

Newton Conservator's Board of Directors Meeting
January 26, 2022, 7-9 PM
Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Chris Hepburn, presiding, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Samantha Corbin, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Dan Green, Pete Gilmore, Katherine Howard, Alice Ingerson, Ted Kuklinski, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson.

1. **Welcome and Land Acknowledgement.** Chris welcomed the participants at 7:05 pm and Nyssa voiced the acknowledgement that we are on the ancestral land of local indigenous peoples and that we are endeavoring to learn more about them this year.
2. **Approval of Minutes.** Chris moved that the minutes of December 15 be approved. These were approved unanimously.
3. **Treasurer's Report.** Katherine reported that we have received and paid for the last batch of 700 trail guides, and that she had sent out the required 1099 forms to the IRS and our independent contractors. She explained various changes in the financial report and noted that our investments have done well. The year-end treasurer's report was approved unanimously. She then presented a budget for 2022, which was also approved unanimously.
4. **Marty Sender Trail.** Katherine moved to make \$10K available from the Trails Revolving Fund, previously established with a grant from the Solomon Foundation, to support the city's grant application to DCR to fund phase II improvements to the Marty Sender Trail in Auburndale Playground near Lyons Field. This was approved unanimously. Also approved unanimously was the motion to send a Conservators letter of support for the City of Newton's DCR grant application.
5. **Speaker for the Annual Meeting.** The speaker for our annual meeting in May has been researched by the DEIJ team. Alice is pursuing contacts with local tribes, Plymouth-Pawtuxet, and with museums. The topic will be local indigenous people, preferably along the Charles River. Barbara moved that the DEIJ Team be enabled to recommend an appropriate indigenous speaker to be approved by the Executive Board, which was approved.
6. **Family Program.** Barbara explained that her April webinar was to be an April Foolery program to engage a younger demographic (families with children) that would utilize nature trivia questions to be judged as fact or fiction. Margaret Doris volunteered to help with publicity. This could be publicized in the various PTO school newsletters.
7. **Updates**
 - a. **Spring Webinars.** Beth reported on the calendar for spring webinars: Russ Cohen will run a webinar on "Nibbling from Nature" on April 6th. Barbara will run a fun facts, interactive nature game for youngsters on April 13th. There will be a webinar on jumping worms on April 20. Pete Gilmore will present a webinar on the spring warblers of Cold Spring Park on May 11th. Marc Welch will present a webinar on the history and current plans for planting street trees in Newton on June 15th. Another webinar is being considered is a native plant ordinance such as Somerville's.
 - b. **Levingston Cove.** The appeal by the Friends of Crystal Lake regarding compliance with the wetland protection act of the design plan for improvements to Levingston Cove is expected to be decided by DCR within about a month. A letter was sent by the Conservators to the DCR in support of the current design plan previously submitted.

- c. **Environmental Science Program.** David referred us to his job description for a senior environmental camp leader and mentioned the changes involved with the new placement of the environmental camp under Parks Rec & Culture. Three leaders are expected to be hired. Camper fees have been raised by \$500 for residents and \$550 for non-residents. David would like to know about scholarships available for ESP college-bound students.
- d. **DEIJ.** Nyssa recommended the Mass Land Trust zoom discussion of using surveys for increasing diversity in land trusts. This takes place on February 17th. Barbara will be sharing our DEIJ group's questions about surveys.
- e. **Trustee for the Golf Course CR Escrow Account.** Katherine talked with Diane Tillotson's recommended lawyer from Hemenway and Barnes, Charlie Platt. Before accepting the role, Platt will consult with Jason Rosenberg, the current escrow attorney who has retired.
- f. **Aqueduct Trail.** The aqueduct blockage was discussed. Ted, Alice and Councilor Downs are working on this. The earliest deeds for the aqueduct route in 1848 specified one view of ownership, which is different from that expressed in a more recent deed and transfers. This 1848 easement may need to be clarified. There might also be a workaround to bypass the blockage.
- g. **Conservation Commission.** Dan Green reported on bringing the DCR plans for Hammond Pond Parkway before the Conservation Commission. Dan would like to see the gate for the deer park to be on the parkway.
- h. **Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC).** No trees need to be cut for the Gath pool project. There would be a very significant cost increase to include a bubble top on the pool. Beth reported that there are two openings on the PRC from Wards 4 and 8 and that open space advocates are needed.
- i. **Newsletter.** Ken reported that a number of articles are coming in for the next Newsletter.
- j. **Conservation Restrictions.** Chris related that the 2021 CR monitoring reports are all into the City agencies and the private landholder on Bracebridge Rd.
- k. **Awtrey Dell.** Barbara, Katherine and Pete will constitute a subcommittee to look into the boundary lines at Awtrey Dell (as a developer is starting to work on an abutting property) and other work needed there; Henry offered to be of assistance regarding zoning.
- l. **Invasives.** Katherine reported that the BC Eco-Pledge student group is interested in helping with invasives, particularly in Webster Woods.
- m. **Spring Walks.** Samantha reported on the spring walks.

8. Coming Events.

Next Board Meeting. Wednesday February 23, 2022 via Zoom

Mass Land Trust DEIJ Seminar. Wednesday February 17, 2022 via Zoom

9. Adjournment.

Chris adjourned the meeting at 8:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pete Gilmore
Michael Clarke

Newton Conservator's Board of Directors Meeting
February 23, 2022, 7-9 PM
Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Chris Hepburn, presiding, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Michael Clarke, Samantha Corbin, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Dan Green, Pete Gilmore, Katherine Howard, Alice Ingerson, Ted Kuklinski, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, and Beth Wilkinson.

- 1. Welcome and Land Acknowledgement.** Chris welcomed the participants at 7:05 pm and voiced the acknowledgement that we are on the ancestral land of local indigenous peoples and that we are endeavoring to learn more about them this year.
- 2. Approval of Minutes.** Mike thanked Pete for his notes on the January meeting and moved that the minutes of January 26 be approved. These were approved unanimously.
- 3. Treasurer's Report.** Katherine reported that she filed the 3ABC form with the city with property values of \$10K for Ordway and \$1 for the other properties. She said that our probono lawyer indicated that we could get an opinion of value for our properties from a real estate broker, but this has not been decided. There is no progress yet on changing the golf course escrow agent, as Jason Rosenberg, who has retired to California, has not responded. Katherine will soon initiate our annual conflict of interest reporting process. There are several membership systems issues to deal with, including how to handle email to our members and mailing list, and Katherine will reconvene the systems group to discuss.
- 4. Annual Meeting Speaker.** Alice recommended Sagamore Faries (pronounced "Ferris") Gray of the Massachuset Tribe and Elizabeth Solomon, treasurer of the Massachuset Tribe as speakers for the Annual Meeting on May 4, 2022. Faries would like a \$500 honorarium and Elizabeth would like a similar amount donated to the tribe. They would also like to meet more members of the Board before speaking at the Annual Meeting. Alice will send an invitation out.
Chris moved that Faries Gray and Elizabeth Solomon be invited as our speakers for the annual meeting. Chris also moved approval of budgeting \$1000 for the speakers. Both motions passed unanimously. The tribe may be looking for collaborations with the city on tribal concerns.
- 5. Annual Meeting Committee.** Chris indicated than an Annual Meeting Committee needs to be formed. Bill volunteered to chair the committee. Other volunteers were Ken, Katherine, Barbara, Alice and Beth. A volunteer is also needed to process the tickets for the meeting. The meeting will be held "in person". A \$250 deposit for the caterer is due in April. The cost of food is also expected to be higher by about \$10/person. Our covid protocols should also be made clear to prospective attendees.
- 6. Annual Awards.** Possibilities for Environmentalist of the Year were considered with Katherine moving that Ted Chapman be the nominee, seconded by Barbara. This was approved unanimously. Ted Kuklinski nominated Clare Rundelli for a Directors Award, which passed unanimously. Possibilities for the Charles Maynard Award were discussed. AnnaMaria Abernathy will also receive the Lifetime Achievement Award that was announced last year.

7. Updates

- a. **Aqueduct Trail.** The aqueduct blockage was discussed. Ted and Alice met with Councilor Andreae Downs and found that some abutters were amenable to aqueduct hikers walking through their properties. They also connected with Diane Tillotson, who did not recommend a prescriptive easement approach but did think that documentation of aqueduct ownership might be helpful. The Aqueduct Trail committee will likely meet again next week. The services of a title examiner may be needed.
 - b. **Spring Webinars.** Beth sent out the calendar for spring webinars to the Board: Russ Cohen will run a webinar on “Nibbling from Nature” on April 6th. Barbara will run an April Foolery fun nature factoids webinar styled as an interactive game for both young and old on April 13, which we want to promote as membership-building event. There will be a webinar on jumping worms on April 20. Pete Gilmore will present a webinar on the spring warblers of Cold Spring Park on May 11th. Marc Welch will present a webinar on the history and current plans for planting street trees in Newton on June 15th.
 - c. **Conservation Commission.** Dan Green reported that the Con Comm discussed no new projects, but that the DCR renovations for Hammond Pond Parkway are still in progress.
 - d. **Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC).** Beth reported that the Levingston Cove project seems to be moving forward but is awaiting a report from the Department of Environmental Protection. Ted said that Shannon Ames has been doing some nature programs and might be interested in collaborating with the Conservators for such programs at Nahanton Park. One of her presenters, Ken Jackson, may be open to working with the Conservators on a program. Mr. Jackson is an African American former Newton resident.
 - e. **Ordway Park.** Aaron Green reported on cleanups at Ordway Park. The sidewalk on Gibbs St. has sometimes been neglected.
 - f. **DEIJ.** Members of the DEIJ team attended The Mass Land Trust program for using surveys for increasing diversity in land trusts on February 17th.
 - g. **Awtrey Dell.** Katherine reported that Bruce Bradford of Everett M Brooks, the original surveyor for our plot at Awtrey Dell, has agreed to locate and mark the boundaries, as he did at Dexter Woods a couple years ago. At both properties, we need to replace the wooden stakes with more permanent markers. Dan suggested metal rods with colored caps, and Pete suggested also using green iron fence posts.
 - h. **Conservation Commission Land Stewards.** Katherine indicated that Ellen Menounos intends to re-energize the Land Stewards group.
 - i. **Invasives.** Katherine reported on an invasives session held Feb 12 with the participation of BC EcoPledge students at Webster Woods, for which she had purchased (with approval of the Executive Committee) some tools such as loppers for the use of the Conservators. There is a long list of planned invasives session from February through July, including 3 on Newton Serves day, May 1.
 - j. **Newsletter.** Ken reported that the spring issue is in design to be sent out in mid-March. The summer issue is to be printed at the end of May.
8. **Old Business.** Barbara said the bylaws committee has met, and the next step is to review the issues with Diane Tillotson. The changes will probably not be ready to present at the May Annual Meeting.

