of minutes of the December 14 meeting.** The minutes were approved as written.

**Treasurer's Report:** In the absence of Katherine, who was ill, Beth reported that so far, income for 2016 has exceeded the budgeted estimate by some \$900.

**Nominating Committee:** Bill agreed to chair the committee, with members Margaret Doris, Henry, and Chris.

Beth reported that Brooks Mathewson had offered to lead salamander and bird walks. He would like to get "citizen scientists" to study salamanders, and offered to attend a board meeting to help generate ideas about getting more young family members. He does not feel able to join the board at this time, so Beth suggested he become an advisor. A MOTION to this effect was SECONDED and unanimously approved.

Beth next told us that Kenneth Mallory will become the new editor of the Newsletter. A photographer and writer, he was director of publications at the New England Aquarium for 25 years. [see <http://www.encyclopedia.com/arts/educational-magazines/mallory-kenneth-1945>] He is also on the board of Green Newton; Marcia Cooper, Beth, and he approve of a dual role and more opportunities for he two organizations to work together. A MOTION to elect Ken Mallory to the board was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

**The Street:** Beth attended the Land Use Committee meeting the previous evening, at which the proposal for Building #55 was approved. The proposals for the two pond buildings and for #27 had been withdrawn without prejudice, to be resubmitted later.

The Conservation Commission was to consider the proposal the following evening. George planned to attend.

**Crescent Street:** The CPC hearing on the proposal will be held on January 19. Dan Brody and AnnaMaria planned to attend.

**Newton Serves – April 30:** The board agreed on the following activities:

- Avery Woods: Dan Brody suggested that 4 volunteers clean up this small area
- Dolan Pond: Ted will oversee again
- Cold Spring Park: Katherine will oversee a team to remove garlic mustard and other invasive plants.
- Blue Heron Bridge: Eric Olson will oversee a team to remove invasive plants here or at a nearby site to be determined soon.

**Walks:** Beth raised the possibility of placing an ad in the TAB listing the spring walks. The board voted its approval. The City will publicize our walks.

**Newsletter topics:** The following topics were suggested for future newsletters:

- Dam removals from the Charles – Pete recommended Chris Leuchtenberg-as the expert to write on this.
- Waban Hill Reservoir plans
- Connecting paths along the Charles

**Status Report on QR Code Project:** Dan said he had attached QR codes to the trailhead signs that have been placed at all the Conservation Areas – they provide links to relevant web pages. The Parks and Rec. Department expressed enthusiasm about a similar project. He needs to work with them about where the QR codes can be attached; so far, there has been no follow-up.

**Path at 15 Bracebridge Road:** Bill Shaevel is doing all the legal work pro bono. Whether the path will require more leveling is unclear; Bonnie will walk it to help make a final decision. A gate is definitely needed; Henry will prepare the specs to submit for an estimate.

**Chamber of Commerce:** George distributed the extensive list of local non-profit members of the Newton-Needham Chamber. Membership for non-profits is \$295/yr. Following discussion, a MOTION to join the Chamber was SECONDED and approved by a vote of 8-2.

**Newton Cultural Alliance:** Ted said they seem to think we do not qualify as a cultural organization, but that he did not receive a final decision; Beth will write again.

**Open Space Priorities in Newton:** Beth distributed her initial list of 10 priorities, to serve as a draft working document. The aqueduct trails were immediately added. Ted asked how many are reflected in the Open Space Plan – possibly a question for an intern to investigate.

**Updates:**

- **Cold Spring Park project – Jan. 28 meeting:** Pete and Henry will join the project committee.
- **Nahanton Park:** Beth has pointed out on Facebook the Woodcock Meadow as the type of site that would be good for the endangered bumblebees featured in the Boston GLOBE.

**New Business**

- **Leafblower ordinance:** the board agreed not to comment further on the debate.
- **Echo Bridge Railing Project:** The Echo Bridge Railing Committee has asked for our help with their proposal to the CPC. Beth has offered to run a 400 word piece in the next Newsletter.

**Nahanton Park Bridge:** Nahanton Park: Duane Hillis shared the name of a bridge company that will provide a pro bono bridge for the park and suggested that the Conservators approach them if bridges are needed in other parks and conservation areas. Ted suggested that Saw Mill Brook is an area that would benefit from a bridge.

- **Albemarle Field signs and dugouts:** Mike brought up the Little League's proposal for signs like Newton Centre Playground; The board agreed that the solution found for Lyons Field signs should be the model. Beth agreed to write to the Parks & Rec. Department affirming this.

Adjournment: at 9:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
AnnaMaria Abernathy, secretary

DRAFT

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, February 8, 2017 7:30 PM  
Home of AnnaMaria Abernathy  
45 Islington Road, Auburndale

Present were Beth Wilkinson, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Dan Brody, Mike Clarke, Henry Finch, Mike Gilmore, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Larry Smith.

The meeting began at 7:35 PM. Beth introduced Ken Mallory, our new board member and coming newsletter editor.

**New Conservation representative on the Community Preservation Committee:**

During introductions to Ken, Mike Clarke announced that he was stepping down from the CPC, and that Dan Brody had been appointed to succeed him.

**Approval of minutes of the January 11 meeting.** The minutes were approved as written.

**Treasurer's Report:** Katherine reviewed the financial statements and proposed budget she had mailed to the board the previous week. In 2016, membership dues and gifts were better than budget. We had the one-time expense of Trail Guide printing, but that was more than offset by below-budget Grant expense and high investment return. Overall the increase in net assets was \$4K better than budget. For 2017, the budget is structured in the usual way, but with no Audubon CR monitoring expense, with higher property maintenance expense and a budget for invasives sessions established. She noted particularly that "property management beyond donor funding" is included for instances when an endowment is exhausted. A MOTION to adopt the BUDGET was seconded and unanimously approved.

**Kessler Woods Conservation Restriction:** Beth has learned that the City now owns the land and holds the CR. Because the owner of a property cannot hold the CR, Jennifer Steel has contacted the Law Department about a solution, which she presumes will be to have the Conservators hold the CR.

**Webster Woods:** Regarding Eric Reenstierna's opinion that the Conservators should make a bid for the land, Jennifer Steel informed Beth that the Trust for Public Land is talking with the City about representing it in negotiations with BC; hence we should not interject ourselves in this way. Beth also met with Friends of Webster Woods principals. Following extensive discussion, there was agreement that we should do nothing dramatic now. A MOTION that, "pending agreement with FoWW, Beth write a letter to the Mayor stating that we hope he will engage with the FWW and the TPL to

acquire the land, and that we will be glad to help in any way, and that the letter appear in the Newsletter,” was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

**Cold Spring Park:** Katherine explained plans by Eric Olson and Bruce Wenning, to create a demonstration area in the red maple swamp –which they think is the oldest open space in Newton - to remove buckthorn in one part where it has taken over, and to remove it from a second area where it is threatening. March 19 is tentatively set for a volunteer day for the work, which will have to be coordinated with the City and IPM committee.

Also re Cold Spring Park: the cut-through path between Beacon Street and the exit trail has been approved.

**Walks:** Beth noted that the deadline for the Newsletter is in two weeks, and asked for submissions/

Marian Lauterbach wants to lead a children’s walk. Beth will meet with her. Ken raised the possibility of documenting walks by use of a GoPro camera.

