



Sunday, October 20, 2019

Newton Conservators: Answers from City Council Candidates

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Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates – Alison Leary

September 2019

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Thank you.

1. Webster Woods

Mayor Fuller has asked the Community Preservation Committee and the City Council to authorize the issuance of bonds, to be repaid from Community Preservation Act revenue, for the purchase of 17 acres of Webster Woods from Boston College. (<https://newtonconservators.org/mayor-fuller-proposes-action-to-save-webster-woods/>) Boston College would retain ownership of the former temple building and the adjacent parking lots. Do you support this proposal?

As the largest tract of undeveloped land in Newton Webster Woods is a priority to preserve in perpetuity. The CPA was created for purposes just like this. I would fully support this proposal. Bonding also makes the good financial sense.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller’s letter on Webster Woods stated the following: “While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property’s 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City’s power of eminent domain.” If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city’s power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

I am a little wary of the taking by eminent domain as it can be a long and expensive process. But I also realize that the City has already been negotiating with Boston College for more than a year and progress has been slow. I became more concerned about the lack of progress when BC built a salt storage facility adjacent to the vernal pool which could cause contamination. If eminent domain is the only way the City can acquire or preserve this tract of open space then I would support it.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

Absolutely! I am a big fan of greenways and bike and pedestrian pathways. I attended the event at the Newton Free Library last January that explored creating such a Greenway and I very much enjoyed the panel discussion. I would strongly support and advocate for such a proposal. Outdoor walking and biking trails encourage people to get out of their car and get outside and contributes to public health goals and creates more public awareness for the work you do to protect greenspaces and wildlife habitat.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

Of course we should! As a Chair of the League of Women Voter's Environmental Committee I advocated for this along with other League members back in 2014. The adoption and protection of linear parks and aqueduct trails is part of the City's 2013-19 Recreation & Open Space Plan. I don't understand why we have not yet signed on. Signing the permit will bring the benefits of the trails to more people. The opening of these trails will expand and provide greater connections to our vital greenspaces.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

We need to update our open space plan. That would be a good start. I would consult with the Conservation Commission and of course with the Conservators to identify opportunities for protecting additional open space. This is getting harder to do in a largely built out city like Newton. We should also look at opportunities to regain and replace green spaces as part of any new development. I would like to see the "daylighting" of culverted portions of streams including South Meadow, Landry and Cheesecake Brook.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

I think you have identified the three most important open space initiatives. I am also interested in working with the developer of Riverside who has committed to an infusion of funds to improve the adjacent trails along the Charles River. It is also important to improve and protect our existing greenspaces, including improving wildlife habitat, removing invasive species and improving water quality.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

The budget is woefully inadequate and we have been underspending for years. I would like to see a significant increase in resources for open space management and would advocate for it in next year's budget.



Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates – Jake Auchincloss

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Yes.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller's letter on Webster Woods stated the following: "While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property's 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City's power of eminent domain." If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city's power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

I most certainly do.



Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates – Susan Albright

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Yes – I did support this.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller’s letter on Webster Woods stated the following: “While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property’s 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City’s power of eminent domain.” If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city’s power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

Yes I do support eminent domain for the woods.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

It would be wonderful to have this implemented.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

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Yes.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

Rather than go through possible acquisitions I refer you to sections 8 and 9 of the 2014-2020 Open Space plan which identifies our goals and hoped for acquisitions of open space. <http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/45077>. Whenever we have the opportunity to take on open space in Newton we have an obligation to do so.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

The amount the city puts in its budget to maintain its open space is not nearly enough. There is an amazing competition for the funds we have available to us. The best way to accomplish our goals for open space and conservation is oddly enough, through development. Through the “new growth” in revenue generated by development we can do more to preserve open space. Without new growth we will always find our selves with competing priorities with not enough funds. Shall we fix the roads? Shall we maintain the parks? Shall we fix our deteriorating buildings and make them more sustainable? The answer should be yes to all of these but we can only accomplish this by increasing the “pie” that we call our revenue – through development.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

Please see the answer to the prior question. We clearly do not provide enough funds to maintain the parks we have nor our conservation areas. We are burdened with putting an increasing amount of our revenue into our obligations, pensions and health benefits for retirees. We must have a complicated formula of increasing development – which provides an enlarged tax base while providing a laser-focus on both increasing and maintaining our open space.



Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates - Tarik Lucas

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Reluctantly yes. We have been talking about preserving Webster Woods for a number of years now. Everywhere we go, you can always be assured that you will see a Save Webster Woods lawn sign. If Newton is serious about the preservation of our parks and green space, then it is time to step up to the plate.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller’s letter on Webster Woods stated the following: “While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property’s 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City’s power of eminent domain.” If Newton is unable to negotiate

a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city's power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

Eminent Domain is a very controversial process. In the past, governments have used it as a tool to harm communities that are less affluent and communities of color. My family was evicted from their house in Boston several decades ago, because of eminent domain. I familiar with the suffering that eminent domain brings upon people. In this case Newton is not evicting the less affluent or communities of color. Eminent domain is still and will always be controversial, and the cost of the acquisition of Webster Woods is still largely unknown. That being said, I still reluctantly support this proposal.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

Any time we have a chance to create easier access for people to get around Newton without using a car, it must be explored and expanded. With the LFIA's zoning amendments to Riverside station, the Greenway will be a nice complement to the project.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

I would like to see how the Sudbury Aqueduct is used by other cities and towns. Find out what works and what doesn't make sense. Then find out what neighbors and abutters along the aqueduct would like to see. Then complete a fair vision process. After that process, the City should allow public access to the aqueduct.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately-owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

Carlson Woods is in desperate need of preservation. If the land is developed on Carlson Woods, then the neighborhood of Oak Hill Park will be a major flood zone; ruining the historic neighborhood.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

Albemarle Park should NOT be used to create an expanded senior center or NewCAL. Albemarle Park and all parks in Newton should remain parks or open space.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

No. Newton is the Garden City. Access to parks and green space is one of the many reasons why I moved here. With the population set to increase in Newton over the decades to come, we need to ensure that anyone who wants to use our wonderful parks, be given access to safe playing fields that are properly maintained.

Jennifer Bentley

1. Webster Woods

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I think we should obtain Webster woods; it is important that we retain and protect as much green/open space in Newton as we can. We should have done it years ago (under Mayor Warren).