9. New Business. The Conservators sent AnnaMaria condolences on the passing of her husband Fred. Planting a memorial tree at Ordway in the fall was suggested as a possibility, to be discussed with AnnaMarie.

Ted thanked the Conservators for having offered to sponsor the Friends of Wellington Park.

That group is about to get its own 501c(3) status, so the sponsorship will not be needed.

Margaret indicated that there would not be a public meeting on integrated pest management (IPM) at city playgrounds. Rodent management, particularly on Washington St., has become a concern that IPM might address, as warfarin used in rodent traps works its way up through raptor food chains. Information is available on the IPM web pages at the City website.

10. Coming Events.

Next Board Meeting. Wednesday March 23, 2022 via Zoom

Newton Serves. Sunday, May 1, 2022

Annual Meeting. May 4, 2022

11. Adjournment. Chris adjourned the meeting at 9:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Newton Conservators' Board of Directors Meeting
March 23, 2022, 7-9 PM
Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Chris Hepburn, presiding, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Michael Clarke, Samantha Corbin, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Dan Green, Pete Gilmore, Katherine Howard, Alice Ingerson, Ted Kuklinski, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson and guest Todd Macalister.

1. **Welcome and Land Acknowledgement.** Chris welcomed the participants at 7:03 pm and Nyssa voiced the acknowledgement that we are on the ancestral land of the Massachusett people and that we are looking forward developing a relationship with them this year.
2. **Approval of Minutes.** Mike moved that the minutes of February 23 be approved. These were approved unanimously.
3. **Treasurer's Report.** Statements will be done at the end of the month. Katherine indicated the \$50 balance in the Wellington Park fund was transferred to their new 501c3 account. The audit committee needs to meet prior to the Annual Meeting. Members of the audit committee are Larry Burdick., Beth, Dan G., Pete, and Bill. Jason Rosenberg's firm will try to get someone to review the golf escrow account issue.
4. **Annual Meeting.** Katherine said that e-mail invitations had been sent. Sponsorships totaling \$1600 have been received, from Paddle Boston, Village Bank, Crystal Lake Conservancy, Larry Burdick, and Lucy Caldwell-Stair. Tickets are being sold online. Printed invitations will be ready to mail soon, which Bonnie will organize. Peter has volunteered to receive the mailed RSVPs. Chris asked whether there is an option for paying at the door, which can be done but is not encouraged. Ken and Henry will photograph the event. Henry, Larry and Sam volunteered to help with tickets at the door and other tasks. Bill is bringing easels for the poster presentations. Alice will consult with the Mayor about her remarks. Covid guidelines are in the invitation. Bill reported on the poster presentations.
5. **Annual Awards.** Bill will introduce Ted Chapman who will receive the Environmentalist of the Year Award. Ted will write the citation for Clare Rundelli, who will receive a Directors Award. Chris will introduce Jon Regosin, who will receive the Charles Johnson Maynard Award. Beth will introduce AnnaMaria Abernathy, who will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award, with Chris as backup.
6. **Annual Election.** Pete reviewed the procedures for verifying candidates for the Board of Directors. Pete related that we will need a new Secretary when we revert to in-person board meetings again.
7. **Earth Day at Chestnut Hill Mall Event.** Ted, Ken, Barbara and Sam volunteered to populate a booth at the upcoming Chestnut Hill Mall Earth Day event that may involve a Webster Woods walk, which Barbara may lead. Ted will coordinate the group for the event.
8. **Trail Guide Request.** Dan B. introduced Todd Macalister who is helping update the Trail Guide. Tod has been making mockups of the maps and is working with a graphic designer along with Doug Greenfield of Newton GIS. The maps will be in four color print. He

described an iterative process that will involve feedback from the subcommittee and board. Dan is optimistic that a version will be ready by the end of the year. Doug Greenfield has been working to get all the trails updated in the Newton GIS system including some connecting trails outside of Newton. Trails will be field checked using Avenza software and the free app can be downloaded to a smart phone for use. During the meeting Dan sent out a link to sign up to do the field checking of the trail maps <https://newtonconservators.org/field-checking-the-trail-maps/>

1. Updates

- a. **Spring Walks.** The Boston Mycology Club group will coordinate a fungus walk, but foraging is not allowed in Webster Woods. Sam talked with Ellen Menounos, who suggested that private property should be sought for the fungus walk. It was not clear how extensive the sampling would be, and other possible sites were discussed. Approval of a joint walk with the Mycology Club was tabled pending more information. Sam related that Jon Regosin was scheduled to lead a walk and that this month's children's walk has been arranged and another in April scheduled.
- b. **Spring Webinars.** Beth said the spring webinars were filling out well. The calendar includes Russ Cohen, who will run a webinar on "Nibbling from Nature" on April 6th. Barbara will run an April Foolery fun nature factoids webinar styled as an interactive game for both young and old on April 13, which will be promoted as membership-building event. There will be a webinar on jumping worms on April 20. Pete Gilmore will present a webinar on the spring warblers of Cold Spring. Marc Welch will give a webinar on "Newton's Street Trees: Past, Present, and Future" on June 15.
- c. **Cochituate Aqueduct Trail.** The Cochituate Aqueduct trail blockage was discussed. Alice noted that the Newton Conservators cannot substitute for city action. Ted related that a consultant has been looking into records concerning the aqueduct, but current information does not point to any specific action. One question is whether 397 Chestnut St. owns their part of the aqueduct or if the city does or if there are just easements. There is no statute of limitation on public land ownership even if it gets lost through unintentional changes in land records.
- d. **Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC).** Beth reported that Gath pool remains controversial in terms of it being a year-round facility. It can be funded by the CPA only if it is an outdoor facility. Indoor and outdoor pools may be considered for different parts of Newton. The Charles River bridge near the Lasell boat house has been under discussion for trail uses. A pavilion is being considered for Cabot Park in the grove of trees or at the edge of the park.
- e. **Ordway Park.** Snow shoveling was discussed for Ordway Park, which the Executive Committee will consider.
- f. **Conservation Commission.** Dan G. said that Levingston Cove is close to resolution and that the Hammond Park Parkway project has been approved by DCR. Channeled streams, such as Hammond Brook in Newton Centre, come under the wetland restrictions administered by the Conservation Commission.
- g. **Invasives.** Katherine said the BC student participation in an invasives pull at Webster woods was very successful. A list of invasive pulls is on the website.

- h. **DEIJ.** Members of the DEIJ team will attend The Mass Land Trust program on March 31. Barbara said the DEIJ team will provide a draft land acknowledgement for one of the co-presidents to use at the Annual Meeting which may be discussed and approved later with representatives of the Massachusetts tribe. The DEIJ committee has scheduled a Zoom “get to know you” session with Faries Gray and Elizabeth Solomon of the Massachusetts tribe on March 31.
- i. **Conservation Commission Land Stewards.** Katherine indicated that Ellen Menounos intends to re-energize the Land Stewards group.
- j. **Mass Land Trust Conference** is scheduled for March 24-26 on the general topic of “Reconsidering Conservation - Building an Inclusive Message for the 21st Century”.
- k. **Integrated Pest Management.** There was an item in Emily Norton’s newsletter about rodent control methods for which more sustainable techniques, such as electronic traps or species-specific birth control methods, should be sought. Positions may be available on the IPM working group.
- l. **Newsletter.** Ken said that the spring issue is out and the Summer issue is going to print at the end of May.
- m. **Doug Tallamy Talk.** Newton Conservators will co-sponsor the library talk by Doug Tallamy on May 26.

9. Coming events

- March 24-26--Mass Land Trust Conference
- March 31, “Get to know you” Zoom with Sagamore Gray and Elizabeth Solomon, 4:45 pm
- April 20--NC Executive Committee meeting
- April 27--NC Board Meeting, 7PM
- May 4 - Annual Meeting

10. Adjournment. Chris adjourned the meeting at 8:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Newton Conservators' Board of Directors Meeting
April 27, 2022, 7-9 PM
Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Chris Hepburn, presiding, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Michael Clarke, Samantha Corbin, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Dan Green, Pete Gilmore, Katherine Howard, Alice Ingerson, Ted Kuklinski, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson and guests Lalor Burdick and Mary Ann Buras.

