

The Future of Webster Woods

Newton Conservators

July 2017



We have a rare second chance to mitigate the impact of a bad decision made 60 years ago.



Webster Woods and Hammond Pond early in the 20th century

Overcoming a lawsuit by the City of Newton, in 1954 the Commonwealth sold part of Webster Woods to Congregation Mishkan Tefila.

MDC Votes to Sell Chestnut Hill Land to Roxbury Temple

The Metropolitan District Commission has voted 3 to 2 to sell 23 acres off Hammond Pond Parkway in Chestnut Hill to Temple Mishkan Tefila of Roxbury, it was announced yesterday.

The vote to sell the plot for \$9200 was taken Thursday, despite opposition from the Newton Board of Aldermen who wanted to reserve the MDC land for future recreational use.

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Boston Globe, July 31, 1954

Court Backs Sale of Newton Land to Temple Tefila

The city of Newton yesterday in Suffolk Superior Court lost its legal move to rescind or restrain sale of 23 acres of land on Hammond Pond Parkway, Newton, by the Metropolitan District Commission to Congregation Mishkan Tefila of Roxbury.

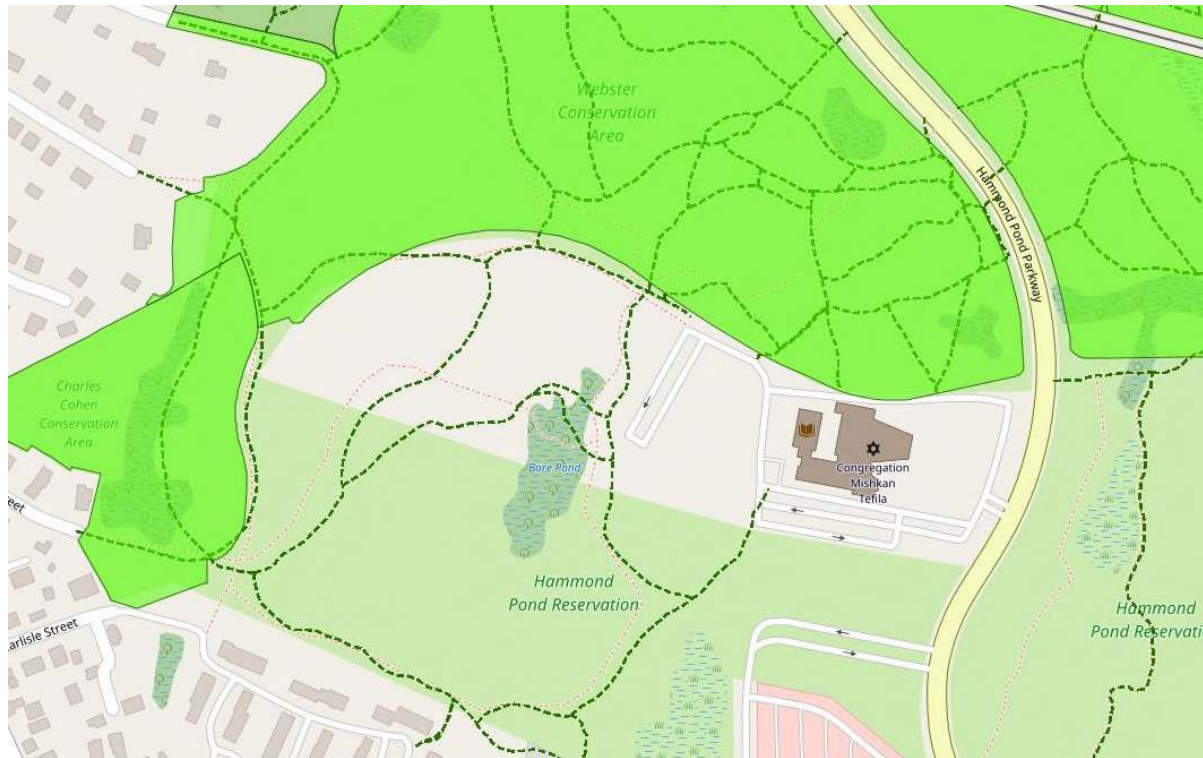
“The city of Newton yesterday in Suffolk Superior Court lost its legal move to rescind or restrain sale of 23 acres of land on Hammond Pond Parkway...”