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller's letter on Webster Woods stated the following: "While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property's 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City's power of eminent domain." If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city's power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

Again, I think we should obtain Webster Woods, but we need to carefully consider the cost of going after this property through eminent domain. We should try to negotiate harder with BC to purchase this land without taking it to court, which will be very costly.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

I support creating a network of trails and green spaces for residents and visitors to use throughout the year. It would be nice to access these trails and bring some more green space access to our residents.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

Absolutely. Opening up the Aqueduct will create a safe and peaceful walking/biking trail through Newton to towns beyond.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately-owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

I think we should try to purchase Carlson Woods along the neighborhood of Oak Hill Park.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

I would like to see the City emphasize the creation and/or conservation of more green space in the City. Over the years, I have seen lots built out to their fullest, former conservation land rezoned for building, and developments encroaching on the limited green space we still have available.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

I feel that the City Council needs to ensure that our naturally wooded sanctuaries are protected against future development, because the residents shouldn't need to fight so hard against the destruction of green spaces in their neighborhoods. We should dedicate more resources to making sure our parks and playing fields are well maintained, and concentrate on not letting our open and green space not get developed.

Newton Conservators candidate questionnaire

Andrea Kelley, Newton City Council, At-large from Ward 3

1. Webster Woods

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College. (<https://newtonconservators.org/mayor-fuller-proposes-action-to-save-webster-woods/>) Boston College would retain ownership of the former temple building and the adjacent parking lots. Do you support this proposal?

I support the preservation of the open space at Webster Woods. A solution that allows BC to keep and use the former Mishkan Tefila structure and parking lots makes sense, while preserving the rest of the 17 acres of woods, trails, vernal pools etc. for conservation and passive recreation uses. This is clearly an appropriate use of CPA funds as one of the designated uses. If the CPC determines that it is financially feasible to bond this acquisition, I will be fully behind it.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller's letter on Webster Woods stated the following: "While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property's 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City's power of eminent domain." If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city's power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

If the CPC determines that bonding this acquisition is do-able, I am all for it. Open space is one of the crucial assets.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

Yes very much. One of the most exciting parts of the Riverside proposal for me are the new and enhanced connections to the Greenway, to the Charles, to walking, hiking and biking trails. Accessing the large and varied green spaces around and behind the Riverside station and proposed development has terrific potential.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

Absolutely. The aqueduct system is ripe for resident enjoyment for walking, bird watching, etc.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

Areas to keep in mind for future acquisition could be golf courses, schools (Mt. Ida and Andover Newton for instance might have come under consideration to acquire portions of) and religious institutions that aim to sell off all or parts of their property at some point in the future.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

This is not directly about preserving green or open space, but the use of chemicals, pesticides and fertilizers on golf courses is very concerning and I wish Newton had some control over that. The chemicals get into the underground aquifer, nearby water bodies, and our storm water system, polluting them and creating algae blooms. As stewards of all green space, how they are maintained is a connected issue environmentally.



Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates

- Pam Wright

September 2019

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Yes, I support the purchase of Webster Woods. We have only a finite amount of green and open space and we need to preserve as much as possible.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

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Yes, I support buying Webster Woods by eminent domain. It's unfortunate Mayor Warren did not buy it when it was made available to Newton.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

Yes, I support the proposed Riverside Greenway. More public access to the river is always great and more people would have an easier access to the Charles River path into Boston.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

I support Newton obtaining public access to the Sudbury aqueduct.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

If schools or religious institutions will sell off their property in the future, Newton should acquire and preserve that open space.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

To help reduce climate change we should preserve as much as the natural land cover as possible. Impermeable surfaces will increase flooding. We should work with homeowners and businesses to convert back to natural land cover where it makes sense.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

I don't feel the budget and attention has been adequately given to parks and open space maintenance and management. For example, the infield of the softball field near my home, used often, is growing grass. I've never seen this field in such bad condition in the 20 years that I have lived here.



Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates - Andreae Downs

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Yes

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

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Yes

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

Yes. Absolutely. There are at least three interruptions in what could be a natural, in fact fantastic, walk or bike to transit (or all the way in to Boston) on trails here—to Riverside, under the commuter rail

tracks, across the river to the LaSalle Boathouse (and better parking) and to the Marriott and the Commonwealth Avenue Carriageway as well as the Charles River Greenway system. These projects could unblock these and make carbon-free travel a reality for so many, particularly Newton residents.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

I facilitated a public meeting Sept. 26 on acquiring the permit for the southern part of the Sudbury—the part that currently has some fencing. Our neighborhood currently uses a path over the Sudbury, and I would like to get an additional permit to allow the neighbors to build box stairs to prevent slips and falls—as well as erosion. The northern section of the Sudbury—from the T tracks to Lakeview Road—is already mostly open. It would be nice to have that open, but the neighbors and abutters are nervous, and we need to work with them.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

I have been working to extend the Upper Falls Greenway to Curtis street. I would like to see it extend into Needham also.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

I would like to see our park spaces better maintained and am working with the Friends of Cold Spring Park and Friends of Hemlock Gorge to secure funding for both. Our aqueduct trails and the Upper Falls Greenway need regular attention, box stairs to link to conservation areas along the river (UFG) and box stairs to allow our older residents access to the Cochituate.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

No. Please help us councilors to identify good candidates for Parks & Recreation Commission openings and help us advocate for more of the city budget to go to maintaining passive recreation assets.



Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates – Deb Crossley

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Yes.

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Yes.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

Yes.

Our natural areas and pathways through them should be made and contiguous where possible and more accessible to residents. This may happen more quickly if the Riverside mixed-use development is approved at a scale where the project can contribute meaningfully to connecting these pathways. In addition, I would like to see river crossings for pedestrians and cyclists repaired – a least one – in the Upper Falls to Needham area. This may happen where the pathway crossed Christina Street if the Greenway is extended through the remainder of the CrossPoint properties and along the old HC Stark building to Christina Street. The Upper Falls Greenway should a well be extended through to Winchester Street to access the Highlands T.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

Yes.

This has been a long time waiting. I supported doing this with the previous administration, until they took a step backward when there was a bit of protest from abutters. People who live near these trails normally love them, and their properties become more desirable as a result.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

We should keep our eye on golf courses, in particular, if one should decide to close. I believe they are all in residential zones, so a zone change would have to be considered. To serve multiple needs, portion of such land could be devoted to clustered community housing and/or active recreation, so as to preserve maximum open space while addressing other facility and housing needs. A funding package could then include CPA monies, and perhaps inclusionary funds, and other federal funds as well.