1. **Welcome and Land Acknowledgement.** Chris welcomed the participants at 7:03 pm and Nyssa voiced the acknowledgement that we are on the ancestral land of the Massachusetts people and that we are developing a relationship with them this year.
2. **Approval of Minutes.** Chris moved that the minutes of March 23 be approved. These were approved unanimously.
3. **Treasurer's Report.** the 2021 financial statements were adjusted for the following: (1) Houghton Garden expenses and revenues in the "Changes In Restricted Net Assets" section were each short by \$9000 - the net was correct and nothing else on the statements had to change - but now those two numbers are both \$9K higher. (2) The \$30K from the City for the CR Monitoring fund should have been presented on the financials as restricted revenue. Now, rather than a Liability, it is classified as a restricted net asset. Katherine moved the approval of the 2021 financial statements, which was approved unanimously.
The March 2022 financials contained a large (\$20K) unrealized loss, a \$3.9K payment for trail guide reprinting, and the Annual Meeting revenues, which will start to be offset by expenses in the second quarter. Membership and gifts appear to be on track. The 990 and Form PC have been sent to the board for review and must be filed before May 15.
Conflict of Interest forms have been sent to board members and officers.
4. **Annual Meeting.** Bill, Barbara and Alice reviewed the agenda, introductions and technical aspects of the Annual Meeting. Chris will read the land acknowledgement and the acknowledgements of the various sponsors. Bill will present the President's Report. Pete will run the voting for officers and directors. Alice will introduce the speakers.
5. **Newton Cemetery Tree Ordinance Exception Request.** Larry Burdick and Mary Ann Buras (President of the Newton Cemetery) presented the Cemetery's rationale for an exemption to the Tree Ordinance in order to fell trees to expand burial sites, which would allow previously planted trees as well as those planted in the following years to be considered in the replacement inches of trees to be felled. Barbara moved that NC write a letter supporting adjustments to the Tree Ordinance standard based on past and future plantings by the Newton Cemetery, which was seconded by Mike. Vote: 11 yes, 1 no, 4 abstentions.
6. **Clean up and help with Bracebridge Rd.** There was a request from Ila Fiete to schedule maintenance for the trail along the Cochituate Aqueduct access trail at the Fietes' property on Bracebridge Road. Ken, Sam, Henry, Larry and Barbara volunteered to help. The Fietes have committed to supplying the materials.

7. **Summer Events Committee.** Chris stated the need for a committee to organize and staff a Conservators' booth at a number of upcoming village days and other events during the spring and summer. Such activity has been successful at similar events. Ted, Sam, Alice and Margaret volunteered.
8. **Jennifer Steel Request.** Jennifer Steele has suggested a number of ways in which NC could cooperate with the Land Stewards group for conservation land. She also suggested that NC might assist in monitoring CRs held by the City on various properties. The list appeared to need updating. Chris and several board members felt that NC would not be able to handle monitoring any CRs in addition to those we hold ourselves. Alice thought it might also constitute a conflict of interest for NC to monitor CRs held *by* the City while also monitoring CRs we hold "against" the City. Rather than help directly with monitoring, she suggested NC might hold a workshop for any land stewards who would like to do CR monitoring.
9. **Updates**
 - a. **Spring Walks.** Sam reported that the children's walks have been successful with many children showing up at subsequent walks.
 - b. **Spring Webinars.** The "Jumping Worms" webinar was well received and may have stimulated a local news report.
 - c. **Tree Commission.** There was a suggestion that the Tree Commission be given more power, but this would require an act of the legislature.
 - d. **Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC).** Beth related that two city councilors are working with Marc Welch to modify the tree ordinance.
 - e. **Newton Serves.** Katherine said that Newton Serves is Sunday, May 1 with three invasive sessions.
 - f. **Conservation Commission Land Stewards.** Katherine indicated that Ellen Menounos intends to re-energize the Land Stewards group. Conservator Board members were encouraged to contact Jennifer Steel and volunteer to become a Land Steward.
 - g. **Commonwealth Ave. Carriageway.** Progress is being made on the Carriageway, but funding for a light at Ash St. remains a problem.
 - h. **Mass Land Trust Conference** is scheduled for March 24-26 on the general topic of "Reconsidering Conservation - Building an Inclusive Message for the 21st Century".
 - i. **Integrated Pest Management.** There was an item in Emily Norton's newsletter about rodent control methods for which more sustainable techniques, such as electronic traps or species-specific birth control methods, should be sought. Positions may be available on the IPM working group.
 - j. **Newsletter.** Ken said the Summer issue is going to print at the end of May for early June distribution.
 - k. **Library Talk Co-sponsorship.** Newton Conservators will co-sponsor the library talk by Doug Tallamy on May 26 at 7 pm. There are 25 seats left. There was a comment that the event should be better publicized.
9. **New Business.** Henry noted that Jeremy Preutenberg has shared links to some interesting historic photographs and engineering drawings of the Aqueducts, available at

<https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/>.

10. **Coming events**

May 4 - Annual Meeting

11. **Adjournment.** Chris adjourned the meeting at 8:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Newton Conservators' Annual Meeting
May 4, 2022, 7-9:30 PM
Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Chris Hepburn and Bill Hagar, presiding, David Backer, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Samantha Corbin, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Dan Green, Pete Gilmore, Alice Ingerson, Katherine Howard, Ted Kuklinski, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson, speakers Faries Gray and Elizabeth Solomon, other members and guests.

1. **Welcome and Land Acknowledgement.** Chris Hepburn welcomed the participants and voiced the acknowledgement that we are on the historical land of the Massachusett. Chris also noted and thanked the sponsors of the program.
2. **Mayor's Remarks.** Mayor Ruthanne Fuller noted the extraordinary group of awardees and remarked on their contributions to open space and environmental education in Newton. She also acknowledged the Conservators' efforts toward establishing a relationship with the Massachusett tribe.
3. **Co-President's Remarks.** Bill Hagar reviewed the accomplishments of the Conservators during the past year and noted the efforts of the Conservators to connect with the Massachusett tribe. He particularly noted our outreach, educational, invasives, conservation, trails, grants, Conservation Restriction monitoring and walks programs, which now include walks specifically for children. He also remarked on the success of our webinar series, the pollinator garden and website pages. The coming updated trail guide will utilize GIS data and include weblinks. Bill also indicated that our finances are strong.
4. **Election of Officers & Directors.** Pete Gilmore presented and moved the slate of officers and directors, which was seconded by Barbara Bates. The slate of officers and directors is: Co-Presidents: Chris Hepburn and Bill Hagar; Vice President: Alice Ingerson; Treasurer: Katherine Howard; Secretary: Mike Clarke; Past President: Ted Kuklinski. Directors: David Backer, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Samantha Corbin, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Maurice Gilmore, Daniel Green, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith and Beth Wilkinson. The slate was approved unanimously, except for one abstention, online by Newton Conservators members present.
5. **Awards.**

Directors' Award. Ted Kuklinski presented a Directors' award to Claire Rundelli for her dedicated work as Newton's Assistant Environmental Planner wherein she diligently supported the work of the Conservation Commission, administered the volunteer Stewards Program for our conservation areas, helped to prepare Newton's Open Space and Recreation Plan, shepherded Conservation Restrictions through the government process, and supported the Newton Conservators' CR monitoring and invasive removal efforts.

Charles Johnson Maynard Award. Chris Hepburn presented the Charles Johnson Maynard Award to Jon Regosin for his expertise and many years of work protecting endangered and threatened species of plants and animals and his leadership in

conserving, enhancing, and rehabilitating wildlife habitat in Newton and throughout Massachusetts.

Environmentalist of the Year Award. Bill Hagar presented the Environmentalist of the Year Award to Ted Chapman for his energetic and productive advocacy for open space, including improved pedestrian and bicycle connections both within Newton and between Newton and its neighbors. Ted helped to secure the Newton Community Farm for the City and led efforts to create the Riverside Greenway connections plan. His recent work brought attention to the Greenway and resulted in the submission of successful grant proposals for additional improvements to this important path. His efforts have added important outdoor recreational and educational spaces for others to enjoy.

Lifetime Achievement Award. Beth Wilkinson bestowed the first Lifetime Achievement Award to AnnaMaria Abernathy (who was not able to be present) for her decades of invaluable work in preserving and maintaining open space in Newton. AnnaMaria was a member of the board from the late 1960s through 2021. AnnaMaria was President of the organization from 1984 to 1986. During that time, a series of land-use forums was held, and the Conservators weighed in on important land use decisions – including the development of what is now Nahanton Park, the Lacy Estate (now the Ledgebrook condos), and the Capasso development adjoining Cold Spring Playground. She received the Environmentalist of the Year Award in 1993 and was secretary of Newton Conservators from 2003 through 2020.

- 6. Featured Speakers.** Alice Ingerson introduced the featured speakers: Sagamore Faries Gray and Tribal Elder Elizabeth Solomon of the Massachusetts tribe at Ponkapoag. Gray spoke on the Massachusetts tribe's long history and association with our region's landscapes. He noted the state of the tribe's population, fishing, farming and trade when the French and then the English arrived and how this changed due to epidemics of introduced European diseases and warfare afterwards. He related the destructive role the Pilgrims and other 17th-century English colonists played in excluding the tribe from its traditional resources and lands, working inward from the coast, and how the tribe has since worked to preserve and restore its culture and access to land. Tribal Elder Elizabeth Solomon contrasted the "ways of being in the world" represented by European or mainstream culture and indigenous peoples, including the Massachusetts. She showed several maps illustrating how English colonization excluded the Massachusetts almost completely from their traditional coastal resources between 1620 and 1640, as also described by Faries Gray. She described how indigenous people do not see human beings and the environment as separate but in a reciprocal relationship, which benefits both, and contrasted this with the way the natural landscape along the Charles River (Quinebequin) has become highly developed. After their presentations, the speakers answered questions. Alice and Barbara then facilitated a question-and-answer session with Elizabeth Solomon and Faries Gray about their talks.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J. Clarke

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1. **Welcome and Land Acknowledgement.** Chris welcomed the participants at 7:02 pm and Nyssa voiced the acknowledgement that we are on the ancestral land of the Massachusetts people and we honor them as prior stewards of this land.
2. **Approval of Minutes.** Mike moved that the minutes of April 27 be approved. These were approved unanimously. Mike moved that the minutes of May 4 Annual Meeting be approved. These were approved unanimously.
3. **Treasurer's Report.** The MA Form PC and the IRS Form 990 were filed before their May 15 due date. Annual Meeting finances will be reported on after May is over and reconciled, but given the generous sponsorships and that fifteen people donated their tickets, Katherine expects that the bottom line for the event will be positive by a few hundred dollars.
4. **DEIJ Committee Session.** The first part of this session was devoted to individual answers to the question Nyssa had previously circulated: "Is it important to you that the Conservators take on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice work, and if so, what makes it important?" The responses were all positive, well thought out and often eloquent as was the discussion that followed. Alice, Ken and other Directors made more detailed notes for the DEIJ team meeting on June 6.
5. **Avery Woods.** Dan B. showed a map of Day Middle School and Avery Woods, which is adjacent to the Halloran Recreation Complex. A portion of the original Woods was used for the Day Middle School, with the permission of the Avery family. The NC Board had previously requested that the Woods be apportioned to the Parks & Recreation Commission (PRC) with a conservation restriction. The Woods contains trails and a vernal pond. The city has the obligation to preserve the wooded area in perpetuity. The original deed indicated the Woods to be reserved for playground and recreational purposes. Dan suggested that this should be codified in a CR, but this would have to be initiated by the PRC. The PRC is considering rearranging playing fields and tennis courts at the Halloran Recreation Complex that are directly adjacent to the Woods. Dan indicated that we need an agreement from the PRC and Mayor that there would not be any infringements on the Woods. Beth suggested and Dan moved that two letters be written: 1. One to Nicole Banks and Luiz Demorizi to verify as official policy Demorizi's statement at a recent meeting that the PRC would not modify the Woods, and 2. A letter to the City Assessor requesting that the School and Woods parcels be separated in the city's assessors and GIS records. The motion passed unanimously. Beth and Dan will draft the letters.