**Course on CR Monitoring:** Chris described a Land Trust webinar that is at [https://landtrustalliance.adobeconnect.com/\\_a993065765/p5r2s9tskw8/?launcher=false&fcsContent=true&pbMode=normal](https://landtrustalliance.adobeconnect.com/_a993065765/p5r2s9tskw8/?launcher=false&fcsContent=true&pbMode=normal)

The main lesson he sees is the need to be more regularized in our work. He will prepare a form for us to use in our next monitoring..

**Audubon Monitoring Report:** Amber Carr has written that she will complete the reports by the end of March.

**MLCC Conference on March 25:** Beth and AnnaMaria are attending; other board members may attend, \$50 registration fee before March 10 is reimbursable by NC.

### **Updates:**

• **Newton Serves – April 30:** Dan Brody has dropped the Avery Woods project, so the usual three activities will be at Dolan Pond, Cold Spring Park, and Blue Heron Bridge.

• **15 Bracebridge Road path:** The area has been re-surveyed and the path laid out. Forward movement awaits probate on the estate.

Dan said that he has created a page on the website that highlights the gifts by the Wilsons of the conservation area and the conservation restriction. He’s working with Doug Greenfield of the Newton GIS office on creating a map of the area for the website. The map will be the prototype of the next generation of maps to be used in our Trail Guide. These maps will use the GIS system data as the base map, and will allow us to put additional information on a map “layer” for our use.

George suggested we ask to know the broker for the property, to inform him of the limitations imposed by the CR.

- **Woodcock Meadow:** Jon Regosin would like another volunteer day and more tree work by the City. Proposed dates for invasives sessions will be in the Newsletter.
- **BU Volunteers:** BU has offered the services of groups of students to volunteer with alumni with community nonprofits during April .Beth submitted an application to have a team assist us with Newton Serves.
- **The Street:** At Land Use, as at the Conservation Commission, the proposals for the two pond buildings and for #27 have been withdrawn without prejudice, to be resubmitted later.
- **Crescent Street :** AnnaMaria reported that the Community Preservation Committee on Jan. 19 recommended appropriating \$260,000 to the Public Buildings Department for the feasibility & design phase of a project to create 4 permanently affordable rental housing units and expand community park.
- **Chamber of Commerce:** George commented on the Newton-Needham Chamber's N2 Innovation District plans described in the current TAB. Our membership in the Chamber has not yet been finalized.
- **Helen Heyn Walkway Extension:** Beth talked with Jennifer Steel about board members' hope to create an extension of the walk that does not require people to be routed through parking lots or to the street. Jennifer explained that it would have to be at the driest edge of the wetlands and that the ConComm will have to be careful to apply the wetlands legislation consistently.

Also, Jennifer Steel is looking for a steward for the pathway. Mike has been doing this, and will take on the title. He and Beth will talk to Jennifer.

- **Annual Meeting:** Beth has been in touch with Andy Finton. He will speak on Conserving a Resilient Future.

**Adjournment** at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

AnnaMaria Abernathy, secretary

# DRAFT

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, March 8, 2017 7:30 PM  
Home of AnnaMaria Abernathy  
45 Islington Road, Auburndale

Present were Beth Wilkinson, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Dan Brody, Matt Calabro, Bonnie Carter, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Robert Fizek, Pete Gilmore, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Larry Smith.

**Approval of minutes of the February 8 meeting.** The minutes were approved as written.

**Treasurer's Report:** Katherine reported that the form 3ABC had been filed with the City's Assessors Office. She will now work on Forms PC and 990 which are due to the State on May 15. She will convene the audit committee to review 2016 statements, and invited additional board members to join Larry Burdick, Dan Green, and Peter Kastner on the committee.

**Brooks Mathewson** will come to the April board meeting

**Newsletter:** The Newsletter will be out next week, well before the first walks. It is 20 pages long, as several groups were eager to contribute at this time. Ken Mallory now becomes editor.

Jason Wexner, arborist for Hartney Greymont, met with Beth and also expressed interest in doing a project with the Conservators, possibly editing the Trail Guide.

**Walks and invasive pulls:** Beth reported a ½ price offer from the TAB, of \$1570 for a half page ad. The board agreed against this. We can use the weekly notices in the TAB, plus Village 14 and Facebook. Also, the Boston Globe Grant will purchase an ad in West Weekly.

**Activate Newton Project:** Beth attended the March 1 meeting of the Newton Health Department about the initiative, and has listed our walks and invasive pulls with the program. Jennifer Steel and she also discussed the possibility of scavenger hunts in the conservation areas; the board suggested enlisting the Land Stewards to help with that project.

**Newton Serves:** We have listed the project at Cold Spring Park with the BU Global Service Day. There will also be projects at Dolan Pond and Blue HeronBridge.

Margaret suggested we place an ad in the Newton Serves program. Beth will check on that, and Margaret will contact the BU Theology School volunteers.

**March 19 Cold Spring Park buckthorn demonstration project:** still waits ok from Parks and Rec. Katherine and Beth will meet with Bob DeRubeis on Monday, March 13.

**Audubon monitoring:** Amber Carr expects to finish the report by March 15.

### **Updates:**

- **MLCC Conference on March 25:** Beth, Dan Brody, Ken, and AnnaMaria plan to attend.
- **Annual Meeting:** Andi Finton will provide materials for the program. Margaret Doris volunteered to do the menu with caterer Maria.
- **15 Bracebridge Road path:** The probate details are under control. Bill Shaevel will prepare the revised path plan to be filed with the Registry of Deeds. Henry will confer with Mike Clarke on what work is needed to level the path and who should do it.
- **Woodcock Meadow:** Katherine said work on the plan approved a year ago is continuing. The woodcocks are back since February 27, but more tree work may still be done next week. An April volunteer day is scheduled.
- **City Budget:** The Budget Open House at NNHS on March 9 did not seem promising, but George stressed that Conservators should attend when the Programs & Services Committee discusses the Parks & Rec. budget in April.
- **Winter Moth Spraying:** Beth summarized Jo Elkinton's argument against spraying, elaborated in his article for the forthcoming Newsletter, and Nate Cenis' counter that given the small percentage of Newton trees (5%) that are sprayed, it is ok to spray those.
- **Board member bios :** Beth asked those who've not submitted them to do it. There was no agreement on whether to include photos; it was decided to take a group photo, either at the April meeting or at annual meeting.

### **New Business:**

- **Grants:** Bill presented the annual request by the Environmental Science Program for \$2,000 toward scholarships, and a request from the Pierce School for \$1188 to build two garden beds for 5<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders (attached to the file copy of these minutes).



Upon discussion, a MOTION to approve \$2,000 for ESP and \$1,000 for Peirce was SECONDED and APPROVED unanimously.

- **Land Steward Meeting:** Katherine reported on the land stewards' meeting the previous week.

- **Kennard Park:** a private home entirely surrounded by Newton, Brookline, and State conservation land is for sale. Ted Kuklinski would like CPA funding to be applied for the open space portion of the site. Jennifer Steel dismissed the idea, and Dan Brody pointed to the question of whether there is potential for any further development.