The 2014-2020 Open Space Plan does a good job cataloguing large and small opportunities for open space acquisitions, conservation restrictions and park management needs. See map and descriptive matrices begins on page 93.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

Again, please see the Open Space Plan.

In addition, I'd like us to pay more attention to open space *within* the built environment, both where pocket parks would be a welcome relief in inner suburban areas – and as well how to treat open space in more heavily developed mixed use areas. How we treat our streetscapes and spaces between buildings, how we site buildings to provide gathering places, public plazas with shade trees and planted elements to provide a bit of nature relief – is increasingly important as the city grows. Access to and placement of outdoor spaces in denser built environments that carefully integrate green spaces can be calming wonderful spaces to gather. We have been increasingly focused on such spaces as we review developments in Land Use committee.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

No. – The budget for maintaining park and recreation lands has been chronically poor. Our saying at home is “life is maintenance” – and I believe that proper stewardship requires regular, careful and more robust maintenance of the places we share. It is also the most sustainable approach to managing scarce city resources, and long term, the most fiscally wise approach.

That said, I am painfully aware of the stressors on the city budget. Two major liabilities in particular: Decades of underfunding pension, healthcare and other post-employment benefits. As we try to remain disciplined and pay this down in a meaningful way (Fuller plan), this debt represents a huge and unyielding lead weight on other needed investments. Second, For the past ten years the Council and two mayors have been investing more heavily in repairing infrastructure – another liability the city must catch up on. I have been a leader on developing strategic plans to rehabilitate water and sewer systems and a few years later, the SIIP – storm water management plan, which are and will continue to be critical to protecting water quality in the Charles River and Crystal Lake. I have also been driving forward numerous energy efficiency investments, critical to reducing carbon emissions and decreasing dependence on fossil fuels. I support our increased investments in roadway repaving, \traffic calming and sidewalk repair, and the more robust ongoing maintenance programs that go with that – to make our streets and sidewalks safer for people, and extend the life of those investments. I supported increasing tree crews and improved management of our “urban forest”. –

Still, a steady increase in in field and public open space maintenance should be part of every budget, and/or we need to find additional sources of revenue to improve these programs.



Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates -Alicia Bowman

September 2019

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Thank you.

1. Webster Woods

Mayor Fuller has asked the Community Preservation Committee and the City Council to authorize the issuance of bonds, to be repaid from Community Preservation Act revenue, for the purchase of 17 acres of Webster Woods from Boston College. (<https://newtonconservators.org/mayor-fuller-proposes-action-to-save-webster-woods/>) Boston College would retain ownership of the former temple building and the adjacent parking lots. Do you support this proposal?

I support the preservation of Webster Woods by the City of Newton. I am however, concerned that the City may have to pay a very dear price to get ownership, either through a deal with Boston College or by eminent domain. I have already heard concerns from residents across the city that open space preservation in their neighborhood might be negatively impacted by this purchase. Residents would like more information on how this project financing would work and we should be working to help residents understand the value to the entire city of saving Webster Woods.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller’s letter on Webster Woods stated the following: “While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property’s 17+

acres of pristine woods through the City's power of eminent domain." If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city's power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

Eminent domain will likely take years to settle so I hope that it will not come to that, but yes I would support eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

I fully support the proposed Riverside Greenway. I have been a member of the Riverside Greenway Working Group from the beginning. This project has amazing potential to provide recreational paths in the Lower Falls and Auburndale neighborhoods mostly along the Charles River connecting to paths in Wellesley and Weston. There are multiple places along the planed routes where green space would be created or made available to be used. The section along Commonwealth Avenue would create more green space and safer access to public parks as well as connect to protected multiuse paths planned west into Natick. The greenway also would provide important transportation connectivity from Lower Falls to the Riverside Station, the Auburndale CR (Worcester Line to South Station) and even the Brandeis CR (Fitchburg Line to Porter Sq/North Station).

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

The aqueduct could be an amazing resource for increasing the number of people walking for exercise and for local trips to school and errands. Permitting of the aqueduct has some advantages to the residents as it would give us legal permission to maintain and potentially beautify the area and certainly make minor upgrade like stairs to make it safe to cross. There are sections where neighbors have expressed concerns about what would happen if it became heavily used. This is where the city could provide assistance in establishing a check in process. Similar paths in Newton have been approved and generally well received once completed.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

I would like to see opportunities taken to create more pedestrian connectivity through neighborhoods from cul-de-sacs and dead-ends and large commercial properties. Also explore opportunities to create pocket parks when redeveloping commercial spaces and linear parks when reconstructing streets.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

I think we should be looking to plant even more trees in the city, in open spaces and small parks and along the streets.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

Funding for parks and open space maintenance does not seem sufficient for the needs of the city. Climate change will only increase maintenance funding needed. Parks and open space are critical to the people across the city for their health, mental wellbeing and sense of community.



Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates – Greg Schwartz

September 2019

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Thank you.

1. Webster Woods

Mayor Fuller has asked the Community Preservation Committee and the City Council to authorize the issuance of bonds, to be repaid from Community Preservation Act revenue, for the purchase of 17 acres of Webster Woods from Boston College. (<https://newtonconservators.org/mayor-fuller-proposes-action-to-save-webster-woods/>) Boston College would retain ownership of the former temple building and the adjacent parking lots. Do you support this proposal?

Answer: YES. I believe this is a unique and historic opportunity to acquire and protect an expansive area of woodland that cannot be replaced if developed upon.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller’s letter on Webster Woods stated the following: “While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property’s 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City’s power of eminent domain.” If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city’s power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

YES. While eminent domain is not a process to be entered into lightly, this situation warrants a public taking if Boston College does not come to a mutually acceptable agreement with Newton.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

YES. This potential connection would enable seamless walking and jogging trails between Lyons Field and Lower Falls.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

YES. The city should not miss the opportunity to increase access to walk along the aqueduct.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

NO, not that I am currently aware of.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

NOT at the moment.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

One area in which the City could do a better job of managing its open spaces are the many fields in our parks that are used for sports programming. Due to a lack of planning, coordination, and funding, many of the athletic fields have degraded to a point where their condition is not safe for sports activities such as soccer. I and a number of other councilors (including Alison Leary and Josh Krintzman) supported a budget resolution last year to increase funding for maintenance of these fields. We are also pushing for a more comprehensive assessment of the current state of the City's athletic fields, a prioritization of those most in need of repair, and a long term plan for rehabilitating and maintaining the fields.



Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates – Victoria Danberg

1. Webster Woods

Mayor Fuller has asked the Community Preservation Committee and the City Council to authorize the issuance of bonds, to be repaid from Community Preservation Act revenue, for the purchase of 17 acres of Webster Woods from Boston College. (<https://newtonconservators.org/mayor-fuller-proposes-action-to-save-webster-woods/>) Boston College would retain ownership of the former temple building and the adjacent parking lots. Do you support this proposal?

Yes, I fully support and have from the start, the proposal for the City to purchase the entire 17 acres from Boston College. These rare and fragile woods support an ecosystem we cannot lose to neglect or development. The City should attain ownership of the property and place it under its protective care to be cared for and enjoyed as passive recreation by the public.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller's letter on Webster Woods stated the following: "While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property's 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City's power of eminent domain." If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city's power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

Yes, I support going the eminent domain route if negotiations with Boston College fail. While a mutually agreed upon purchase remains likely the least complicated route to the City's acquisition of the property, I am not surprised by or opposed to the Mayor's initiating the eminent domain process. The City may benefit from a valuation of the property by a jury.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

Yes, I fully support the Riverside Greenway. The extension of connections between Lyons Field and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge will bring wonderful quiet pleasure to generations of Newtonians. State Rep. Kay Khan

has provided active leadership in promoting the rail trail in Lower Falls. We need to support its extension.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

Yes, Newton should obtain a permit from the MWRA that authorizes public use of the Sudbury Aqueduct. Again, the aqueduct is a wonderful resource in the middle of our City that would afford a way to connect to walking trails all the way to Framingham. Already many towns have gotten such permission. It is time for Newton to step up and do the same.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

I know of two others that would be good acquisitions: One is at the end of Islington Rd. and the other is on the Charles River. (I don't know the addresses off-hand).

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

Our first priority should be the acquisition of Webster Woods. After that is done, we should look at what other parcels may come up for sale, especially along the Charles River.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

No, I would like to see a more robust financial commitment by the City for maintenance and management of City parks and open space. CPA funding may not be used for this purpose.

The City budget, like any other budget, is a value judgement. There are always more valued programs, services and assets in the City that merit additional support than there is funding available. That being said, I believe that an increase in funding is overdue for maintenance of our parks, playing fields and open space for needed upgrades and to prevent further deterioration.



Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates – Becky Grossman

September 2019

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1. Webster Woods

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Yes.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller’s letter on Webster Woods stated the following: “While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property’s 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City’s power of eminent domain.” If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city’s power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

Yes.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

Yes.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

Yes.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

I believe we should be looking to preserve and create open space in the city, and I'd refer to the Open Space Plan for other parcels to consider.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

We should continue to look for opportunities to preserve and expand open space and recreational space in considering major development proposals.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

The budget is not sufficient, though I think our city employees and volunteer commissions do excellent work and deserve our thanks for working very hard to maintain our parks and open space as best they can within the budget they are given. We have many parks and fields that are flooded and inadequately maintained in other ways. When my daughter used to play kindergarten soccer at Richardson Field, we'd all be covered in dirt up to our knees because the field lacked grass. The field adjacent to Ward School, which my children attend, is often flooded. And Lyons Field is regularly out of commission due to flooding. That isn't right, and I'd love to increase the funding we put toward park and open space maintenance and management.

1. Webster Woods

Mayor Fuller has asked the Community Preservation Committee and the City Council to authorize the issuance of bonds, to be repaid from Community Preservation Act revenue, for the purchase of 17 acres of Webster Woods from Boston College. (<https://newtonconservators.org/mayor-fuller-proposes-action-to-save-webster-woods/>) Boston College would retain ownership of the former temple building and the adjacent parking lots. Do you support this proposal? **Yes**

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller's letter on Webster Woods stated the following: "While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property's 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City's power of eminent domain." If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city's power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods? **Yes**

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal? **Yes**

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same? **Yes**

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve? **I would look to our 2014-2020 Open Space Plan to identify potential acquisition targets. I support ensuring Newton continue to be referred to as the Garden City, which means advocating for, protecting, as well as increasing usable open space.**

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council? **I would continue to advocate for more funds to go to use on conservation and recreational concerns.**

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area? Budgetary concerns are always a balance. In the last budget discussion, I supported allocating more funds to recreation upkeep, and would continue to advocate for this, and other funds to be allocated for open space in the future.

Rick Lipof**1. Webster Woods**

Mayor Fuller has asked the Community Preservation Committee and the City Council to authorize the issuance of bonds, to be repaid from Community Preservation Act revenue, for the purchase of 17 acres of Webster Woods from Boston College. (<https://newtonconservators.org/mayor-fuller-proposes-action-to-save-webster-woods/>) Boston College would retain ownership of the former temple building and the adjacent parking lots. Do you support this proposal?

I support the concept and ideal. I am open to all possibilities as to how to structure the purchase.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

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I do.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

I do.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

Investigation and feedback from Newton citizens is necessary but I would be open to the idea.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

None specific, but we should take advantage of any opportunities to acquire open space as they arise.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

Continue to support the maintenance and upkeep of trails and find innovative ways to bring awareness of the wonderful trails. Supporting art installations such as the one in Kennard park last year.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

We can always do better. Budget constraints don't make it easy to do all we want to do.



Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates **Maria S Greenberg**

Candidate for re-election Ward 1 Councilor

September 2019

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1. Webster Woods

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(<https://newtonconservators.org/mayor-fuller-proposes-action-to-save-webster-woods/>) Boston College would retain ownership of the former temple building and the adjacent parking lots. Do you support this proposal? **Yes**

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller’s letter on Webster Woods stated the following: “While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property’s 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City’s power of eminent domain.” If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city’s power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods? **Yes**

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal? **Yes**

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same? **Yes**

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve? **I am wondering if there parcels of land within the 3 large Newton golf courses that are not being used by these golf courses that could be acquired and preserved.**

I would also insist that the open spaces planned for large develop projects be preserved as open space in perpetuity. In addition, these open spaces when possible should enhance the connectivity of our city's trails and greenspaces.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

Because of Climate Change our area must deal with the negative impacts of more extreme storms and flooding. I am concerned with soil erosion into our streams and into the Charles River, clogging our waterways with increased pollution and sedimentation with detrimental effects on that fragile ecosystem.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?**No, I do not feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and**

management are sufficient. I understand there are constraints on our City's budget but I promise to advocate for more funding to preserve, maintain and protect our greenspaces and support environmentally policies and practices at the municipal level.