6. **PRC Proposed Pavilion for Newton Centre Playground.** Beth showed pictures of how the proposed pavilion, which would hold an audience of 300 at Newton Centre Playground, would be used. The structure would require an ADA accessible path, terracing of the hill, a large stage structure, and be adjacent to and within the protection area of Hammond Brook. The project is set to move forward quickly and depending on the setback from Hammond could routinely receive permission from the Conservation Commission. A hearing on the project will be held on June 7.
7. **Annual Meeting Review.** Chris declared the Annual Meeting a wonderful success and thanked everyone involved in organizing it. Bill said that the meeting worked well on Zoom, particularly for the keynote presentations and discussion. Alice said we are waiting for permission from the speakers to put a full or partial video recording of their presentations online. Bill complimented Barbara on her technical management. Barbara remarked that approximately two dozen people stayed on for the discussion. She endorsed using the “meeting” rather than the “webinar” format, so all participants could be visible; but said that for such meetings a second technical host would be needed in the future.
8. **Updates**
 - a. **Bracebridge Road Trail.** Sam has been in touch with volunteers for trail maintenance and with Marc Welch who will provide wood chips for the trail. The date has not been set.
 - b. **Events Committee.** Margaret said that volunteers were needed for village days and other summer events. Chris suggested that George Mansfield might like to help on the Newton Highlands Village Day.
 - c. **Conservation Commission.** Dan G. said that the Northland project of 800-900 apartments is to be presented to the Conservation Commission on June 9.
 - d. **Webinars.** The last webinar is with Marc Welch on street trees in Newton on June 15.
 - e. **Walks.** Sam is considering neighborhood and aqueducts walks with Green Newton and solicited suggestions for walks. The Greenway through Newton Highlands was suggested. It was also suggested that Faries Gray might be involved in a walk, perhaps with Historic Newton, or along with Tom Wessels.
 - f. **Invasives.** Katherine said the most recent session at Upper Falls Greenway was a success due to participation of 20 members of a running club associated with the Chinese Friends of Needham. Work sessions at Dexter Woods and Awtry Dell are being organized.
 - g. **Newsletter.** The summer newsletter should be printed in early June. Ken thanked Alice and Dan G. for their help.
 - h. **Riverside Greenway and Commonwealth Ave. Carriage Road.** Larry said there is still controversy about the proposal to remove the light at Ash St., and that the project was as at a standstill in the City Council.
 - i. **Trails.** Work on the Sender Trail Phase-I will start in June. PRC and the Conservation Commission have agreed to make consistent trail signs. Progress on Upper Falls Greenway steps is also stalled. While the City apparently holds a CR on the land, that CR does not provide for public access, and the landowner (Village Falls Condominiums) does not want the increased traffic.

- j. **Integrated Pest Management.** PRC is going to use herbicides on some playing fields. Despite the need, IPM tends not to discuss rat control, which is in its charter, and have been focusing mainly on playing fields. It appears IPM will no longer hold public hearings on herbicide use this year.
 - k. **Co-Sponsored Talk.** Newton Conservators will co-sponsor the library talk by Doug Tallamy on May 26 at 7 pm.
9. **New Business.** Beth related that Phil Saunders, who was a leader in the movement to get the Massachusetts legislature to pass the Public Lands Preservation Act to protect open space, died on May 17.
10. **Coming events**
May 26, Doug Tallamy talk, 7PM
June 5, Nonantum Village Day
June 12, Highlands Village Day
June 15, ExCom Meeting
June 19&20, Juneteenth Celebration
June 23, Board Meeting
11. **Adjournment.** Chris adjourned the meeting at 8:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Newton Conservators' Board of Directors Meeting
June 22, 2022, 7-9 PM
Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Chris Hepburn, presiding, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Michael Clarke, Samantha Corbin, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Dan Green, Pete Gilmore, Bill Hagar, Katherine Howard, Alice Ingerson, Ted Kuklinski, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson.

1. **Welcome and Land Acknowledgement.** Chris welcomed the participants at 7:02 pm and Nyssa voiced the acknowledgement that we are on the unceded ancestral land of the Massachusetts people.
2. **Approval of Minutes.** Chris moved that the minutes of May 25 be approved. These were approved unanimously.
3. **Treasurer's Report.** Katherine reported that the Annual Meeting finances were about \$700 positive due to the the generous sponsorships and that a third of attendees donated their tickets.
4. **Conflict of Interests Statements.** Katherine has received COI statements from almost all of the directors and reviewed the results with the executive committee. No issues were found.
5. **Newtonville Books Discussion.** Mary Cotton from Newtonville books wrote the Conservators with the suggestion of a book discussion centering on an environmental or open space book. The discussion would be jointly sponsored by both the NC and Newtonville Books possibly in July. Ted volunteered to take the lead, perhaps with Barbara, who had previously volunteered by email. Alice also volunteered to help. but not to run the event.
6. **Public Lands Preservation Act (PLPA).** Chris displayed the letter he wrote to the Mass Senate President in support of the PLPA, but without the possibility of the public land being sold even if no other land was available. Directors were encouraged to send their own letters that might be modeled after the one Beth drafted and Chris sent.
7. **Environmental Science Program.** Dave gave an update of the ESP for the coming summer. A grant for \$2500 to support the 2022 program was considered. The program is fully enrolled, the staff have been hired and the program will start on July 1. A \$500 increase in the grant from 2021 was attributed to rising costs and the subsequent need for increased scholarship funds. Individual tuition also increased by \$500. Green Newton is donating \$1000. There are also donations from alums and parents. The grants committee had approved the grant and the motion to award the grant received the unanimous approval of the board.
8. **Recruitment of New Members.** Chris noted that we need to increase our membership and the number of directors to support our mission. We have been seeking non-directors to volunteer to help at events and on individual projects, such as invasive pulls and staffing tables at Village days; however, someone is needed to coordinate the effort. Margaret volunteered to be this coordinator and suggested that we also need a group to participate in this outreach. Sam, Ted and Alice volunteered to help.

9. Updates

- a. **Avery Woods.** Chris wrote letters to Nicole Banks, Luis Demorizi and the Assessor's Office concerning Avery Woods (see May minutes), which received an encouraging response from Nicole Banks.
- b. **Bracebridge Road Trail Renovation.** Sam related that the Fietes were happy with the work that was done and that the mulch was no longer on the sidewalk. Mulch was placed on the trail and reinforcing logs were moved to appropriate places. The Fietes are responsible for updating the signs on their portion of the trail.
- c. **Walks.** Sam said that the walk with the Mycology group will not happen because of the Conservation Commission's no foraging rule. Joint walks with Green Newton and Historic Newton, are also being considered. Historic Newton is trying to arrange a walk involving the Massachusetts tribe. Barbara suggested that June may be too late to schedule walks because of children having other activities. Ted noted that two walks are scheduled for the coming Saturday at Dolan Pond and Wellington Park (particularly the butterfly garden). Ted is trying to coordinate some activities with the Newton Cultural Alliance, which also sponsors walks and tours and we are hosting a table at the NCA's event at Allen House. Henry will be leading a walk from Newton Center Playground to Echo Bridge this Sunday.
- d. **Report on PRC.** Beth noted that Marc Welch gave a wonderful webinar on Street Trees in Newton. The Levingston Cove project is still in progress.
- e. **Nahanton Park CR Update.** Chris said that Ouida Young has managed to get Jonathan Yeo to put funds needed for the survey of Nahanton Park into next year's City budget. The survey is needed for the Nahanton Park CR.
- f. **Events Committee Report.** Chris and Margaret noted that it is time to start considering events for the Fall. Chris and Katherine thanked Margaret for all her effort in coordinating outreach at recent village days and other events.
- g. **DEIJ Committee.** The committee reported briefly on its long conversation with Sara Luria, a Newton resident and faculty member at the College of the Holy Cross, and Colin Novick, Executive Director of the Greater Worcester Land Trust, who worked on the documentary, *Pakachoag: Where the River Bends*, about the relationship between the site currently occupied by Holy Cross and the Nipmuc people. Sarah and Colin had offered useful, confidential advice about working with Indigenous people. The committee also noted that needing to diversify the Conservators Board had been a consistent theme in the discussion of DEIJ goals at the May Board meeting. They strongly recommended that all Board members join a "watch party" on Zoom to view and discuss the Charles River Chamber of Commerce's Sept. 2021 panel, "Diversifying Your Nonprofit Board" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJL6fB6OAoA>); so the full Board can determine some specific steps to take in this direction at its August meeting. Alice will email the Board to request RSVPs for the two dates identified by the Committee: Tuesday 12 July 2022, 7 pm (hosted by Alice) or Monday 18 July 2022, 1 pm (hosted by Peter Barrer).
- h. **Webinars.** Beth indicated that the Fall webinar series should be in place by July. Jennifer Steel will present on Newton's Buried Streams. Barbara may do a webinar on tracking in January. A webinar involving individuals who were instrumental in passing the Sommerville Native Plant Ordinance is a possibility. Newton City Councilors may docket a similar one. Chris suggested that there might be more webinars in the winter, when people tend to be inside rather than in the spring and fall, when people tend to be outside and may participate in our walks.