Boston Globe, August 24, 1954

The land is in the heart of Webster Woods.



Hiking trails crisscross the land, which the congregation sold to Boston College in 2016.

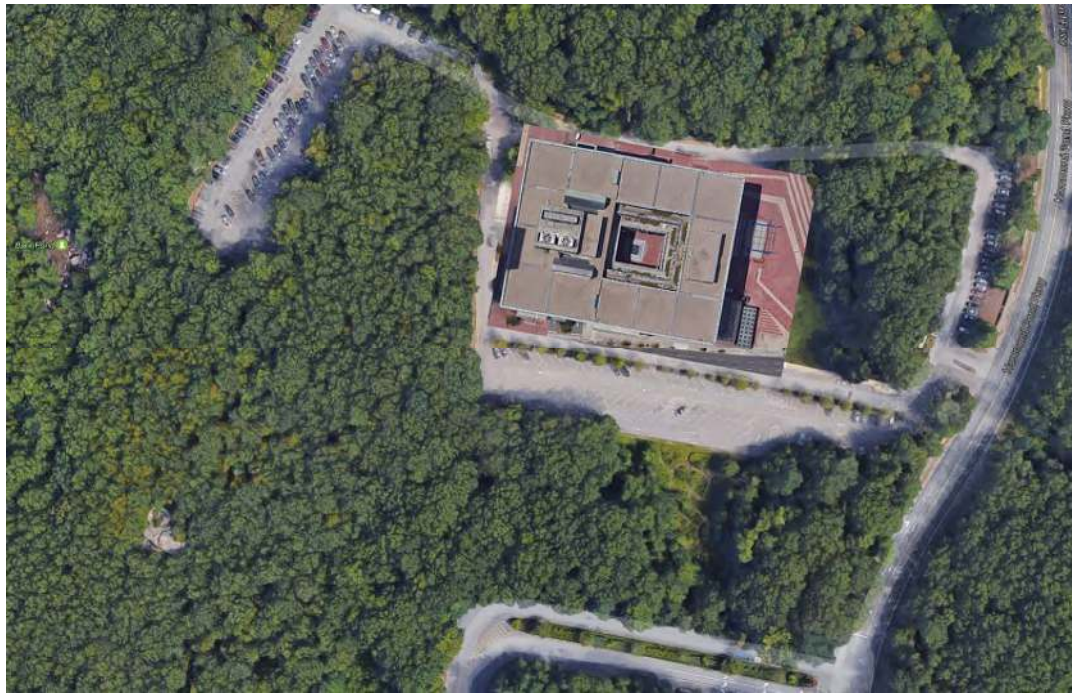


BC's plans are unknown, but development of the entire site has been proposed in the past.



Source: previous development plan presented to Temple Mishkan Tefila

A major building could be accommodated on the site of the temple.



The temple site with an aerial view of Boston City Hall at the same scale

The rear MASCO parking lot, west of the main building, is adjacent to the Bare Pond wetlands.



Bare Pond wetlands

MASCO parking lot



View of the MASCO (Medical Academic and Scientific Community Organization) parking lot. Shuttle buses take commuters to jobs in the Longwood Medical Area in Boston.



Bare Pond in the evening. Lights from the MASCO parking lot illuminate the trees at rear.

The Newton Conservators position

- Allow development replacing the temple buildings
- Remove and restore to a natural condition the MASCO parking lot adjacent to Bare Pond and the driveway that serves it
- Secure permanent protection, by either City purchase or conservation restriction, of all land to the west of the main development area, including the MASCO parking lot
- In addition, consider these possible changes:
 - removal, restoration, and permanent protection of the small MASCO parking lot next to Hammond Pond Parkway
 - removal, restoration, and permanent protection of the driveway to Hammond Pond Parkway
 - construction of a new access road leading to the existing mall driveway and traffic signal

Area to be preserved



Additional possibilities to consider

Remove parking lot

Provide access to existing driveway that enters Hammond Pond Parkway at traffic light



Remove small parking lot and hazardous entrance to parkway