Newton Conservators Candidate Questionnaire

Emily Norton, Ward 2 Councilor

1. Webster Woods

Mayor Fuller has asked the Community Preservation Committee and the City Council to authorize the issuance of bonds, to be repaid from Community Preservation Act revenue, for the purchase of 17 acres of Webster Woods from Boston College.

(<https://newtonconservators.org/mayor-fuller-proposes-action-to-save-webster-woods/>) Boston College would retain ownership of the former temple building and the adjacent parking lots. Do you support this proposal?

I support this proposal, but would like to see the City also take the back parking lot where the salt shed is located, as any impervious surface is detrimental to the local area (including the nearby vernal pool), especially with a salt shed located on it.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller's letter on Webster Woods stated the following: "While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property's 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City's power of eminent domain." If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city's power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

Yes. As the City's Open Space plan notes, "Parcels that are contiguous with existing conservation lands should be considered for elevated priority." That certainly describes Webster Woods, sandwiched between Newton conservation land and DCR land. I think it is unfortunate Mayor Warren did not buy the property when Mishkan Tefila first approached him, but here we are. Boston College "Sustainability Mission Statement" reads: "Boston College recognizes that there are limits to the world's resources. To ensure the quality of life for future generations, Boston College seeks to demonstrate leadership in environmental stewardship and sustainability, living the motto 'ever to excel.' The university is committed to conserving resources and reducing the impact that its services and activities place on the environment." When I read that I do not understand why BC is not offering to place this land under a conservation agreement without the City or anyone else having to prod them. It seems hypocritical to me that they have such a strong sustainability statement and yet want to keep open their options to destroy these incredibly valuable 17 acres of forest.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

Yes. In fact I spoke in favor of this at a panel discussion at the Newton Free Library in January 2019. Not only do I support this project as a Newton City Councilor, but also from my perch as Executive Director of Charles River Watershed Association where we advocate for improved public access to a cleaner Charles River.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (

<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

I support this idea and would like to know how the other communities have reconciled public right of ways that go through a private property to see if there is a way to do this well.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

I support acquiring and preserving all the parcels recommended in the City's Open Space Plan. I am grateful to the Conservators for the huge part they've played in both drafting the plan as well as placing Conservation Restrictions on open space. I look forward to working with the Conservators on this.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

Climate change is bringing more intense rain events, more frequent drought and more extreme heat to the Northeast, including Newton. This brings additional urgency to the need to preserve natural land cover. Impermeable surfaces such as roads and buildings cause more flooding and heat island effect, as well as water quality degradation to the Charles River and its tributaries such as Cheesecake Brook. As City Councilor I will pursue additional limitations on removing trees, including on private property; opportunities to daylight streams; and also look for ways to create pocket parks and preserve what open space we have left, especially on the North side of the city (where I live), which has less green space than other areas.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

I do not feel we value our parks and open space to the extent we should. For example, I do not think parkland should have even been on the list of options as a site for NewCal. I also opposed carving a parking lot out of Cabot Park when the Cabot School renovation was underway, and

was grateful that the Parks and Recreation Commission voted that down. I would support more investment in our parks and open space, including planting more native species and pollinator friendly plantings.



Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates - Bryan Barash

September 2019

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Thank you.

1. Webster Woods

Mayor Fuller has asked the Community Preservation Committee and the City Council to authorize the issuance of bonds, to be repaid from Community Preservation Act revenue, for the purchase of 17 acres of Webster Woods from Boston College. (<https://newtonconservators.org/mayor-fuller-proposes-action-to-save-webster-woods/>) Boston College would retain ownership of the former temple building and the adjacent parking lots. Do you support this proposal?

Webster Woods is an important natural resource as part of the broader Hammond Pond woodland, and I support preserving it for future generations. Newton has precious little green space left; we need to preserve what we have and hopefully expand on it in the future.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller’s letter on Webster Woods stated the following: “While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property’s 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City’s power of eminent domain.” If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city’s power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

Speaking as an attorney, I believe that eminent domain is an extreme measure that should be a last resort. As I understand it, despite the city's statements that it would engage in a "friendly" eminent domain process paying full market value, Boston College has stated (Boston Globe, October 1, 2019) that it views eminent domain as a hostile act by the city and will fight it. I would prefer that the city continue to try to reach an agreement with Boston College suitable to both sides and avoid a drawn out legal battle, with the accompanying legal fees. A drawn out legal battle is not a good use of our limited dollars for preservation.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

I strongly support the Riverside Greenway proposal. There once were trails and footbridges over the river all along the Charles from Norumbega Park to Lower Falls. We need additional greenways so that Newton residents can get out in nature and enjoy the river that runs along so much of our city's borders. For those residents looking for longer walks and runs, the more extensive the network of interconnected paths, the better.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

Yes. Projects like the Bay Circuit Trail show that Massachusetts communities are finally starting to get more serious about the need for trails, and recognize the potential for former railway beds and aqueduct crests to provide ready-made walkways. It is a no-brainer for Newton to ask the MWRA to authorize public use of the Sudbury Aqueduct, given the benefits of longer uninterrupted trails to the community and the fact that many walkers in Newton already are using the aqueduct.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

I have a particular interest in identifying open space parcels in Ward 2 and on the north side generally, where there is greater population density and relatively few potential sites for publicly accessible open space. I would like to see, perhaps by easement, greater access to the Cheesecake Brook for a more extensive pathway along the brook. I would also like to see pocket parks in densely populated areas of Newton, perhaps by identifying privately held residential parcels that are not currently being used for housing purposes. One example: A wooded parcel at Washington Street and Court Street is in the process of becoming a parking lot, I would've preferred to see it preserved and turned into public space.



Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates - Carolina Ventura

September 2019

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Thank you.

1. Webster Woods

Mayor Fuller has asked the Community Preservation Committee and the City Council to authorize the issuance of bonds, to be repaid from Community Preservation Act revenue, for the purchase of 17 acres of Webster Woods from Boston College.

(<https://newtonconservators.org/mayor-fuller-proposes-action-to-save-webster-woods/>) Boston College would retain ownership of the former temple building and the adjacent parking lots. Do you support this proposal?