- i. **Invasives.** Katherine has sent out an update list of invasive pulls. A work session was also scheduled for Dexter Woods.
- j. **Newsletter.** The summer Newsletter has been sent out. Bonnie said that we may be approaching the minimum number for a bulk USPS mailing.

10. **Adjournment.** Chris adjourned the meeting at 8:10 pm.

Coming Events

July 20, Executive Committee Meeting

July 27, Board Meeting

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Newton Conservators' Board of Directors Meeting
July 27, 2022, 7-9 PM
Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Chris Hepburn, presiding, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Bonnie Carter, Michael Clarke, Samantha Corbin, Henry Finch, Dan Green, Pete Gilmore, Bill Hagar, Katherine Howard, Alice Ingerson, Ken Mallory, Larry Smith and guest Aaron Green.

1. **Welcome.** Chris welcomed the participants at 7:03 pm.
2. **Approval of Minutes.** Chris moved that the minutes of June 22 be approved. These were approved unanimously.
3. **Treasurer's Report.** Katherine had previously circulated the financials for the first half of the year. She reported that due to the decline in the stock market the NAV (Net Asset Value) of our Fidelity Multi Asset Fund (formerly the 4-in-1 Fund) declined (22%) over six months. Slightly offsetting that was a 3% increase in our shares due to dividend reinvestment in April, so the market value of our main holding of that fund decreased by (19%). Because our investments are also in Money Market and Treasuries, which didn't change, total investments came down by \$64K or (12.5%). The \$30K of CR Monitoring Funds is now \$26.8K.
4. **Discussion of the 85 Dudley Rd. Parcel.** Chris had previously circulated the broker's proposal for 14 acres at 85 Dudley Rd. (between Dudley and Brandeis Roads). Bill reviewed the NC land acquisition criteria for gifts and acquisitions. Bill and Chris noted the rock formations on the parcel. Possible educational value to Newton South High School was mentioned. There is limited value for providing connections with wildlife corridors including wetlands near Newton South. Alice pointed out that a road could be built between Dudley and Brandeis Roads that would provide frontage to interior lots. Dan B. had previously communicated that the current \$19M price would preclude other open space acquisitions involving the CPA for years to come. If the price were lowered, possibly due to the difficulty of building on the site, an option similar to Kessler Woods might be to partner with a developer to save as much open space as possible. However, it is not clear if the city would be amenable to this. Chris suggested that a subcommittee be formed to discuss options with the city. Peter suggested that we resolve to work to save as much of the parcel as possible.
Motion: The Newton Conservators advocate for the City to do whatever it can to preserve as much of the main parcel at 85 Dudley Road as possible as publicly accessible open space. To talk with the City about various options for this, and how the Newton Conservators might support those options, the Board designated a working group with Alice Ingerson, Dan Green, Chris Hepburn, Henry Finch as advisor, and in their absence Dan Brody and/or Beth Wilkinson, if either of them is willing. Motion by Peter Barrer, seconded by Barbara Bates, approved unanimously by all directors present.
5. **Web Site's News Section.** Barbara asked whether we should have criteria for posting advocacy items on the web site's news section such as for the Public Lands Conservation Act. Chris and Peter suggested a subcommittee to develop the criteria and how it relates to our mission. Volunteers were Barbara, Ken, Ted and Peter.
6. **DEIJ Committee Report.** Alice and Peter presented the takeaways from the watch parties of the Charles River Chamber video that discussed increasing diversity on the boards of nonprofits such as ours. Barbara and Alice noted that a main point was for the nonprofit to have a clear concept of how and why its mission requires diversity, as well as how joining the

organization would help prospective new board members accomplish their own goals. First it is important to define what the organization means by diversity and what it wants from it. It is also important to develop diversity from the bottom up and develop authentic relationships with groups previously underrepresented in or underserved by the organization. The largest group of current Newton residents who are underrepresented in the Newton Conservators are those of East and South Asian descent. Recruiting BIPOC people requires a continuing commitment. The DEIJ group will have suggestions for proceeding at the September meeting.

7. **Conservation Restrictions (CR) Monitoring.** Chris indicated that it was time to sign up for CR monitoring. The online signup format has changed somewhat. Monitors should invite the landowner or the appropriate city contact. Sam expressed an interest in learning about CR monitoring with some of the extant groups.
8. **Fall Events.** The Newtonville and Upper Falls Village Days, Indigenous Peoples Day, Harvest Fair and the Monarch Festival will occur in the fall. The latter will be on Saturday September 17 at Wellington Park and will be co-sponsored and publicized by Parks and Rec.

9. Updates

- a. **Ordway Park.** Dan and Aaron Green related that they had a landscape company trim the rhododendrons and had requested a cost estimate from the same company for cleaning up parts of Ordway and shoveling snow in the winter. Dan explained that if the bill for work on the rhododendrons was considered too high, he had some ideas about fundraising to cover it. Ted noted that in hiring new vendors, BIPOC organizations should be considered. Dan said that the vendors under consideration were from Guatemala.
- b. **Public Lands Preservation Act (PLPA).** With both the House and Senate having passed versions of An Act preserving open space in the Commonwealth, often referred to as the Public Lands Protection Act, a conference committee is working to iron out differences between their versions in order to send the bill to the Governor. MLTC and other groups are strongly advocating that they do so before the session ends on July 31st.
- c. **Marty Sender Trail.** The grant from the state for \$340K for phase-II was awarded.
- d. **Passing of Cris Criscitiello.** Katherine noted the passing of Cris Criscitiello. Ted has sent a letter of condolence to his family and is writing a remembrance for the Newsletter.
- e. **Newtonville Book Store Book Club.** The joint discussion with the Newtonville Book Store Book Club for a mutual event is being planned.
- f. **Report on PRC.** The PRC is doing a public opinion survey about the proposed performance Pavillion in Newton Centre Playground. Alice encouraged all park users to complete the survey, not just those interested in the performance space.
- g. **Conservation Commission.** Dan G. related that the Levingston Cove project was approved by the Department of Environmental Protection. There was a site visit to two potential dog park areas; one near Lyons Field and another adjacent to Norumbega Park near the Marriott. The Conservation Commission prefers the Norumbega Park site. The Northland development is coming up at the next Conservation Commission meeting. Alice asked whether an archeological assessment would be done on the Northland and Riverside sites. Dan G. said he would pose the question.
- h. **City Trails Subcommittee.** Chris related that the City Trails Committee meets bimonthly. The city has hired a new vendor for improving trails in the Hammond Pond deer park,

Norumbega Park, an area near Elgin Road and the Pigeon Hill Trail in Auburndale, which might be made ADA compliant.

- i. **Walks.** Sam reached out to Richard Primack, who will do a walk at Webster Woods. There will be a birding walk at Cutler Park. Barbara and Sam will continue the kids program. The first walk will be on September 11. Historic Newton has expressed an interest in working with the Conservators on walks. Ted suggested a walk with children with various disabilities from Paddy's Restaurant to Dolan Pond and back to Paddy's for a pizza party.
- j. **Invasives.** Katherine said that more pulls will be scheduled once the weather improves. She also plans to publicize the effects of black swallow wort, which reduces biodiversity, degrades our local environment, and, is fatal to Monarch butterflies.
- k. **Aqueduct Blockage.** Ted said that the Aqueduct Trail blockage by a homeowner will be discussed with attorney Diane Tillotson. Bruce Henderson is developing a short history of historical documents for discussion with Diane.
- l. **Newsletter.** Ken said that Richard Primack is doing a story on pollinator gardens. Elizabeth Farns is doing an article on the lantern fly. Pete will write a piece on warblers at Cold Spring Park and Katherine will write on invasives. Ted is writing a remembrance of Cris Criscitiello. The newsletter will go out the end of August.

10 Old Business. The Newton Cemetery is now asking for a longer compliance period for planting replacement trees following their proposed removal of existing trees for a new burial area.

11. New Business. Alice noted it would soon be time to begin looking for our 2023 annual meeting speaker. Ted mentioned that there would be a farewell party for Margaret Ford on Friday, July 28 from 5 to 7 pm at Wellington Park on Kilburn Road in West Newton.

12. Adjournment. Chris adjourned the meeting at 9:00 pm.

Coming Events

Next Exec Committee Meeting: September 21

Next Board Meeting: September 28

Monarch Festival: September 17, Wellington Park

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Newton Conservators' Board of Directors Meeting
September 28, 2022, 7-9 PM
Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Chris Hepburn, presiding, David Backer, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Bonnie Carter, Michael Clarke, Samantha Corbin, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Dan Green, Pete Gilmore, Bill Hagar, Katherine Howard, Alice Ingerson, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten and Beth Wilkinson.