**Adjournment** at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

AnnaMaria Abernathy, secretary

# DRAFT

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, April 12, 2017 7:30 PM  
Home of AnnaMaria Abernathy  
45 Islington Road, Auburndale

Present were Beth Wilkinson, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Dave Backer, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Mike Clarke, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Larry Smith.

Also present were Larry Burdick and Jason Weksner.

**Approval of minutes of the March 8 meeting.** The minutes were approved with the correction of the spelling of Andy Finton's name.

**Treasurer's Report:** Katherine will send copies of the Forms PC and 990 to the board for review. The Audit committee met and approved the accounts.

**Brooks Mathewson** will come to the June board meeting

**Land Trust Alliance:** Larry Burdick explained the Land Trust Alliance standards. We joined the LTA in 2009, mainly to benefit from their liability insurance rates. New standards have been issued which we must adopt. The board will receive copies to review. We will accept the standards, but not seek accreditation, which only the largest land trusts do.

**Habitat Project:** Pete has been communicating with the administrators of the Habitat Project, a joint effort by The Nature Conservancy and the Audubon Society. It is "a citizen science movement to explore how our collective efforts to transform yards and urban landscapes into more diverse habitat can support wildlife and connect people to nature in communities around the world." Beth and Pete have begun using the Yard Map, and Pete will provide the board with links to it and to some useful guides for using the system.

**Bike Rail Grant:** Ted Chapman, treasurer of the Newton Lower Falls Improvement Assn., has asked the Conservators for moral support and possible some administrative help with a possible grant from DCR to study extending the bike/pedestrian trail from Newton Lower Falls to Riverside. According to Ted, the grant covers "a 1700 ft. section that connects the street grid in LF to Riverside. We saw this a potentially low-hanging fruit with a huge benefit to the LF community and beyond, especially given the impending development at Riverside MBTA station. The purpose of the grant . . . is to study some of the engineering challenges the path would present as well as clarifying the

complex ownership/jurisdiction of the corridor.” Because the NLFIA has withdrawn its support for and participation in the grant, it leaves Bike Newton, which is too small. The Solomon Foundation is considering giving the needed match for a DCR grant, and their Herbert Nolan has asked about the Conservators’ advocacy. The board agreed that Beth should speak to the Mr. Nolan, and to invite Mr. Chapman to a meeting. He will bring some materials to display during the social hour of the annual meeting.

**Report from MLC Conference:** Ken said information will be in the summer Newsletter. He and Beth commented on how inspiring the meetings were, particularly EO Wilson’s keynote address. Andy Finton’s discussion of resilient landscapes suggests a lively annual meeting talk.

**Newton Serves April 30:** The BU Global Alliance Project will send 9 workers to Cold Spring Park. It was noted that The Echo Bridge/Hemlock Gorge walk and Friends of Nahanton Park annual meeting are also on April 30.

**Annual Meeting:** Board members are asked to let Beth know if they can help with set up or clean up; Henry volunteered for both.

Beth has invited two teachers from Needham whose students have participated in nature studies at the park and who will work with Katherine on two invasives pulls; 4 students from NNHS Envirothon team and Sonja Wadman of the Waltham Land Trust (who lives in Newton) are also invited, as are the honorees and their families. Since many sponsors do not use their tickets, the board agreed that 10 invitee tickets is reasonable.

**Watertown Dam Removal Proposal:** Beth explained the CRWA’s advocacy of removing the Watertown Dam. Beth has invited them to write about it for the next Newsletter, and put them in touch with Ellen Meyers at the Library; the Conservators will co-sponsor their Library talk about it on November 9.

**ESP 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:** Dave described the plans for the August 4-6 celebration, to which we are all invited. In honor of the occasion, AnnaMaria suggested we make a contribution to the ESP. After a brief discussion, a MOTION to give \$1,000 from the special projects fund was SECONDED and APPROVED unanimously.

### **Updates:**

- **Activate Newton Project:** Our activities are now listed on the City’s Activate Newton site.

Last Sunday’s Vernal Pool walk was very successful; Jon Regosin, Bill Hagar and Richard Primack filled in for Eric Olson. Henry has posted the Aqueduct hike on Apr. 30, Easter Sunday, on the “Nextdoor” site.

- **Audubon Report:** Beth is continuing to press for the report that is six months overdue.

• **Woodcock Meadow:**

Katherine said the snow held up the planned tree removals, but invasives removal is continuing.

• **Cold Spring Park:** Katherine said the buckthorn project is proceeding. They have marked out a small area in which to begin, and she will go to the IPM Committee for approval to use Rodeo if necessary and appropriate. Four weed wrenches will be used to pull up the buckthorn, and buckthorn baggies will also be used in volunteer sessions on April 30, May 20, and June 4.

**New Business:**

• **Green Budget:** The executive committee renewed our support of the Green Budget Coalition. The Coalition is recommending that members push for two specific amendments to the Legislature's operating budget: increase for the DEP and DCR. Representative Ruth Balser will co-sponsor amendments we recommend. After discussion, the board voted unanimously to ask Rep. Balser to co-sponsor these. We will send the information to Newton's Directors of Sustainability, Andy Savitz and Anne Berwick.

• **Board Resignations and Social Media position:** Beth reported that Margaret Albright, Mat Calabro, and Willis Wang will leave the board. This means we need a new member for social media. At the end of the meeting, Jason Weksner volunteered to take on that position.

• **Earth Day:** A NSHS student has asked whether a Conservator would like to give a presentation at the Earth Day celebration on April 27. Margaret Doris has volunteered. Beth will inquire whether a representative of Friends of Webster Woods might join her.

• **Bocce Court at the Oak Street end of the Upper Falls Greenway:** Jerry Riley sent us a message about a Newton Serves project to install a bocce court next to the pathway by the Depot restaurant. They also will install grass in a currently hard-packed dirt area. The board agreed that this is not an issue for us.

• **Speaks for Trees:** David Meshoulam wrote to Beth asking for our help to start a non-profit to plant trees in poor urban parts of Boston. The board agreed not to.

• **Nahanton Park Alms House:** Mike told us that probably a simple marker containing a QR code will memorialize the site. Its history may also be summarized on a long plank there and in additional QR codes posted at appropriate sites on the property.

**Adjournment** at 9:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
AnnaMaria Abernathy, secretary

# DRAFT

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, June 14, 2017 7:30 PM  
Home of AnnaMaria Abernathy  
45 Islington Road, Auburndale

Present were Beth Wilkinson, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Dave Backer, Dan Brody, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Robert Fizek, Pete Gilmore, Katherine Howard, Ted Kuklinski, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Larry Smith.

Also present were Larry Burdick and Ellen Gibson Kennedy.

Beth introduced Ellen Gibson-Kennedy, who has volunteered to help with the new edition of the Trail Guide.

**Approval of minutes of the April 12 meeting.** The minutes were approved with the correction of two misspelled words noted by Chris: “especially” and “proposal.”

**Treasurer’s Report:** Katherine has received the Certificate for Solicitation from the Attorney General’s office. She has sent out the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter financials, where the major change was increase from the rise in the stock market.

**Interns:** Beth announced have taken on two interns for the summer; she has applied to the Cambridge Savings Bank for a grant to cover the \$3,000 cost; failing that, she will go to the Village Bank. Katherine explained that the will be temporary employees, requiring withholding, payroll taxes, W-2s. She will take a commercial workers’ Compensation plan, to be cancelled after the two months of the internships.

**Trail Guide Revisions:** Dan reported progress, as the City’s GIS maps are being used as basis, with our maps having additional layers for notations specific to only our guide. current guide, or a book containing text on pockets that would hold fold-out maps of varying size, or possibly a hybrid: the current format with one or two large foldouts. Costs need to be learned; in discussion, several board members pointed to the experience with the Almanac, that \$20 is a deterrent, while \$10 is generally accepted. Jannifer Steel is planning long distance trails, to be marked as Wellesley’s are. Ellen and Dan will continue work, and will ask for help particularly in layout and production.

**Land Trust Alliance Standards:** Larry Burdick reiterated the explanation that we must accept the new standards that have been formulated, and that had been sent to the board. He read the main requirements, after which a MOTION that we accept the standards was SECONDED and unanimously approved.

**Bruce Wenning as Advisor:** Because he has been most helpful in our work at Cold Spring Park, Beth suggested that Bruce become an advisor; he has indicated that he would be pleased to accept if offered.

A MOTION to elect Bruce as advisor was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

**Board Bios:** Beth passed around the list, reminding those who have not sent one in.

**Beacon Street Trees:** Beth has received much mail asking Conservators to oppose the planned removal of 30 large street trees along the entire length of Beacon St. in Newton, as part of the sidewalk reconstruction this summer. Following discussion, board members agreed that this is an issue for the Tree Conservancy, and that we should respond asking individuals to weigh in before the June 20 deadline.

**Bartlet Tree Experts' Client Days:** Nate Cenis invited Beth and another person to the two-day event at the company's research lab in North Carolina, all expenses paid, with an immediate response needed. Following discussion, it was decided to pass the offer on to several members who would benefit from it. We agreed that the financial arrangements are not the responsibility of the Conservators and would be between the individual and the tree company.

**Citizen Science Project:** Brooks Mathewson would like to start a Citizen Science Project in Newton, and asked the Conservators to co-sponsor the project with him. Ted stressed the need to work with Brooks to attract young people. Margaret volunteered to be the liaison. We decided to continue the discussion in the fall, when Brooks will be ready to develop a plan. He also offered to lead a walk in the fall.

**Interns:** Iris Liao and Bennett Walkes are interning with us this summer. We also offered a position to Laura Schmidt-Hong, who first accepted but then realized that she would be too busy this summer. She will occasionally volunteer and is eager to do it next year. Beth distributed the list of projects from which the interns decide each week what they will do the following week. Beth and Katherine will be the primary supervisors for the students. Working with them is proving time consuming as well as satisfying.

**Farmers' Markets:** begin June 24 on Elm Street in West Newton, and July 11 at Cold Spring Park. Interns will help, but for the first several sessions a board member is needed. Beth asked for volunteers.

**Fall Walks:** Three have been scheduled; others are solicited. Those that occur before the next Newsletter will be announced in the TAB and online. Pete Gilmore and Henry Finch joined Bill and Dottie Hagar and Haynes Miller in signing up to lead walks.

**Outreach and Facebook:** 20 new members have joined since March, showing the outreach is succeeding.

**Friends of Webster Woods letter to mayoral candidates:** Beth circulated copies of the letter that the FofWW would like the Conservators to sign. It was the sense of the board that we are appropriately cited in the letter as supporting the acquisition.

**Updates:**

• **Audubon Reports:** all have come in. It is time to schedule monitoring again, to begin this fall.

• **Bracebridge Road path:** John Menard thinks it is not a volunteer job, and Mike also has found it more complex than he'd expected. With the contribution of wood from 3 trees on the property to line the path, Menard thinks the cost will be between \$3.5 and \$5K. Volunteers can spread the woodchips at the end. A MOTION to accept the bid was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED. Meanwhile, Bill Shaevel is valiantly pushing the Wilsons' lawyers to get the needed documents finalized.

**New Business:**

• **CPC:** Dan Brody, who observes the CPC, asked whether there is land we would recommend for taking. Jennifer Steel thinks the 4-acre lots along Dudley Road should be preserved.

• **Newton's underground streams:** Following Richard Primack's article in the June 7 issue of the **Tab**, Andreae Downs called out on Facebook to Eric Olson and Beth, to trace all the streams. We agreed to be part of the discussion.

• **Coalition advocating for Newton to use 100% renewable energy by 2027:** Dave Backer reported on the meeting of the group, and recommended that we not sign on to an unrealistic demand. The board agreed to be part of the discussion while the issue gets ironed out.

**Adjournment** at 10:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
AnnaMaria Abernathy, secretary

# DRAFT

## MINUTES

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, July 12, 2017 7:30 PM  
Waban Library Center  
1641 Beacon Street, Waban

Present were Beth Wilkinson, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Dave Backer, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Dan Green, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ted Kuklinski, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Larry Smith.

**Approval of minutes of the June 14 meeting.** The minutes were approved with the following corrections: Replace as follows the first ¶ of **Trail Guide Revisions:** “Dan reported progress, as the City’s GIS maps are being used as basis, with our maps having additional layers for notations specific to only our guide. Format could be similar to our current guide, or a book with pockets that would hold pull-out maps of varying size, or possibly a hybrid: the current format with one or two large pull-outs. Costs need to be learned; in discussion, several board members pointed to the experience with the Almanac, that \$20 is a deterrent, while \$10 is generally accepted.” And under **New Business,** “**CPC:** Dan Brody, who is a member of the CPC, asked whether there is land we would recommend for future acquisition. Beth mentioned that Jennifer Steel thinks the 4-acre lots along Dudley Road should be **preserved.**”

**Treasurer’s Report:** Katherine reviewed the financials through June 30 that she had sent to the board commenting that they continue to show a large unrealized gain on investments, and net Annual Meeting results positive by \$300 due to generous sponsorships, both of which offset other variances. A Workmen’s Compensation policy for the interns’ two months will come to c.\$100. Katherine reminded that we need a membership person; an appeal will be repeated in the Newsletter.

**Bracebridge Road:** John Menard will finish the path in the last week of July, wen Andre Wilson will be in town.

A MOTION to authorize thePresident and Treasurer to execute the “Amendment to the Conservation Restriction covering 15 Bracebridge Rd., Newton, MA” which includes a change in location of the “public access easement” upon such terms and conditions that the President and Treasurer should deem appropriate” was **SECONDED** and unanimously **APPROVED**. AnnaMaria signed the Clerk’s statement attesting the vote. The three officers will meet to sign and have notarized the Acceptance of the Amendment.



Bill Shaevel will retire at the end of the month, and will see this action completed.

**Webster Woods:** Dan distributed copies of the Friends of Webster Woods' letter to the mayoral candidates and of his draft motions about WW (see attached). He no longer advocate acquiring the entire parcel (motion 4). After extended discussion and several straw votes on the other three motions, a MOTION to authorize the President to draft a letter endorsing the FOWW letter, defining what we include in "the portion of the woods owned by Boston College," and requesting their response, which we will publicize, was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED. The letter will be reviewed by the board and sent to the FOWW and to the candidates as they turn in their nomination papers.

**Webster Woods Signs:** FOWW has 90 new signs available. The board agreed to help distribute them via an email to the NC membership and our Facebook page.

**Monitoring Report –and sharing it with the City:** Beth noted several issues raised in the 2012 and 2013 Audubon reports that have not been corrected were not addressed in the 2017 report. She will ask Amber Carr to include them in the final report. Board members who met with Amber last November are asked to send the information about their respective sites to Beth, who will forward to Amber.

**Work needed at Dexter Road and Ordway:** Katherine solicited bids, and accepted the low bid of \$1800 by Stumpy's Tree Service for removing a large tree. Nate Cenis will trim trees and remove the poison ivy at Dexter Park, after which NNHS students may help remove invasives.

**Awtrey Dell:** TheAwtreys have not responded yet about installation of the sign to the Dell. They will be asked again.

**Interns:** Iris Liao and Bennett Walkes are doing good work. Beth and Katherine are spending some 20 hours/week for and with them, so while the collaboration is very productive, they have concerns about another year unless the process can be revised or other board members contribute to the assignment.

**Farmers' Markets:** Chris and Pete reported on their experiences. The interns' posters on invasives attracted much attention and comment. The majority of shoppers had no idea where Webster Woods is, but showed interest. Chris indicated the need for another poster telling about the Conservators, and a map of Newton locating Webster Woods. Ted has offered to lead walks to nearby Dolan Pond from the Saturday market.

**Fall Walks:** scheduling is going well.

**New trails:** Dan Brody described the possibilities that the recent opening of the Upper Falls Greenway provides, to create a network of trails that link the Greenway to the Blue Heron Trail along the Charles, and to Hemlock Gorge and the Charles River Conservation Area. He will lead a new walk there to show the possibilities to others.”

**Citizen Science Project:** the planning is inching along. It will be modeled on the Mt. Auburn phenology plan. Brooks Mathewson, Richard Primack, Margaret Doris, and Beth will work on it in the coming two months.

**New Business:**

- **Monarch Butterfly:** Henry has abundant milkweed in his yard, and showed the photo of a monarch butterfly there last week.
- **Pollinator Garden at Nahanton Park:** that Katherine and Beth planted last week with the interns is so successful that Beth has suggested planting another one in one of the city’s adopt-a-space spots. Helen Jordan, a master gardener, has expressed interest in working on the project.

**Adjournment** at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
AnnaMaria Abernathy, secretary



July 4, 2017

Dear Newton Mayoral Candidates:

We are Newton residents who care deeply about Webster Woods, the largest contiguous parcel of open space in Newton. As you may know, most of Webster Woods is owned by the City of Newton and the state Department of Conservation and Recreation. Fortunately, these portions are permanently protected.

However, in the middle of these two protected, publicly owned portions is a twenty-two acre area of wooded open space now owned by Boston College. This privately owned area is an integral part of the woods, with numerous hiking trails running through it that are used regularly by many visitors and that connect to the publicly owned areas to the north and south. This area also contains a vernal pool, a rare resource in Newton, which functions as a breeding pond for tadpoles and salamanders.

Webster Woods is an open space gem. For many years, it has offered Newton residents and many others abundant recreational opportunities, such as hiking, jogging, cross-country skiing, and even cave-visiting. It also has high scientific value. As detailed by biologist Richard Primack, these woods have been used by nearby universities for studies of the biology of pink lady's slipper orchids, wildflower restoration programs, and the effects of climate change.

Given that the privately-owned area is right in the middle of these woods, any development of it would inevitably and seriously degrade the publicly owned open space on both sides and would undermine the public investment that has been made in this open space.

Due to the unique value of these woods, and the threat posed by the potential for future development by a private owner (especially after the expiration of the current restriction on all development that is not educational or religious), the Newton City Council, the Newton Conservators, and the Newton Conservation Commission have all strongly supported the City taking action to permanently protect the portion of the woods owned

by Boston College. And neighbors of these woods have pledged to contribute very significantly to the costs of such protection.

We ask that as a candidate for Mayor, you make the following commitment:

1. You state that it is a top priority of yours that the City permanently protect this area.
2. You form a citizen's advisory group to assist in this effort, and meet with the group on a quarterly basis.
3. Within two years from taking office, you negotiate an agreement with Boston College that includes permanent protection of at least the wooded area.
4. Within two and a half years from taking office, you submit necessary approvals to the Community Preservation Act Committee and the City Council to finalize and implement the agreement with Boston College.
5. If despite your best efforts you are unable to forge an agreement with Boston College, you fully support a taking by eminent domain that ensures no development of this area and continued public use of it.

We appreciate your consideration of this vital open space protection opportunity. Please confirm in writing your agreement with this request. We would appreciate a response within thirty days, and are happy to discuss this further with you if you would like.

Signed,

AnnaMaria Abernathy  
Anna A. Allen  
Rory J. Altman  
Joan Balaban  
Peter Barrer  
Adrian Bradley  
John Chadis  
Sandy Chadis  
Annie Cole  
Josh Coval  
Doug Dickson  
Judith Di Leo

Bev Droz  
Kat Eutsler  
Deena Freed  
Joshua Freed  
Lynne Friedlander  
Steve Garfinkle  
Jeff Goldman  
J. Christopher Hepburn  
Katherine Howard  
David Hruska  
Kenneth Kimmell  
Rebecca Kornblatt

Daniel Krasa  
Jonathan Landman  
Rebecca M. Mayne  
Tatjana Meschede  
Steven Miller  
Lucy Ogburn  
Willard Ogburn  
Gordon M. Orloff  
Carol Sklar  
Phil Stern  
Susan Stern  
Beth Wilkinson

Next page lists Dan Brody's four possible motions:

1. The Board endorses the July 4 letter from Friends of Webster Woods to the candidates for Mayor of Newton, and requests FOWW to add Newton Conservators as a signatory of the letter.
2. The Board endorses the July 4 letter from Friends of Webster Woods to the candidates for Mayor of Newton, and requests FOWW to add Newton Conservators as a signatory of the letter. In addition, the Board authorizes the Executive Committee to write to each candidate asking them to commit to:
  - acquire the rear MASCO parking lot and the wooded land between it and the developed area
  - restore the rear MASCO parking lot and its driveway to a natural condition
  - grant to the Newton Conservators or another organization a permanent conservation restriction on all city-owned land comprising Webster Woods.
3. The Board endorses the July 4 letter from Friends of Webster Woods to the candidates for Mayor of Newton, and requests FOWW to add Newton Conservators as a signatory of the letter. In addition, the Board authorizes the Executive Committee to write to each candidate asking them to commit to:
  - acquire the rear MASCO parking lot, the wooded land between it and the developed area, the small MASCO parking lot adjacent to Hammond Pond Parkway, the wooded land between the small MASCO parking lot and the developed area, and the driveway to Hammond Pond Parkway
  - negotiate with the state Department of Conservation and Recreation an agreement giving BC (possibly in exchange for a portion of its land) an easement to build a driveway from its land to the access road that connects Hammond Pond Parkway to the residential and commercial buildings to the south
  - remove the driveway from the BC land onto Hammond Pond Parkway, and restore the MASCO parking lots and adjacent driveways to a natural condition
  - grant to the Newton Conservators or another organization a permanent conservation restriction on all city-owned land comprising Webster Woods.
4. The Board authorizes the Executive Committee to send a letter to each candidate for Mayor asking them to commit to the following:
  - acquire the entire parcel bought by Boston College in 2016
  - restore the developed portions of the site to a natural condition
  - grant to the Newton Conservators or another organization a permanent conservation restriction on all city-owned land comprising Webster Woods.



# DRAFT

## MINUTES

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, September 27 7:00 PM  
Waban Library Center  
1641 Beacon Street, Waban

Present were Beth Wilkinson, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Dave Backer, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Henry Finch, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ted Kuklinski, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Larry Smith.

Also present were EllenGibson-Kennedy, and for the first 30 minutes, Ted Chapman

**DCR Rail Trail Grant:** Ted Chapman presented, with a power point presentation, the history of the project and the current proposal and grant. For the 1700 foot link in the trail between the end of Clearwater Street and the Riverside MBTA station and DCR trails along the Charles River DCR and is offering a \$38,000 grant to Bike Newton, requiring a 20% match. The Solomon Foundation is pledging to underwrite any portion of the required 20% (\$9675) that is not met by volunteer labor. Chapman and Bike Newton would like the Conservators to co-administer the project or to support it. After Ted left, discussion centered on whether signing on incurs any risk to the Conservators, and the fact that our participation will be the same either way: to have two board members be part of the committee to oversee the project. Larry and Henry volunteered to participate. For the project, each hour of volunteer labor is counted as \$30 toward fulfilling the matching grant.. A MOTION that we support the project, and 2 members will go to the first meeting, after which we will re-evaluate the issue was SECONDED and CARRIED, with one opposed.

**Approval of minutes of the July 12 meeting.** The minutes were approved as written

**Treasurer's Report:** Katherine wanted us to be aware of five large expenses in this quarter She has begun transferring a portion of NC business to the Village Bank by opening a checking account there, partly to support the local bank and partly in case it would be required for the DCR grant. She asked for board approval of the move, so a MOTION to approve the move to the Village Bank was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

The Corporation Annual Report is due in November, and will be done.

**Bracebridge Road:** Beth described Andre Wilson's planting of trees and blueberry plants, as he sees the whole Wilson Conservation Area providing a greenspace corridor.

Sarah Loria, English professor at Holy Cross, previously did an article and library presentation about Houghton Garden, and has completed an article for the Newton Tab

and our newsletter on the history of the Bracebridge Road property and the Wilson family's wish to make it accessible to the public.

**Trail Guide:** Ellen asked about the format to be chosen for the new guide. Dan Brody passed around a number of examples, said he favors the model that is like ours, but with a long fold-out page (see Carlisle's.)

He and the City's GIS coordinator Doug Greenfield will soon have a map of the Wilson Bracebridge Rd. property that will let us include parts that are not on the City map. He needs two volunteers to 1)decide which properties to include in the Guide, and 2)to do suggests that we consider flipping the project around: doing the web part first, one map at a time, before putting all into the book. Ken volunteered to do the photography, and will be one of the tow volunteers.

**499 Winchester Street:** A developer has a purchase and sale agreement on Duane Hillis' former home. He wants to subdivide the 1-acre lot into three (one rear-lot). The Conservation Commission has denied his request for a sewer line easement through the park in order to connect to the City sewer line. Following discussion, Chris MOVED that the Conservators write to the developer, with copies to the Ward 8 councilors Lappin, Kalis and Lipof, that we oppose the rear lot. Larry SECONDED the motion, which was unanimously APPROVED. George and Chris will draft the letter.

**Communications with Law Department about CRs on Nahanton Park and 3 other properties:** Beth has learned from Ouida Young that the Law Dept. wants a task force about the Nahanton Park CR, and will do a survey of the park. A board member is needed to represent NC on the task force. Chris will be on it for the Friends of Nahanton Park. **Please inform Beth if you are willing to represent the Conservators.**

CRs are also coming up for Kessler, Flowed Meadow, and the Crystal Lake path. The board needs to decide on funds for taking on the CRs. Katherine has requested information about the issue from the Land Trust Alliance.

**Annual Meeting Speaker:** Board members are asked to think of possibilities, to be discussed at the October meeting.

**Audubon monitoring report:** The report is in, and Beth will send the information to the City and other responsible parties.

**Environmental Forum:** The forum that was scheduled for Sept. 28 has had to be postponed, tentatively to Oct. 21 at 4:30 PM. The Library is not available, so other sites are being sought

**Fall Walks:** The schedule is being published in the TAB and Ted has sent EBulletins.

A sign-up sheet was circulated for Richard Priack's citizen-science-noise-monitoring session at Hammond/Webster Woods on Saturday, October 7.

**Connections with High Schools:** Two environmental teachers from Needham High School again have brought classes to remove invasive plants from Nahanton Park. Teachers from Newton North have contacted Beth about presentations on our work and Webster Woods. They may be interested in doing work at Dexter Woods. If so, they will be asked to come up with a plan. We also are continuing contact with two teachers at Newton South.

**Harvest Fair on October 15:** A sign-up sheet was circulated for volunteers.

**New Business:**

• **56 Farwell Street:** Ted told of the request by Stephen Vona (Turtle Lane, LLC) to construct six single family homes on the 92,790 sq.ft. riverfront lot. He made a MOTION that NC write to the Conservation Commission in time for the following day's meeting, expressing concern about creating public access along the river front in line with the City's Open Space Plan, with an easement. It was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED. Ted agreed to draft the letter, and Katherine volunteered to attend the meeting.

• **Historic Burying Grounds:** Larry Burdick spoke to Beth about obtaining a grant for work at the Historic Burying Grounds.

• **Ken Mallory** thanked all for their support and contributions to the Newsletter, and asked members for ideas.

**Adjournment** at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
AnnaMaria Abernathy, secretary



# DRAFT

## MINUTES

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, October 25, 2017, 7:00 PM  
Waban Library Center  
1641 Beacon Street, Waban

Present were Beth Wilkinson, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Dave Backer, Dan Brody, Mat Calabro, Bonnie Carter, Henry Finch, Dan Green, Bill Hagar, Katherine Howard, Ted Kuklinski, George Mansfield, Larry Smith.

**Approval of minutes of the September 27 meeting.** The minutes were approved as written.

**Treasurer's Report:** Katherine has filed the Corporation Annual Report to the Secretary of State, and the quarterly tax filing due to intern payroll to the IRS. She had sent out the financial statements through Sept. 30. She noted several large one-time expenses in this quarter: Bracebridge path work and Dexter Rd tree work, which drew down the Board designated Endowment spending policy account by \$6.2K , and Ordway tree work, which drew down the Ordway Endowment Interest account by \$2.2K. She has contacted the holders of the Weeks and Regan restricted funds about plans for their use.

**Membership Renewal Letter:** The board approved the draft renewal letter, and agreed to adding to the renewal form a check list of specific funds that members might contribute to.

**Two-Bridges Grant Group Report:** Larry and Henry reported on a good meeting. Ken Krems will provide the legal work pro bono, and the Solomon Foundation is handling the financing.

**Webster Woods Appraisal:** The board agreed that a meeting should be sought with the mayor elect sometime before the inauguration.

**Annual Meeting Speaker:** Several names were discussed, and the board will decide in November whom to invite.

**Meeting with teachers from Newton North:** Beth met with three teachers and spoke to Anndy Dannenberg's class; students were very responsive and interested in NC projects. We expect to have ongoing interactions with Anndy and her students.

**Holiday Potluck:** We will skip the December meeting, and instead have the potluck on January 3 at Henry's home, with the regular January meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Updates:**

- **499 Winchester Street:** Duane Hillis canceled his appearance at the Parks and Rec Commission, so the item was canceled.
  
- **56 Farwell Street:** Many communications from City agencies forwarded by Jennifer Steel indicate multiple problems at the site. The Conservation Commission hearing has been continued to November 9. Ted will attend.
  
- **Audubon Monitoring Report:**
  - The reports have been sent to the individual holders of the sites. Bids for work at Waban Hill Reservoir came in too high, so only basic work such as the steps to the gate house will be repaired at this time. Neighbors want to rename the site Heartbreak Hill Reservoir.
  - Crystal Lake easement: Beth has asked the Law Department to clarify the details. Everyone agreed signs are needed. Henry recommended barrier plantings between the property and the path.
  
- **Fall Walks:** have gone well.
  
- **Bracebridge Road project: Note the workday November 12!** Andrè Wilson has continued planting trees and removing invasive plants, aiming to create a green corridor between the beginning of the Wilson Conservation Area on Greenlawn Avenue and the end of the Wilson house property on Pleasant Street.
  
- **Cold Spring Park:** Katherine will update the work plan.
  
- **Woodcock Meadow:** Katherine said another tree day is planned. Jon Regosin thinks a consult is needed from an invasives control specialist on how to proceed. She has filed the First Year Report to the IPM. The City will do tree work in December.
  
- **Renewable Energy Report:** Dave Backer reported on the October 18 meeting, regarding a municipal aggregation plan, a letter being drafted by a coalition of environmental groups setting ambitious goals and a resolution to the City Council committing to 100% renewable by a certain date.
  
- **Chamber of Commerce:** We are now members, and have received invitations to meetings. Architect Dewey Nichols is their ambassador who welcomed us.

**New Business:**

- **Flowed Meadow:** Dave Backer said the Environmental Science Program students did trail maintenance this summer, spreading wood chips for the City, at the site which will be one of the new CRs that the Conservators will be asked to hold.

- **Norumbega Park Dog Park:** The Conservation Commission is approving a dog park of .8 acre in the low scruffy area abutting Commonwealth Avenue, so the main conservation area may be freed of off-leash dogs.
- **Potential new dog park by the Chestnut Hill Mall:** Ruth Balser has invited us to participate in a meeting with DCR about their plans for a new dog park on their land.
- **Goats at the Deer Park:** Dave Green reported that the ConCom has rented 35 goats to spend 4 weeks in the Deer Park, devouring the bittersweet and other invasive plants.

**Adjournment** at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
AnnaMaria Abernathy, secretary

# DRAFT

## MINUTES

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, November 29, 2017, 7:00 PM  
Waban Library Center  
1641 Beacon Street, Waban

Present were Beth Wilkinson, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Dave Backer, Bonnie Carter, Henry Finch, Ellen Gibson-Kennedy, Pete Gilmore, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ted Kuklinski, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Larry Smith.

Also present were Barbara Bates and Nyssa Patten.

**New board member:** Before Ellen Gibson-Kennedy arrived, Beth asked for discussion about electing Ellen to the board. A MOTION to elect Ellen Gibson-Kennedy was SECONDED and unanimously approved.

**Approval of minutes of the October 25 meeting.** The minutes were approved as written.

**Treasurer's Report:** Katherine said the Workers' Comp. premiums from the summer interns have been audited. She asked that anyone foreseeing changes in expenditures let her know, as she will be working on next year's budget.

**Annual Meeting Speaker:** Following a brief discussion, the board voted to invite Peter Alden to speak at the annual meeting, with Sam Jaffe as back-up in case Alden has a conflict on our date, May 2.

**CR Monitoring Form:** Chris explained the "need to be more formal and organized in our CR monitoring" and asked for board members to send him suggestions of changes to the form he has drafted for monitoring reports. He has set up files for each site, containing the CR and the previous monitoring reports. He suggests a committee be formed to decide on how best to permanently preserve the material. Meanwhile, it can be on the Conservator web site portion that is reserved for board members. At Barbara Bates' suggestion, the board agreed to test the form by monitoring a site this winter.

**Additional CRs to take on:** The Law Department is drafting CRs for Wabasso Street, Rogers Street at Crystal Lake, Kessler Woods, Dolan Pond, and Nahanton Park. The first ones to be ready for the review of the board and our pro bono lawyer Leigh Gilligan will be for Wabasso Steet and Rogers Street. For Nahanton Park, the Law Dept. wants a task force. Among the proposed members are Beth Wilkinson, Chris Hepburn, Suzette Barbier, Judy Dore, Michael Clarke, Jennifer Steel. Bill Hagar volunteered to join, too.

The City has us asked to suggest a figure for the sum to be put in escrow for each of these CRs for 15 years, to be reviewed after 10 years. After discussion, including the suggestion that a single sum for all the CRs would be more reasonable, a MOTION that \$10,000 for each of the five, not including the cost of baseline survey, and including clauses that if expenses exceed the amount, we may petition the City for reimbursement, was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

**LTA on non-partisan status of land trusts:** This is no longer an issue, as the problem clause was dropped from the bill.

**Meeting with Friends of Webster Woods Executiv Committee:** Beth reported that the FOWW agreed to ask Mayor Elect Fuller to name a task force on WW. They also have scheduled a meeting with Jennifer Steel on December 19 in order to get a better understanding of the details of the appraisal of the land obtained by the city.

### **Updates:**

- **56 Farwell Street:** Ted reported that the developer has agreed to a riverfront path along the site, but no access from the street. A wildlife report is forthcoming from the developer. The next meeting of the Conservation Commission at which the property will be discussed is in January.
- **Two-Bridges Grant Core Group Report:** Larry and Henry reported on their afternoon with the group working to develop a plan for a pathway from Newton Lower Falls to Riverside Station using abandoned railroad bridges to cross Route 128/ I-95. They walked the 3 miles from Lower Falls to Riverside. They joined Jennifer Steel and her assistant; Paul Jahnige, DCR Director of Trails and Greenways; Amanda Lewis, DCR Recreational Trails Program Coordinator; and Andrew Norkin of the AMC, who is interested in work for kids during the summer.
- **Membership Renewal Letters:** five board members joined Bonnie on Sunday to get the letters ready to mail, and many have been delivered. In just the first three days, two new members have come from an email message and Facebook posting about it, and thirteen have renewed online.

Beth reported that the Conservators has been nominated to be added as an approved nonprofit through the Tufts Health Plan Matching Gift Program.

• **Trail Guide:** Ellen, Beth, and Dan have had a productive meeting, and work is progressing.

• **Newsletter:** Ken said it is in the final stages of preparation. It will be kept within the 14-16 pp. limit, with an added emphasis on photos and graphics.

- **Bracebridge Road Project:** Sarah Luria's article in the current TAB was praised (See appended.)
- **Renewable Energy Report:** Dave Backer summarized the letter to the City, signed by a coalition of environmental groups, describing the municipal aggregation plan and asking that Newton adopt a set of ambitious goals (see attached). He recommended we sign on to the letter. Following discussion, a MOTION to sign on was SECONDED and APPROVED by a vote of 12-0-1 abstention.

**New Business:**

- **ESP:** Dave Backer explained that he is working on internships to attract some older ESP leaders, and that he hopes to ask NC to help fund two internships. Beth suggested that work at Awtrey Dell might be offered in return.
- **Dog Parks at Hammond Pond DCR Reservation** near Mall Parking area: Beth joined Rep. Ruth Balser, Commissioner DeRubeis, Commissioner Roy of the DCR, City Councilor Susan Albright, and MaryLee Belleville, who proposed the park on DCR land, to discuss the project. The representatives of the state and the city came to a tentative agreement to place dog parks on the unused land to the left of the access road off Hammond Pond Parkway.
- **Protection of trees in park and conservation land:** Beth spoke of the need to advocate for attention to the wilder areas of our city parks (such as Nahanton Park and Cold Spring Park), starting with a letter to the mayor about adding staff responsible for them.
- **Tree Bark Program** on Nov. 20 was very successful, attended by c. 80.
- **Dolan Pond:** Ted described the new ramp leading down from the board walk, done by Scout Troop 355.
- **Christmas Bird Count:** Pete announced that the owl count will begin at 5:00 AM on December 17, at Rayburn Terrace. The regular bird count will begin at 7:00 AM and should end by noon.
- **Holiday Potluck:** on January 3, at 6 pm. Henry will post a Google sheet for us to indicate what we will bring to the potluck.

**Adjournment** at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
AnnaMaria Abernathy, secretary

## **The story of Jolly's Hollow: How conservation land builds community**

**By Sarah Luria**

For years I have cherished the ability to walk off-road along Newton's aqueduct trail from the Four Corners area to Mason-Rice Elementary School. The highlight of that trip, as many lucky aqueduct walkers know, is the winding path through Jolly's Hollow, a secluded dell with a little stone bridge to one side and shaded by gloriously tall healthy trees. Though the path actually runs through private property, for the past many years a charming pair of signs have invited us in: "Welcome to Jolly's Hollow. Please keep to the paths. Beware of the gardener, she talks!" I always wanted to thank that chatty gardener, and would sometimes glimpse her among her gorgeous flower garden and ornamental trees, but I was too shy to tell her how much it meant to me to walk through her beautiful grounds.

My wish came partly true the other day, when I met someone planting 50 native low bush blueberry plants under the pine grove near the lip of the hollow where it borders Bracebridge Road. This was André Wilson, who grew up on the property after 1966 when André's father, Harvard physicist Richard Wilson, and mother, Andrée Désirée Wilson, moved there with their six children. (André is transgender and in tribute to Andrée's enabling support has taken and adapted her name.) The elder Andrée was the legendary "gardener" who, during the 50 years she lived there, created this special place. Beginning in the 1990s, as Newton was becoming ever more subdivided, she and Richard began the extraordinary and arduous process that would eventually donate the Wilson Conservation Area to the city and put all but .4 acres of their remaining 1.9-acre parcel under a conservation restriction that protects this legacy in perpetuity.

One important condition of conservation land is that there be public access. Andrée passed away in 2016 and the property will eventually be sold. Now in a joint effort by the Newton Conservators and the Wilson family, an official path has been created that runs up along the pine-covered hill where I met André hard at work to enhance the family's gift to the city.

Trained in architecture and ecological restoration, André represents the latest generation of talented, articulate gardeners on this place. A few days after our meeting amongst the blueberry bushes, we sat down for an interview on a crescent-shaped bench by the lovely half-moon garden. We were joined by Beth Wilkinson, current president of the Newton Conservators, the nonprofit organization that administers the conservation restriction on the private land. Our conversation revealed more about the significance of Jolly's Hollow to the larger community, a story of how Andrée's garden and her commitment to her children and her trees grew to include her neighborhood, her city and us.

**Coalition Organizing for 100% Renewable Newton**

October 17, 2017

Dear Public Facilities Councilors, Chair Deb Crossley, Mayor Setti Warren and Sustainability Dir. Ann Berwick:

The Coalition Organizing for 100% Renewable Newton was formed last spring to address urgent climate change challenges. The goal is to be fossil-fuel free as soon as possible. We represent local environmental organizations and local chapters of statewide organizations.

Our Coalition recommends that the *Newton Power Choice* municipal aggregation initial contract set a default percentage of Class 1 New England renewables well above both the State mandate of 12% and Brookline's default of an additional 25% (37% total). We support a default of 40% above the state mandate in its initial contract (52% total). This number is feasible and will meet the newly adopted international carbon roadmap to reduce global warming, driven by a simple rule of thumb or 'carbon law' of halving emissions every decade to catalyze disruptive innovation. (<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/03/170323141338.htm>)

To learn about Newton residents' willingness to pay a somewhat higher price for green electricity, the Coalition Organizing for 100% Renewable Newton asked *Green Newton* to sponsor a statistically reliable, random, zip-code based survey. The preliminary results show strong support for green electricity among Newton residents, even among those who have modest incomes. 87% of respondents would pay more for green electricity, and of these, 78% support the total level of renewables ranging between 50% and 100%. This would mean an additional cost to Newton households, who pay an average cost of \$150 a month now, of between \$8-18 per month (in today's prices).

Aggregation is the least expensive and most efficient way to maximize Newton's reduction in greenhouse emissions. It is an opportunity to increase the amount of electricity generated in New England from renewable sources, such as wind and solar. It would support the local economy and create local energy sector jobs. It will increase demand and capacity for a 100% renewable Massachusetts. It will help reduce the amount of energy dollars leaving the state - estimated at \$18 billion annually. It can add measurably to the Massachusetts passed legislation that mandates a gradual transition (1% per year) to renewable Class 1 New England-sourced energy. Besides Brookline, Boston, Cambridge and many other towns and cities are increasing their percentage of local renewable energy through aggregation contracts.

Critical to the success of an ambitious "green" municipal aggregation program is a robust effort to educate residents that reducing energy use will reduce cost and is an alternative to opting out of the aggregation contract. The plan should include options for those who cannot afford the cost of a higher percentage of renewable energy. Education must ensure that people are aware of how to opt down or out of paying higher rates, and that low-income households will see no change in their fuel subsidy.

In this letter, which incorporates recommendations submitted in a memo from the Newton Citizens Commission on Energy, members of the Coalition propose four options for Newton citizens through *Newton Power Choice*:

1. Receive a default level of Class 1 locally-sourced renewable electricity of 40% beyond that required under state law (52%) total
2. Opt-up to 100% renewable electricity
3. Opt-down and receive the state mandated minimum
4. Opt-out. Stay with the current supplier (Eversource basic) or other individually negotiated contract.

We urge the City of Newton to embrace this opportunity to commit to a high percentage of New England renewables in its aggregation contract, *Newton Power Choice*. Catastrophic climate-change induced events, both on the national and international stage, and a steady rise in sea levels, lend great urgency to the goal of becoming fossil fuel free as soon as possible.

Thank you.

**Coalition Members: 350Mass, Newton; Green Newton; Sierra Club, MA Chapter; Newton Citizens Commission on Energy; Mothers Out Front, Newton; ForwardMA; Newton CALM; Bike Newton; Newton High Performance Buildings Coalition; Mass Health Professionals for Clean Energy**