Yes, but I am concerned about the cost. Before making a final decision, we need more information on the financing of the acquisition and the CPC’s determination of the feasibility of a bond issuance.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller’s letter on Webster Woods stated the following: “While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property’s 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City’s power of eminent domain.” If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city’s power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

Eminent domain is a lengthy and expensive process with a risky outcome. The construction of a road-salt storage facility next to a vernal pool is an immediate concern that will not be dealt with during a long legal battle. Before resorting to eminent domain, I support returning to the negotiating table with B.C.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

Yes—we should increase bike and pedestrian paths, improve access to conservation areas and the Charles River, and connect with other walking and cycling trails. The Greenway will also provide a sorely needed link to public transit.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

Yes, let's make full use of this wonderful resource. As with the Riverside Greenway, Aqueduct trails will connect with other walking trails and increase recreational opportunities.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

The City's Open Space Plan is our best guide to acquiring and preserving land. Ward 3, which I will represent if elected, is a dense part of Newton that would benefit from pocket parks and a linear park along Washington Street. We should also maximize access to and use of Cheesecake Brook.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

I'm relieved that the locale of NewCAL in Albemarle Field is being reconsidered—we should never consider building in parks and green spaces. Many of our parks need better maintenance. Captain Ryan Park next to the Police Station and the fields next to Franklin School, both in Ward 3, are good examples of parks that could benefit from improvement and increased maintenance. Having recently attended the Wellington Parkfest, I was reminded what a wonderful resource a well-maintained local park can be.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

The budget is not sufficient and more funding is absolutely necessary. Obviously there are budget constraints, but we need to increase park and open space funding. As I said in Question 6, many of our parks are not well maintained, and we must prevent further deterioration.

Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates — Julia Malakie, Ward 3

September 2019

1. Webster Woods

Mayor Fuller has asked the Community Preservation Committee and the City Council to authorize the issuance of bonds, to be repaid from Community Preservation Act revenue, for the purchase of 17 acres of Webster Woods from Boston College. (<https://newtonconservators.org/mayor-fuller-proposes-action-to-save-webster-woods/>) Boston College would retain ownership of the former temple building and the adjacent parking lots. Do you support this proposal?

Yes. I would also support acquisition of the interior parking lot, since its new use as a salt storage site is likely to do actual damage to the abutting land. Ideally, the asphalt could be removed and recycled, and the area returned to a natural state through planting appropriate native species. The city and the Conservators have gone to great efforts to restore Woodcock Meadow in Nahanton Park, because it was the only warm-season grassland left in Newton. This parking lot, a level area surrounded by woods, could be an opportunity to create another such meadow.

Bonding will spread the acquisition cost of this ‘forever’ asset over time, and help ensure CPA funds will still be available for open space acquisitions in other parts of the city.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller’s letter on Webster Woods stated the following: “While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property’s 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City’s power of eminent domain.” If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city’s power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

Yes, as I said during the LWV/NewTV debate shortly before the mayor’s decision was announced, eminent domain is our backstop to ensure that we can protect this land without paying an extortionate price. It’s unfortunate that we are in the position of digging ourselves out of a hole, in effect, created by the previous administration’s lack of interest in Mishkan Tefila’s apparent offer to sell to the city.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

Yes. We are lucky in Newton to be bordered on so many sides by the Charles River and conservation land. Creating longer trails with beautiful water as well as forest views will be a great recreational asset for residents.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

Yes, and I understand the city is proceeding with this request. As with the Riverside Greenway, adding walking routes is an overall benefit. The city should be sure to give adequate notice to abutters and work to mitigate any concerns about safety/loss of backyard privacy.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

The city should be prepared to purchase the Eversource parcels at 53-59 Auburn St, abutting Reverend Ford Playground, when Eversource no longer needs it (as was forecast several years ago). Combined with the existing playground and the former Parks & Rec headquarters at 70 Crescent St, this would create an enlarged park with two public access points, instead of the current situation of access only via the Myrtle Baptist Church driveway. This would somewhat alleviate the deficit of public open space on the north side. (The National Recreation Association recommends 15 acres/1000 people. Ward 3 Precincts 1 & 4 have less than 3.5 acres/1000. Ward 3 Precincts 2 & 3 have less than 10 acres/1000.)

I would like to see at least one north-side Community Garden, so residents in the most densely developed area of Newton don't have to drive to the other end of the city to have a community garden plot. 56 Farwell Street abutting the Charles River was a missed opportunity. Over two acres of mostly open land that was in the 2007-2014 Open Space Plan, it would have been a great location for a neighborhood park including a community garden, but instead it was purchased by a developer to be a subdivision.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

As noted above, some of the most densely developed areas of the city have the least amount of public open space to serve their residents. I would advocate for prioritizing improvements to existing parks such as the River Street Playground, and the Franklin School playground, as well as looking for more opportunities to create even small pocket parks. Wellington Park in West Newton is a great example of how parks bring a community together, and more neighborhoods should have such an asset.

We should not be putting "NewCAL" on parkland whether it's taking green space or hardscape facilities like basketball and tennis courts. Parkland is not "free"; it's value is what it would cost to replicate it. And at Albemarle, contrary to how it's being presented, actual green space would be lost between the pool and the courts.

I would like more support from the city, and the state (since I see garlic mustard and Japanese knotweed, to name just two, everywhere I travel around Lowell), for efforts to control invasive species. With the exception of invasive aquatic species in the Charles River where I believe there have been some state grants, this overwhelming task has fallen to a relatively small number of resident volunteers, when we need an army.

I also hope that more care is taken with the use of herbicides, since the blackgum tupelo on the grounds of City Hall was almost killed inadvertently when its suckers were mistaken for unwanted trees, and cut and painted with Roundup.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient?

The budget is not adequate, and parks and open space maintenance should be made a higher priority. I am most familiar with the street tree situation. We once had over 40,000 street trees. We now have about 21,000, and only last fiscal year have the city and Newton Tree Conservancy combined been able to plant more street trees than were lost. Because of stricter planting distances (e.g. not putting trees five feet away from hydrants and utility poles anymore), and loss of berm space to wider driveways and more development, there are now only an estimated 35,000 plantable street tree spots. With more people now appreciating the climate change mitigation benefits of trees, it's time to step up planting numbers to restore our missing street tree canopy, but this will require increased budget, as watering is at capacity with current staff, and more young trees will need structural pruning for long term health.

Chris Markiewicz

1. Webster Woods

Mayor Fuller has asked the Community Preservation Committee and the City Council to authorize the issuance of bonds, to be repaid from Community Preservation Act revenue, for the purchase of 17 acres of Webster Woods from Boston College. (<https://newtonconservators.org/mayor-fuller-proposes-action-to-save-webster-woods/>) Boston College would retain ownership of the former temple building and the adjacent parking lots. Do you support this proposal?

Yes. I think there is probably work to do here to get to a final proposal and there may be some changes required, but in principal I support the City acquiring land that can be conserved, in fact I have advocated for that with respect to other needs that we have.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller's letter on Webster Woods stated the following: "While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property's 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City's power of eminent domain." If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city's power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

I hope that this can be negotiated further without expensive and time consuming litigation. I understand that BC has plans to grow as do the other large institutions in Cambridge and Boston, but I also see the impact that splitting the woods would have. As I wrote above, I don't want to build on any green space in Newton, I believe in re-use and re-habilitation of existing structures.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

I have been attendance at many of the meetings and walks for various parts of this run. I have offered amendments to the budget to address the drainage problems at Lyons Field; the flooding there impacts the trail. I am 100% behind making the connections through Auburndale and Lower Falls to make that run accessible to all. I am waiting to see what the Mass DOT work on Comm Av can do to help support all of this and will support the expansion of green there as well as the safety improvements that will help make this run work.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

Yes

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

I don't have a specific site in mind, I know there are scattered small parcels which could be like pocket parks. Unfortunately these are usually very expensive for what they are. We have properties that we own that could be improved. One that comes to mind is on Pine St. in Auburndale. I have walked that parcel and talked to abutters and other councilors about cleaning up that area. Unfortunately that space is probably polluted and the cost to remediate the land and return it to a park/play area would be significant. Nonetheless it is a resource to be tapped and we should look for ways to create the funding. Incidentally, there has been a private donation offered

for that parcel's rehabilitation. While the amount, though large, is still not enough to make a significant dent in a project that would probably cost millions, it is indicative that there are many ways that a funding package could be assembled.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

I am looking into ways to strengthen our ability to protect mature trees that are removed to facilitate development on private land. While I respect property rights we are simply going backwards here, I don't have the answer/method here yet, but we need to pay more attention to this. On another thread, we have a real problem with a number of invasive species. Many of these have habitats on private land and proliferate or reseed from there. We need more education and tools to help our residents with the initiative to clean some of this up.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

Every year when we review the Mayor's budget my colleagues and I ask for more funding for Parks and Rec. They do a good job but could use more resources given how much there is to do in this fairly large land area. As far as additional attention, if we can muster the resources, we should increase maintenance of our playing fields and work to eliminate invasive species in our parks and waterways



Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates – **Bill Humphrey**

September 2019

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Thank you.

1. Webster Woods

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Yes, and I would also be interested in exploring acquisition of the temple site and parking lots in addition to the woods themselves, since there might be some downsides to not acquiring all of it together, and we might miss some key opportunities. I have heard some people float this possibility.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller’s letter on Webster Woods stated the following: “While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property’s 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City’s power of eminent domain.” If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city’s power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

Yes – the construction of the road salt storage site makes clear time is of the essence.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

Yes

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

Yes, and we are on the verge of doing so for at least a pilot section between Rte 9 and Eliot Station.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

In general, whenever the city has the opportunity to acquire and preserve/protect privately-owned open or green space, I believe it should do so. I have heard some specific discussion about trying to acquire privately-held easements along the Sudbury Aqueduct at the points that are no longer owned by the MWRA so that we can eventually form a continuous public recreational trail.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

I'm particularly passionate about wetlands conservation and restoration because of its role in local ecosystem health and in natural flood control management. When voters talk to me about repeatedly flooded basements in their homes, businesses, or even schools, it usually means that somewhere a wetland nearby was destroyed or paved over.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

I think the Friends of Cold Spring Park have demonstrated over the past year that despite the best efforts and intentions of the city staff, there is currently nowhere near enough money being budgeted toward maintaining our current park and recreation lands – and also that they can do a lot to stretch the dollars they do have. I think if we put in a chunk of new money toward those efforts, the city staff will manage to deliver a lot and catch us up on years of deferred trail and other land maintenance across the city.



Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates - Rena Getz

September 2019

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1. Webster Woods

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Yes, I am in complete support of the acquisition of this land by the City of Newton. I would support further land acquisition being considered for the parking lot as well. It is of concern that a salt shed has been sited on an impervious surface with such close proximity to a vernal pool.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller’s letter on Webster Woods stated the following: “While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property’s 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City’s power of eminent domain.” If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city’s power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

Yes.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

Yes. Offering networks of interlinked walking paths and trails would augment alternate travel for those that wish to use them. Providing better access to the Charles River would be of significant public benefit to the community.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

Yes. Educating more broadly the community of the benefits of permitting the public use of the Sudbury Aqueduct would be required, as many residents are unaware of this initiative.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

Any and all parcels that will provide additional habitat and open space in the community. I would prioritize any parcels that have waterways and/or streams.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

I consider funding for education an important and wise investment of public dollars. Educating residents of the value of habitats and proximal natural spaces in the community is paramount in a world of rapid Climate Change.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

Better stewardship and overall maintenance in our existing open spaces (trails in Cold Springs Park) and budgeting additional funds for Forestry in the City of Newton. As an unofficial member of the Urban Tree Commission the need in the Department is great and the dollars spent would be a wise long-term investment.

1. Webster Woods

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College. (<https://newtonconservators.org/mayor-fuller-proposes-action-to-save-webster-woods/>) Boston College would retain ownership of the former temple building and the adjacent parking lots. Do you support this proposal?

Yes.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller's letter on Webster Woods stated the following: "While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property's 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City's power of eminent domain." If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city's power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

Yes.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

Yes. Connecting this network of trails would provide enjoyment for many residents and access to the trails from Riverside station would

provide an important pedestrian link to transit.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

Yes. Formalizing the existing use of the aqueduct trails will allow for better signage and maintenance, and will allow us to improve the heavily-used (but sometimes treacherous) pedestrian crossing over the aqueduct from Stanley Rd. to Canterbury Rd. by installing box stairs. We need this permit in order to develop an overall “aqueduct loop” of trails along the Cochituate and Sudbury aqueducts.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

The city should explore acquiring easements along the end of the Upper Falls Greenway in order to provide better accessibility and linkage. In addition, we should lobby the town of Needham to enter into a joint project to extend the Upper Falls Greenway over the Charles into Needham.