1. **Welcome.** Chris welcomed the participants at 7:02 pm. Barbara enunciated the acknowledgement that Newton is on the historical, current and unceded land of the Massachusetts.
2. **Approval of Minutes.** Mike moved that the minutes of July 27 be approved. These were approved unanimously.
3. **Treasurer's Report.** Katherine noted that our Fidelity Market Index Fund investment is down 24% this year. The Executive Committee has agreed to Save the Cove's request that the Conservators continue to sponsor its fundraising for water treatments at Ware's Cove. The City is proceeding with the Marty Sender Trail phase-2 project and has requested that we send \$10,000 in matching funds, which the Board approved in January 2022, from the Trails revolving fund.
4. **Cold Spring Park Pollinator Garden.** Katherine presented a grant proposal for a large Pollinator Garden at Cold Spring Park, which was submitted by the Friends of Cold Spring Park and an Eagle Scout project. The 600-700 sq ft garden, to be installed in October with much support from the City, will feature the plants needed to support native pollinators including threatened bumblebee species. It will include educational signage (both on-site and via links to websites), and educational tours will be run from the adjacent farmers' market. The Grants Committee recommended this request for \$1,000. The board approved it unanimously.
5. **Commonwealth Avenue Carriageway Pollinator Gardens.** Luis Demorizi of PRC sent a letter requesting that the Newton Conservators participate in developing pollinator gardens along Commonwealth Avenue by providing advice and helping to maintain the gardens. Barbara and Beth noted that there would be too many gardens for the Newton Conservators to help maintain. The Board supported Alice's suggestion that we decline to take responsibility for these gardens as a group, but offer to publicize a call for volunteers once the City designates a staff member to be in charge of maintenance and to organize volunteers. Chris said he would send a response to that effect to Luis. Sam volunteered to help with the gardens.
6. **85 Dudley Road Property.** Alice had contact with representatives of the city, who have requested from the landowners of 85 Dudley Road more time to respond. Both open space and affordable housing advocates have shown interest in the property.
7. **DEIJ Requested Discussion.** Peter proposed a change in the mission statement: "Newton Conservators connects people to open space. We promote acquisition, protection, and stewardship of natural and recreational open spaces in Newton for the benefit and enjoyment of all through education and civic engagement." Barbara said the revision would put something the Conservators have always done up front, to emphasize our commitment to improving relationships between all kinds of people and nature. Peter moved the new wording and it passed unanimously. Peter then introduced a draft list of different types of diversity we might include in defining diversity for our purposes.
 - i. Power, income, wealth, education.

- ii. Race, ethnicity, national origin – including indigenous peoples and descent and language other than English.
- iii. Ability differences.
- iv. Age.
- v. Sex and gender identity.

Alice emphasized that the DEIJ group did not see these categories as “checkboxes” for types of people to involve with the Conservators. Instead, we should review possible actions and policies, to ensure they don’t unintentionally exclude people based on any of these criteria. Barbara noted that we should equally consider whether our decisions might unintentionally privilege anyone based on the criteria.

Peter observed that there are many ways to connect to open space. We need other people influencing us to be open to many ways of experiencing open space. How do we present ourselves to other people that encompasses these different uses? The “way we do it” doesn’t include all the ways it can be done. We may need to change the way we do things. It might change the organization, and we need to be open about that.

In a statement distributed ahead of the meeting, Barbara emphasized that an engaged and connected electorate is essential to maintaining Newton's open space and adding to it. If people are connected to open space, they are more likely to care about preserving it in the future. Ted led a walk for 20 participants just before the meeting at Dolan Pond for Newton Athletes Unlimited (high quality recreational programs to encourage physical, social and intellectual developments for individuals with disabilities).

- 8. **ARPA Funds Use.** Mayor Fuller wrote to Chris indicating that ARPA funds would not be available for our requested items, which had included support to complete outstanding conservation restrictions for Nahanton Park and Kessler Woods, as well as other items.
- 9. **Spring Banquet Speaker.** Chris solicited suggestions for our annual Spring Banquet speaker. Barbara suggested that Ted Levin might talk on the timber rattlesnake. All directors were requested to think of speaker ideas for the next meeting.

10. Updates

- a. **Bobby Braceland Park Gate.** Katherine said that representatives of the Upper Falls Greenway group noted that a chain link fence at Braceland Park inhibited access to the trail along the Charles River and proposed that the City install a gate to allow easier access. The City approved the request contingent on funds being raised to cover the cost. The Greenway group requested \$581 (25% of the gate’s cost) from Upper Falls Greenway funds held by the Conservators; other sources will cover the other 75%. The Executive Committee had approved this request, and funds have been transferred to Parks, Recreation and Culture.
- b. **PRC Update.** Beth said that PRC is considering community gardens in the North side of Newton near the Jackson Homestead on the City-owned “Spears Park” lot at the corner of Washington Street and Walnut Park. There was a community meeting about possible plans to improve the area next to the parking lot and bathhouse at Crystal Lake, formerly 20 Rogers Street. A controversial aspect of one plan was an access road across the land. The CR we hold on this parcel limits the amount of paved or impermeable surface, and we will need to monitor the project’s plans closely for compliance. There will likely be a subsequent series of meetings on this project.

- c. **Conservation Commission.** Dan G. said that the Deer Park trail was dedicated to former Conservation Commission chair for 28 years, Ira Wallach. The honeybee project at Deer Park has been approved for an additional year.
- d. **Conservation Restrictions.** Chris displayed the current CR sign-up sheet and encouraged additional signups and submission of all reports on the form provided by the middle of November. He also asked that monitoring teams provide only necessary photos.
- e. **Events.** Margaret said that volunteers were needed for all the upcoming fall tabling events.
- f. **Volunteer Coordination.** Margaret has contacted potential volunteers and requested referrals for potential volunteers.
- g. **Monarch Butterfly Festival.** Ted related that the recent Monarch Festival at Wellington Park attracted a diverse population of over 200 people in attendance, which may be the largest event the Newton Conservators has done recently. An article about it appeared in Fig City News (<https://figcitynews.com/2022/09/newton-monarch-festival-2022-beauty-on-the-wing/>). Overall, the Festival, cosponsored by the Newton PRC and Friends of Wellington Park, was a tremendous success.
- h. **City Tree Ordinance Proposal.** Two revised tree ordinances have been introduced to the Program and Services Committee of the City Council, which may be reconciled. In both proposals the minimum size will be decreased from eight to six inches diameter at breast height. One proposal would require a mitigation fee paid by homeowners who remove and do not replace a tree.
- i. **Walks.** Sam said that the walk with John Regosin was very successful. The trail was more rugged than some participants had expected, so the board discussed whether descriptions of terrain might be included in publicity of subsequent walks. The Kids Walks continue to be successful. The Riverside walk has been changed from October 8 to October 29. The website was changed to reflect the new date, but other public notices need changing as well.
- j. **Webinars.** Beth said that more than 220 people signed up for Jennifer Steel's talk on Newton's buried streams, which was very successful. The video of the event has been published on our YouTube channel (tinyurl.com/videoconservators.)
- k. **Newsletter.** Some mail subscribers have not yet received the latest Newsletter. Ken has extra copies if they are needed, which can be made available for upcoming events. The winter Newsletter will be printed for December delivery. The printing cost has gone up 28.6% for a current cost of \$1.93/copy. The Executive Committee has agreed to the price increase for now but is exploring future options such as reducing the number of copies or re-bidding.
- l. **Trails Subcommittee. Marty Sender Trail Phase-2.** Chris said that PRC will have an online update by Weston and Sampson on the Marty Sender Trail phase-2 project on the evening of September 29.
- m. **November Meeting.** The November meeting was moved from November 23 to November 30th to avoid inconvenience due to Thanksgiving on November 24.

12. Adjournment. Chris adjourned the meeting at 9:15 pm.

Coming Events

Sept. 29, Thur., 6 pm public zoom meeting on Marty Sender Trail Phase II, see

www.newtonma.gov/parkprojects

Oct. 1, Sat. Walk, Notable Features of Webster Woods [10am-12pm]

Oct. 2, Sun., Upper Falls Village Day [11am-2pm]

Oct. 10, Mon., Indigenous Peoples Day [11am-5pm]
Oct. 16, Sun., Newton Harvest Fest Fair
Oct. 19, Wed. NC ExCom Meeting [3pm]
Oct. 22, Sat., Walk, Birding at Cold Spring Park [8am-11am]
Oct. 26, Wed. NC Board Meeting [7pm]
Oct. 29, Sat., Walk, Kids-Riverside Adventure [10am-11:30am]
Nov. 30, Wed, November Board Meeting

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Newton Conservators' Board of Directors Meeting
October 26, 2022, 7-9 PM
Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Chris Hepburn, presiding, David Backer, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Bonnie Carter, Michael Clarke, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Dan Green, Bill Hagar, Katherine Howard, Alice Ingerson, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith and Beth Wilkinson.

1. **Welcome.** Chris welcomed the participants at 7:03 pm. Barbara enunciated the acknowledgement that Newton and its open spaces, which we promote and steward, is on the historical, current and unceded land of the Massachusetts.
2. **Approval of Minutes.** Mike moved that the minutes of September 28 be approved. These were approved unanimously.
3. **Treasurer's Report.** Katherine had previously sent around the current financials and noted that our Fidelity Market Index Fund's Net Asset Value (NAV) is down 25% this year to date with an unrealized loss of \$91K as of September 30; however, in the previous three years there were large unrealized gains. Our operating statement is \$5K behind in Dues and Gifts, so we will need to make sure our year end renewals come in strong. Operating expenses are favorable by \$2.7K (or \$3.6K after adjusting for timing of the grants budget). We have had no expenses for Special Projects so are favorable in that category by another \$12.4K. The main transaction in restricted funds was the \$10K for the Marty Sender phase-2 project paid from the Trails Revolving fund, for which we need to develop a replenishment fundraising plan. Chris noted that all expenses or commitments to spend over \$100 should be pre-approved by the executive committee before commitment to the expenses.
4. **Newton Community Farm Request.** Chris presented a grant proposal for \$876 for two Smart Carts to be used by the staff and volunteers of the Newton Community Farm. The carts would allow the Farm to grow produce more efficiently for sale and donation for the Newton community. Chris noted that our Grants budget is depleted for this year, the request is not directly related to open space or environmental education and the Farm has other sources of revenue. The Grants Committee thought that the Farm needed the carts for general and student use. Barbara felt that this was an operational cost. On the original proposal, the board voted: Yes 3; No 10. Ted moved that we provide funding for a single cart as a grant; the vote was Yes 3 and No 10. Katherine moved that we fund one cart under special projects, Alice seconded. The vote was Yes 9 and No 1.
5. **Spears Park Community Garden.** The PRC is considering a community garden in the north side of Newton near the Jackson Homestead on the City-owned "Spears Park" lot at the corner of Washington Street and Walnut Park and has requested a letter of support for this. The community garden would be the first community garden on the northside of Newton. A group of residents have formed a 501(3)c called the Friends of Tasun Community Gardens at Spears Park. The PRC has completed a survey of the plot and selected a design consultant. The Friends have recently received a commitment of at least \$5000 from The Village Bank. They have also applied for a grant from the Hauser Charitable trust and are looking for funding at the State level through State Rep. John Lawn and Senator Cynthia Creem. The planting beds would be wheelchair height. Alice said the north side of Newton has relatively little useable open space and that the area would need to be fenced to exclude rodents. Ken noted that the site had been used for dumping snow, but new soil will be provided for the planting beds. The vote to

write a letter of support to the PRC for the concept of providing a community garden at Spears Park, passed with one abstention.

6. **Guidelines for Website Postings.** Barbara referred to the item in the board packet (Appendix A) regarding guidelines for posting on our website. The document is weighted toward local Newton items but would allow relevant posts from entities outside Newton while excluding fundraising requests. Those with current posting privileges would be the first decision makers in determining what would be posted. Beth pointed out that, where there is controversy, policy should be made by the Board before items citing or inferring a position could be posted. Barbara suggested that the committee review the present document and submit a revised draft at the November meeting.
7. **Newsletter Price Increase.** Because of the recent price increase for printing the newsletter, Chris said that we would likely print fewer newsletters in the summer and winter (those needed for our membership mailings) and more in the spring and fall when they are also needed for events. One-sided fliers will be prepared this winter for use at NC events next spring, since these seem to be more popular take-aways at events than the newsletters.
8. **City Tree Ordinance Proposal.** Katherine presented a chart comparing the essentials of the two revised tree ordinances that have been introduced to the Program and Services Committee of the City Council. Both would protect trees of 6" in diameter. The discussion will be continued in the P&S Committee. Alice suggested that a small committee be formed to follow this issue. Alice, Katherine, Bill and Beth volunteered.
9. **Spring Banquet and Speaker.** Chris suggested Bill (chair), Alice, Barbara, Katherine, Ted and Sam as members of the committee to organize the Annual Meeting and Banquet since they did such a good job this year. Barbara had circulated a video of Ted Levin as a suggested speaker talking about the timber rattlesnake.
10. **New Volunteers.** Chris indicated that we need to follow up on people who have offered to volunteer to help with various aspects of our mission. Nyssa and Margaret will discuss how we could connect to volunteers and what opportunities we could offer them and present their suggestions at the November meeting.
11. **DEIJ Requested Discussion.** Peter suggested that the dominant way we connect people to open space depends on science, ecological and educational approaches. The DEIJ committee had previously asked Board members to jot down 2-3 sentences in response to the question: "Please describe a time when you realized someone else experienced nature differently than you did." This will be discussed at the November meeting. Peter offered one example from his own experience, but for lack of time the general discussion was deferred to the November meeting.
12. **Updates**
 - a. **Parks, Recreation & Culture.** Beth noted that Dan Brody updated the website on Levingston Cove, and Luis Demorizi had communicated to Beth that the PRC was ready to proceed with this project in the fall. In a roundtable discussion on the proposed budget override an additional \$1M would be available for parks, fields and playgrounds, and \$500K for tree planting. Jonathan Yeo has said that he would find money for the survey of Nahanton Park needed to complete its long pending CR. As a result of the override, additional CPA funds may also become available.

- b. **Membership Renewal and Fundraising.** A membership renewal letter is in the works. We will need to do fundraising for the Trails Fund, as we have spent \$10K from this fund this year.
- c. **Conservation Restrictions.** Chris encouraged the submission of all CR reports on the MS Word form provided by the middle of November.
- d. **Webinars.** Beth said there will be a webinar on the native plant ordinance in two weeks. Pete said that 23 people showed up for his recent bird walk.
- e. **Invasives.** Katherine said that there was a really great outing with the Boston College Eco-Pledge Group. Katherine and Beth spent an hour with a middle school class from a local Montessori school talking about invasives.
- f. **Newsletter.** Ken said the winter newsletter will go out in early December, with articles on the monarch festival, Levingston Cove (Luis Demorizi), and updates on the Marty Sender and Pigeon Hill trails (Ted Chapman).
- g. **New Trails Booklet.** Dan B. related through Chris that most edits have been made on the new trails map booklet and a presentation will be made shortly to the Trails subcommittee at which time the maps to be included in the booklet will be discussed. Dan G. said that the Mayor had a favorable view on providing a gate at the former deer park on Hammond Pond Parkway, which should be installed later this month.
- h. **Conservation Commission.** Dan G. said that bees and pollinators are under discussion, but it is not clear what action might be taken after the research on these issues is considered.
- i. **ADA/504 Accessibility Draft Plan.** Ted said that Newton residents with disabilities and those who are interested in accessibility are invited to review the draft of the updated Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan (for 2022 to 2027) and provide feedback at a virtual Zoom meeting on Thursday, October 27th, 2022 at 6 pm. The focus of this multi-year plan is to identify projects that will improve the accessibility of conservation and recreation sites in Newton. For questions or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact jfairley@newtonma.gov. The session is posted on our events calendar. If there are accessibility issues with trails or individual properties suggestions should be made to the ADA Draft Plan.
- j. **Zoning and Diversity.** Alice noted that zoning has had a significant impact in limiting Newton's diversity. She offered to canvas Board members for dates when she might present the research she previously presented through Historic Newton on the history of Newton's zoning.

12. Adjournment. Chris adjourned the meeting at 9:10 pm.

Coming Events

Oct 27, Thur., Discussion on ADA/504 Accessibility Draft Plan

Oct. 29, Sat., Riverside Adventure walk -Kids [10-11:30am]

Nov. 2, Wed., Darkness in Distress-Webinar [7-8:30pm]

Nov. 5, Sat., Discovering Natural Changes walk -Kids [10-11:30am]

Nov. 16, Wed., ExCom Meeting [3pm]

Nov. 16, Wed., What is a native Plant Ordinance-Webinar [7-8:30pm]

Nov. 17, Thur. ExCom Meeting [3:15pm]

Nov. 30, Wed., Board Meeting [Note the last Wed. of Nov. because of Thanksgiving]

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Appendix A. DRAFT Recommendations for Posting News and Events, October 3, 2023 – Rev 1.0

From Committee: Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Ted Kuklinski, Ken Mallory

We are proposing the following guidelines to advise Newton Conservators with website posting privileges regarding what from other organizations may be added to our “Conservation News” and “Events” feeds on the home page of our website.

POSTS – Should be at the discretion of the poster and should be:

- Mission aligned (connecting people with open space, plus education and advocacy regarding open space and nature.)
- Of interest to our members and friends (e.g. health alerts, how to cope with problem wildlife, new street tree ordinances, etc.)
- Promoting opportunities for action our members and friends can take
- Weighted towards local Newton items, but including regional, state and US items
- Refrain from posting fund raising appeals from other organizations that are not event- oriented (e.g. we would post the Newton Community Farm Annual Dinner even though it is a fund raiser, but would not promote other general appeals or the weekly Waltham Land Trust restaurant meetings to raise funds.)

PROCESS –

- Directors with posting privileges may post News & Event content using their discretion.
- If poster believes item to be potentially controversial, they should ask the Executive Committee for review / approval.
- Anything posted in our News and Events is appropriate for adding to the E-Bulletin and our various social media feeds.
- If a Director lacks posting privileges, they may ask another director to post for them:
 - Website managers: Peter Barrer and Barbara Bates
 - Website, Instagram & Twitter: Ted Kuklinski
 - Website, Facebook: Beth Wilkinson
 - Facebook, Instagram: Sam Corbin
 - Facebook, Instagram: Ken Mallory

Sources for potential postings:

- Newton- specific
- Newton Conservators (board, members, and friends)
- Green Newton
- Historic Newton – events, walks
- Newton Community Farm – events
- Newton Tree Conservancy
- City of Newton, Con Com, Parks, Rec & Culture, Tree Conservancy, Village Days, etc.
- Bike Newton – use discretion, may not necessarily be mission aligned
- Mothers Out Front - especially climate change, others use discretion
- Riverside Greenway Working Group
- FORJ - use discretion
- Indigenous Peoples’ Day

DRAFT Recommendations for Posting News and Events

- o Friends Groups – events, walks
 - Friends of Cold Spring Park
 - Friends of Nahanton Park
 - Friends of Houghton Garden
 - Friends of Hemlock Gorge
 - Friends of the Cove
 - Friends of Albemarle
 - Friends of Farlow Park
 - Friends of Wellington Park
 - Athletic Fields organization
 - And others.....

- Nearby Conservation Organizations – if walks, webinars, events of educational import (not fundraisers)
 - o Waltham Land Trust
 - o Wellesley
 - o Weston
 - o Needham
 - o Watertown
 - o Brookline
 - o Boston
 - o Lincoln
 - State
 - o Mass Audubon – advocacy alerts
 - o The Trustees [of Reservations] – advocacy alerts
 - o Mass Land Trust Coalition – advocacy alerts
 - o Land Trust Alliance – advocacy alerts
 - o Mass Wildlife – alerts, conservation news, how to handle problem animals etc.
 - o CPA Coalition – – advocacy alerts
 - o Massachusetts tribal news & events encouraging outside participation
 - o TNC [The Nature Conservancy] – advocacy alerts
 - o Union of Concerned Scientists - – advocacy alerts
 - o Conservation Law Foundation - – advocacy alerts
 - National – use discretion
 - o National Audubon
 - o National Wildlife Federation
 - o Sierra Club
 - o Journey North
 - o Outdoor Afro – events in our area
 - o Environmental Voter - <https://www.environmentalvoter.org>

Consider other groups mentioned here (list on our website of all regional orgs plus links):
o <https://newtonconservators.org/nearby-parks/>

Newton Conservators' Board of Directors Meeting
November 30, 2022, 7-9 PM
Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Chris Hepburn, presiding, David Backer, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Michael Clarke, Margaret Doris, Dan Green, Bill Hagar, Katherine Howard, Alice Ingerson, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith and Beth Wilkinson.