Beyond that, I would look to the Newton’s Open Space Plan for recommendations to explore the acquisition and preservation of private open spaces.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

A conservation issue specific to Ward 5 is the preservation and

improvement of the Quinobequin parkland. Through the leadership of Sen. Creem and Rep. Balser, the state has recently approved \$50,000 for a study of the parkland along the Charles River from Route 9 to Route 16. As a city councilor I would be actively engaged with DCR as it examines conditions of the parkland. I would also press for the City to engage with the town of Wellesley and DCR through the permitting process for the redevelopment of the Wellesley Office Park just across the Charles, as mitigation may be required to prevent negative environmental impacts resulting from the redevelopment of the site.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

No, and we do not match up well with the spending of peer communities on parks and open spaces. Unfortunately, the budget is incredibly tight as we dig ourselves out of the hole created by our unfunded pension and OPEB liabilities. In order to have more revenue available for spending on parks and open spaces, we need to grow our tax base (especially our commercial tax base).

With regard to field maintenance, the city should be charging a per-player fee to sports league participants in order to generate more funding. As a parent and youth sports coach (and as a board member of the Newton South H.S. Boosters Club) I am very familiar with the woeful state of many of our heavily-used playing fields. Neighboring cities and towns have this fee structure in place, and the head of the largest youth league in the city has brought this forth as a possibility. If elected I would work with city leadership and with our sports leagues to make this new revenue stream a reality.



Brenda Noel

Ward 6 City Council, Ward seat

Incumbent

1. Webster Woods

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I am very much in favor of doing everything we can to preserve Webster Woods.

I also completely understand and can appreciate people's concerns about the recent eminent domain declaration made by the Mayor.

Having said that, my general thought process on issues like these involves thinking through 1) what are we trying to solve for and 2) what are ALL possible avenues that can be taken to address the issue being solved for.

In this case, I believe the urgency is related to the kinds of environmental damage BC may be inflicting on those grounds, which I believe is unacceptable, and demands action.

My initial thought would be to pursue a legal path that would require that environmental regulations are being enforced. I am not privy to the specific negotiations the Mayor has engaged in with BC. As a member of the Finance Committee who works hard to spend the City's money carefully, the prospect of a long, expensive legal battle is not ideal. But the costs of the land acquisition and any litigation will be spread over multiple years, and the benefits of this open space -- Newton's largest forest -- will last for generations.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller's letter on Webster Woods stated the following: "While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property's 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City's power of eminent domain." If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city's power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

If eminent domain is the only way to ensure the land is protected from environmental hazards, and enforce environmental regulations, then I support that. My primary concern is protecting the environment.

3. Riverside Greenway

The proposed Riverside Greenway (<https://newtonconservators.org/property/riverside-greenway/>) would create a network of connections between Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue and the Lower Falls Pedestrian Bridge at Concord Street. Do you support the proposal?

Yes- this is an exciting prospect, I would strongly support and advocate for this.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

Almost all communities along the Sudbury Aqueduct have obtained a permit from the MWRA to authorize public use of the aqueduct. (<https://newtonconservators.org/sudbury-aqueduct-petition/>) Should Newton do the same?

YES!

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

Whenever we have a chance to acquire open space we should act on and not miss any opportunities to expand Newton's green space.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

I think we hit on the big ones. We have underfunded our conservation commission- they don't have the resources they need to maintain the tasks they have been charged with caring for. I would advocate for more funding to care for our conservation land.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

No- see above- I would advocate for an increase in funding. The city has become acutely aware with the release of the climate action plan just how precious and valuable our green space is. We need to fund it and treat it as the precious resource it is.

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We request that you provide us with your responses to the following questions.

We will publish all responses to these questions on our website beginning on October 1st, and on **October 15th** we will send an email to our membership with all responses we’ve received to date.

Please email a pdf of your responses to info@newtonconservators.org

Thank you.

Responses of Councilor Lisle Baker, Candidate for re-election, Ward Councilor, Ward 7.

1. Webster Woods

Mayor Fuller has asked the Community Preservation Committee and the City Council to authorize the issuance of bonds, to be repaid from Community Preservation Act revenue, for the purchase of 17 acres of Webster Woods from Boston College. (<https://newtonconservators.org/mayor-fuller-proposes-action-to-save-webster-woods/>) Boston College would retain ownership of the former temple building and the adjacent parking lots. Do you support this proposal?

Yes.

2. Webster Woods eminent domain taking

State law permits cities and towns to acquire open space through eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell. In eminent domain takings, a jury determines the price the buyer must pay. Mayor Fuller’s letter on Webster Woods stated the following: “While I remain open to achieving a mutually acceptable agreement with B.C., I have decided to initiate a process of acquiring the property’s 17+ acres of pristine woods through the City’s power of eminent domain.” If Newton is unable to negotiate a purchase agreement with Boston College, do you support using the city’s power of eminent domain to acquire Webster Woods?

Yes.

3. Riverside Greenway

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This appears to be a worthwhile idea. It would be helpful to know more about it as it appears to require removal of a fence around MBTA property which is the subject of a development proposal before the City Council for approval. As that is still a pending land use matter before the Council, I should not comment on it yet.

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

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Yes, unless there is some difficulty in opening the trails in Newton that would make the situation distinguishable from towns to the West.

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

I would look to the City's Open Space Plan for guidance.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

Helping make sure that conservation land is well cared for, along with Webster Woods, once acquired.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

More money would always be helpful so long as it can be wisely spent – that is with City staff in place to supervise the work once maintenance contracts are let. In the past, I have offered City Council resolutions requesting more funding, especially for the care of conservation land.



Newton Conservators Questions for City Council Candidates – Holly Ryan

September 2019

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Yes

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I would hope an agreement could be reached with Boston College. Power of eminent domain would be acceptable .

3. Riverside Greenway

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Yes

4. Public use of Sudbury Aqueduct

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Yes

5. Land acquisition

Besides Webster Woods, what other privately owned open space parcels should the city acquire and preserve?

Carlson and Nahanton Woods.

6. Other land conservation issues

Are there other land conservation issues that you would address if elected to the City Council?

I would like to see more attention given to open space in Ward 8.

7. Land management issues

Do you feel the budget and attention given to park and open space maintenance and management are sufficient? Would you make any changes in this area?

I don't feel the attention given is sufficient. I would have to wait until I was on the Council to see what changes are possible to make.

Holly Ryan

Candidate for Ward 8 City Councilor

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