1. **Welcome.** Chris welcomed the participants at 7:03 pm. Alice enunciated the acknowledgement that Newton and its open spaces, which we promote and steward, are on the historical, current and unceded land of the Massachusett.
2. **Approval of Minutes.** Barbara moved that the minutes of October 26 be approved. These were approved unanimously.
3. **Treasurer's Report.** Katherine said that there was progress on securing Charles Platt as the Newton Commonwealth Golf Club Commission escrow agent. Peter said that progress has been made on organizing groups to pursue funding for the Trails Fund to replace the \$10,000 we have recently provided for the Marty Sender Trail. Katherine has also approached a lead off donor.
4. **85 Dudley Road.** Alice had previously circulated the Expression of Interest (EOI) solicitation by the City for potential public/private uses of the 14 acres referred to as 85 Dudley Road that has a submission deadline for December. The Planning Department held a community meeting that outlined the EOI. (See <https://www.newtonma.gov/government/planning/development-review/high-interest-projects/dudley-road-estate>).
5. **City Tree Ordinance Proposal.** Alice said that the Board's Tree Ordinance Committee (Katherine, Beth, Bill, and herself) met after the last Programs and Services Committee (P&S) meeting on the topic and will report after P&S has met again on December 7. There was a site visit by P&S at the Newton Cemetery, which has requested an exemption from the ordinance regardless of how it may be revised by either of the competing proposals.
6. **Spring Annual Meeting and Speaker Bill** solicited Ted, Ken, and Sam for the organizing committee for the Annual Meeting, which should be on May 3, 2023. Alice said she would help with investigating potential indoor-outdoor venues.
7. **New Volunteers.** Margaret said that the committee was unclear on to whom volunteers should be channeled based on the volunteers' self-identified interests. Barbara pointed out that there were various efforts of the Conservators where volunteers could be directed. Beth suggested that we provide a list of needs for volunteers that they could choose from. Ted said that the list could be posted both on the website and in the bulletin. Sam offered to join the committee on volunteers.
8. **Report on the Environmental Science Program (ESP).** David said that he would no longer be running the ESP, the PRC has interviewed and appointed a new program director, who may take over at the beginning of December. David said he would be available for questions through his email (davidbacker610@gmail.com). David expected that the new ESP program director would submit a grant request for camper scholarship funds. On behalf of the Board Chris thanked David for his 18 years of service to the ESP.
9. **DEIJ Requested Discussion.** The DEIJ committee deferred their discussion until the December meeting.

10. Updates

- a. **Spears Park Community Garden.** Ted talked about the PRC public meeting to discuss the proposal for the Spears Park Community Garden. Most comments were generally favorable to the idea of a northside community garden, but some neighbors were opposed. The PRC approved the proposal unanimously.
- b. **Membership Renewal and Fundraising.** Katherine said that 440 membership renewal letters were mailed out from Bonnie's mailing party.
- c. **Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC).** Beth related that work has started on Levingston Cove, which will be closed until June 3, 2023.
- d. **Conservation Commission.** Dan G. said that only individuals making changes around their houses have been coming to the Conservation Commission recently. The proposal for improving the Marty Sender trail will be presented at the Commission's meeting on December 1. Beth thought that development of The Street near Hammond Pond was under consideration, which might affect wildlife around the pond. Dan said that enduring noise rather than light was a greater consideration for the commission.

In a comment unrelated to the Conservation Commission, Dan also remarked that a dying tree at Ordway Park should be felled.

- e. **Conservation Restrictions.** Chris noted that all the CR reports save one had been submitted and said that our cumulative efforts on the CR reports has had a noticeable effect on improving the environments of the properties monitored. All but one of the CR monitoring reports have been received.
- f. **Webinars.** Katherine felt that the webinar on light pollution was very motivating. Beth and those she has talked to agreed. Katherine expected that Green Newton would be interested in the topic.
- g. **Newsletter.** Ken said the winter Newsletter was waiting for Luis Perez Demorizi of Parks, Recreation & Culture to approve the final editing of his article about the progress of the improvements at Levingston Cove.
- h. **December Board Meeting.** Chris noted that the December meeting would be on December 28th.
- i. **Walks.** Sam said that Newton Community Pride will cosponsor a walk at 8:30 am on January 29, 2023. A representative from The Street was willing to promote our walks on The Street's social media and staff from the organization may attend some of the Hammond Pond/Webster Woods walks and bring snacks. Sam hopes to develop this collaboration. Sam will solicit walks leaders after the New Year.
- j. **Christmas Bird Count.** Ted mentioned that the Christmas Bird Count would occur on December 18.

12. Adjournment. Chris adjourned the meeting at 8:24 pm.

Coming Events

Dec. 15, Thur. ExCom meeting, 3 pm

Dec. 28, Board Meeting, 7 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Clarke

Newton Conservators' Board of Directors Meeting
December 28, 2022, 7-9 PM
Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Chris Hepburn, presiding, David Backer, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Michael Clarke, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Bill Hagar, Katherine Howard, Alice Ingerson, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith and Beth Wilkinson.

1. **Welcome.** Chris welcomed the participants at 7:03 pm. Barbara enunciated the acknowledgement that Newton and its open spaces, which we promote and steward, are on the historical, current and unceded land of the Massachusetts.
2. **Approval of Minutes.** Mike moved that the minutes of November 30, 2022 be approved. These were approved unanimously.
3. **Treasurer's Report.** Katherine said that she was busy keeping up with the year-end activity and that we had met our 2022 budget with \$31,000 in donations which included several large donations late in the year. She has now received the certificate of solicitation from the attorney general's office. She requested suggested changes for the 2023 budget.
4. **85 Dudley Road.** Beth said that the review group had narrowed the field of 9 proposals to a smaller group and met with the short list of proposers and forwarded its recommendations to the Mayor. Meeting the mandate for affordable housing may require additional resources and CPA funding may be considered for filling the gap. It is unclear how much of the 14 acres would remain as open space even without City acquisition because some sections probably are unbuildable, such as the ledges.
Alice noted that the Newton Conservators may not have a chance to comment until after the Mayor has selected a developer to submit a combined bid for the property with the City, and a proposal for public acquisition and funding is before the City Council and the Community Preservation Committee, both of which would probably hold public hearings on that proposal. Given this tight timeline, she suggested that the Board should discuss and vote on this final proposal as soon as it becomes available, then rely on its Dudley Road working group (Chris, Dan G. and herself) to turn that vote into written testimony for the public hearings. The Board agreed with this approach. There was a consensus of the Board that the City should not make a sizeable commitment to using open space funds to acquire an interest in the property.
[On Friday, January 13, the Mayor announced that she had chosen NOW Communities/Civico Development as the City's partner in potentially acquiring/developing housing on the parcels the City has been calling the "Dudley Road Estate."]
5. **City Tree Ordinance Proposal.** Alice related that the City's Program and Services Committee did not meet on this in December, so no progress has been made on resolving the City Tree Ordinance proposals.
6. **Spring Annual Meeting and Speaker.** Bill discussed the possibility of using an indoor-outdoor facility instead of the VFW site and displayed a list of considerations for this.
7. **2023 Awards.** Chris said it was time to start considering who might be eligible for the several awards that we make annually. He asked that directors email him with suggestions.
8. **Trails Fund.** Katherine remarked that the committee was in the quiet phase of looking for major donors.
9. **Watertown Dam Removal.** The CWRA has requested that we write a letter in support of removing a dam on the Charles in Watertown and asked for an opportunity to present this to the Conservators. The consensus was to hear a brief presentation on this.

10. **Co-Sponsoring Bee Talk with the Library.** The speaker is from the van Engelsdorp Bee Lab at the University of Maryland. It is not clear how the speaker would portray the effect of honeybees on native bees. Though Ted was not at this meeting, the Board reiterated its request that he contact the speaker to clarify the emphasis of the talk.

11. **DEIJ Requested Discussion.** Ahead of the Board meeting, the DEIJ team asked directors to think about: 1) What is the main way you experience nature? And 2) Describe a time when you realized someone else experienced nature differently than you. Each Board member responded during the meeting. Here is a summary of key words from the responses.

How YOU experience open space. Enjoying, learning, escape, field guide learning, being out in nature, joy, wonder, learning, roaming, “home”, early in life wanted to be a biologist, restorative, senses, ask why do things grow this way?, see wildlife, aquatic wildlife, as a child nature literature, now photos, work in nature, understanding ecology, calm feeling, any kind of nature is enjoyable, solving problems of climbing and canoeing, restorative, seeing details, relaxing to walk around, observing rocks and wildlife

How you’ve seen OTHERS experience open space. Fear based in racist history, hunting wildlife to eat, fear of nature, family enjoyment and eating, study nature plants, foreign and dangerous, talking but not seeing nature, fear of nature, exercising with earbuds and not noticing nature, indigenous people see themselves as part of nature, difficulty navigating in wheelchairs, farmer who felt pain looking at dry landscape, young person wondering at small waterfall, liking wide paths for a pleasant pretty walk, riding bikes oblivious to natural surroundings

12. Updates

a. **Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC).** Beth related that construction on Levingston Cove is moving along and that the renovation of Gath now involves two separate pools. David noted that the offers made to two individuals to direct the Environmental Science Program had not been accepted, but that there was optimism that someone would be on board by January.

b. **Webinars.** Beth said that Barbara will give a webinar on animal tracks on January 12.

c. **Walks.** Sam said that planning was proceeding for the winter walks and asked who might be interested in leading a walk.

d. **Newsletter.** Ken related that the winter Newsletter was emailed on December 13 and mailed on December 19-20. The mailed copies were only just arriving.

12. Adjournment. Chris adjourned the meeting and wished everyone a Happy New Year at 8:24 pm.

Coming Events

Jan. 12, Thur., Webinar, Reading the Stories Told by Animal Tracks and Signs, 7pm

Jan. 19, Thur., ExCom Meeting-3pm

Jan. 25, Wed., Board Meeting-7pm

May 7, Sun., Newton Serves

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke