

the Newton Conservators NEWSLETTER

SPRING ISSUE

APRIL 1991

C A L E N D A R

- Saturday, April 27 - 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon ORDWAY PARK CLEAN-UP
- Saturday, April 27 - 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon COLD SPRING PARK CLEAN-UP
[Sunday, April 28 - Rain Date]
- Sunday, April 28 - 12:00 noon - 5:00 p.m. NEWTON EARTH DAY CELEBRATION
- Sunday, May 12 - 12:00 noon - 5:00 p.m. SPRINGFEST
- Wednesday, May 15 - 6:30 p.m. CONSERVATORS ANNUAL MEETING
- Saturday, May 18 - 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon EAST BURIAL GROUND CLEAN-UP
- Sundays, May 19, 26; June 2, 9, 16 - 2 p.m. SPRING WALKS

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ANNUAL MEETING AND DINNER - MAY 15

by Fran Seasholes

Following the successful pattern of the last two years, the Conservators will hold their Annual Dinner Meeting on the campus of Andover Newton Theological School on Herrick Road, Newton Centre, on Wednesday, May 15. State Representative David Cohen's keynote address is titled, "1991 - Watershed Year" and will look at environmental issues in the legislature. That will begin after

the business meeting and two presentations: the first, a special recognition to Helen Heyn, retiring executive secretary of the Conservation Commission; and the second, the annual Environmentalist-of-the-Year Award to Leo Levi, chairman of the Newton Pride Beautification Committee. The pre-dinner social time and the meal culminate in make-it-yourself strawberry shortcake! Invitations and specifics will be mailed soon. **SAVE THE DATE!**

REPRESENTATIVE DAVID B. COHEN

by Bonnie Carter

Representative David B. Cohen will be the speaker at the Conservators annual meeting on May 15.

Since January 1991, Representative Cohen has served as chairman of the Joint Committee on Banks and Banking, a committee which reviews each piece of legislation concerning banks, banking institutions, credit unions, small loans, consumer credit and related matters. He also co-chairs the Special Commission on Early Childhood Programs which is developing proposals for affordable, universal child care. For the previous six years, he served as chairman of the House Committee on Bills in Third Reading.

Protecting the environment is one of his legislative priorities. Representative Cohen is spearheading the effort to protect the metropolitan drinking water supply. He strongly supports the reduction of toxic waste production, and was the driving force behind an act to improve air quality.

Representative Cohen has received numerous citations for his leadership, including: Legislator of the Year Award from the Massachusetts Municipal Association, The Massachusetts Psychological Association, and the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health; a Friend of Children's Award from the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; and a Leadership Award from the Massachusetts Senior Action Council.

A product of the Newton public school system, David Cohen attended Harvard University and was graduated in 1970. He earned a legal degree from Boston University in 1973.

Representative Cohen became active in local politics while in law school and served on the Newton Board of Aldermen from 1972 to 1980. He was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1978, representing the villages of Newton, Newton Centre, Oak Hill, Chestnut Hill and parts of Newtonville and Waban.

Representative Cohen was born in 1947 and has been a Newton resident most of his life. Currently he lives in Oak Hill with his wife, Laura, and their two children, Melissa and Adam.

IN MEMORIAM

With regret we note the death of long-time Conservator member, Hanna Salzer of Waban. A refugee from Germany, she had a reverence for life and the conviction that we can find purpose and contentment in meeting each day's challenges. We will miss her cheerful, always-ready-to-help spirit.

1961 - 1991
30th ANNIVERSARY!!!

DUES are DUE To Support Newton Conservators

Please pay up to support Newton's advocate for open space and environmental education, the Newton Conservators! If you receive a white envelope with this mailing, you are in arrears -- or note the mail label -- a date before '91 means you need to pay up.

If your check has been mailed, our thanks, and the update will be made ASAP. And our thanks especially if you have contributed more than the \$10 membership, or \$15 family renewal, say \$25 as a sponsor, or even a Life Membership!

Coming soon, the Annual Dinner and Environmentalist of the Year Award! And in the works, a new map of Newton's parks and open spaces - last done by Newton Conservators in 1981.

See coupon on the back page!

The Conservators Newsletter appears three or four times a year.
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HELEN A. HEYN

by Jean Husher

Helen Heyn, Executive Secretary of the Newton Conservation Commission, will be retiring on June 30th of this year. It is hard to imagine how the work of the Commission will proceed in the professional way to which all of Newton is accustomed. Helen has been deeply involved in the conservation of Newton's open spaces for at least 35 years, and her memory of the details of land use issues which have come to public attention during those years is phenomenal!

Helen Heyn grew up in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and graduated from the University of Michigan there. Her parents were always involved in local public issues so that this pattern was established for Helen at an early age.

In 1947, Helen and her husband Arno moved to Oak Hill, where she witnessed the fast development of its farms and woodlands. She became a member of the Oak Hill District Improvement Association, an active organization which campaigned against several inappropriate commercial proposals for the development of the Shaw Estate on Nahanton St. near the Charles River.

When Lorenz Muther approached her with the idea of establishing a citizen action organization to serve as the city's conscience for guarding its remaining open land, she accepted immediately and became one of the charter members of the Newton Conservators.

The Newton Conservation Commission was established by the city in 1966 at the urging of the Conservators, and Helen was appointed as a member by Mayor Basbas the following year. The Commission quickly became a busy arm of city government, and Helen filled the role of volunteer executive secretary for many years. Early in the 1970s, Helen found that serving on both the Conservators Board of Directors and on the Conservation Commission took more time than a conscientious person could manage well, and so with regret she resigned from the Board. She became a member of the Planning and Development Department staff as the Commission's executive secretary in 1979, and has served with distinction in that important position. She has

been a superb source of information about conservation laws and ordinances for the members of the Board of Aldermen, the Planning and Development Department staff, architects, developers, and citizens alike.

The Newton Conservators will be proud to present Helen Heyn a Certificate of Appreciation at the Annual Meeting for her many years of outstanding service to our city.

LEO L. LEVI, ENVIRONMENTALIST OF THE YEAR

by Liz Cody

Leo Levi, businessman, volunteer and prize winning gardener is the Conservators' choice for the 1991 Environmentalist of the Year.

Since his retirement in 1988, Mr. Levi has taken on a new project, that of giving further reality to Newton's desire to be the "Garden City." As a member of the Board of Directors of the Newton Pride Committee and chairman of its Beautification Committee as well as the Street Tree Task Force, he has provided the momentum for the flower bulb and the tree planting programs. He has involved local schools, colleges, churches, synagogues, scouting groups and community leaders in design and planting projects. He has encouraged the development of an herb garden at the Jackson Homestead and Arbor Day tree plantings at Newton colleges and public school campuses. Through his work, 1,500,000 bulbs have been sold to Newton gardeners. Bulbs donated by his committee have been planted in Newton Centre, in Pettee Square, in Nahanton Park and at seven Newton housing projects. Mr. Levi has supported botanic tree hikes, tours of the Newton Cemetery grounds, and has worked with Bull Worldwide Information Systems of Newton to develop environmental programs for use in Newton's public schools.

The following quotes are from just a few of his many admirers.

Mayor Mann: "Everybody will claim Leo as his very own... We have been kindred spirits for a long time and share a mutual commitment to improving Newton's environment. He is, for me, not only 'Environmentalist of the Year', but 'Friend of the Year'."

Linda Plout, Director, Mayor's Office for Cultural Affairs: "Leo is fabulous. I think Leo ...[has] awakened the entire community to...improving the

[cont. page 5]

NEW DEVELOPMENTS AT LASELL COLLEGE

by Peter Kastner

Lasell has filed suit in the Land Court requesting a declaratory judgment for the college upholding their position that they should be allowed to build an "educational center for and about the elderly." The educational center would retain most of the attributes of the life care center which had been turned down by the Newton Board of Aldermen this past year.

The Lasell suit contends that the primary purpose of the educational center will be to "enhance the lives of the elderly residents....to provide a site for the study of the problems of the elderly by the college's undergraduate students"....and to provide practical instruction and experience to the college's undergraduates and students from other local educational institutions in "related fields such as human services, health services, business administration, physical therapy, nursing, travel and tourism, and food services."

The college's suit also contends that the recent amendment to the city zoning ordinance controlling educational use of land is too restrictive and violates Massachusetts General Law c40A which states that "No zoning ordinance or by-law shallprohibit, regulate or restrict the use of land or structures....for educational purposes on land owned or leased by....a nonprofit educational corporation; provided, however, that such land or structures may be subject to reasonable regulations."

The current Lasell College project is essentially a redrafting of the original life care center proposal, but with the novel approach of trying to avoid application for a special permit by claiming an educational use. The latest proposal is a challenge to the City's control over land use for educational purposes.

At first glance, the college will be hard pressed to receive approval for an educational exemption for essentially a life care center with an attached nursing home. The City, however, is taking this case seriously. It is concerned about the importance of maintaining the current protection under the code, as well as defending a narrow interpretation of what constitutes an educational use.

STONE INSTITUTE NURSING HOME PROPOSAL

by Doug Sherman

As many readers of the Newsletter know, the Stone Institute is a retirement home for women is situated on Elliot Street in Newton Upper Falls. The Institute's main building and wide, sloping front lawn have long been a Newton landmark. The site also includes about two acres of mature second-growth woods located behind and to the side of the main building.

For several years, the non-profit Stone Institute has faced increasing financial difficulties, and in 1989 the Institute proposed to ensure its long-term survival by building a nursing home on the property. Unfortunately, the original plan involved considerable blasting of rock ledges and the virtual destruction of the woods. Opposed by many in the Upper Falls neighborhood, the proposal was rejected by the Board of Aldermen in March, 1989.

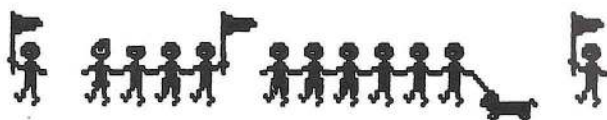
That decision temporarily saved the woods, but it did nothing to solve the Stone Institute's underlying financial problem. To do so, the Institute has developed a second proposal for construction of a nursing home on the property. The project has been redesigned in response to neighborhood and environmental concerns to eliminate blasting and to preserve 80% of the woods. If the proposal is accepted, the entire property will be placed under a preservation easement, affording permanent protection to the remaining woods and guaranteeing public access.

Obviously, environmentalists would prefer that these woods (and all the surviving woods in Newton) remain inviolate, but efforts to fund public acquisition of the land have been sadly unsuccessful. In these circumstances, the current proposal appears to be a relatively good resolution of the familiar conflict between economic and environmental imperatives. If the proposal is rejected, the only realistic alternative open to the Stone Institute would be the construction and sale of several two-family houses on lots carved out of the lawn and woods. Under the existing zoning, the Institute could apparently build this housing by right, without the need for aldermanic approval.

The proposed nursing home is preferable for two reasons. First, it will entail less destruction of

open space, both in the short and long terms. Second, it will provide a socially beneficial service to the Newton community at a very small environmental cost. This is the sort of solution that we should support; and this is the standard that we should require of any future development in our city.

The Stone Institute's proposal will come before the Board of Aldermen in May.



SPRING WALKS SCHEDULE

This year the Conservators have planned five spring walks, and invite all citizens to participate in this opportunity to enjoy Newton's lovely public open spaces. All walks are on Sundays at 2 p.m.

May 19 - NAHANTON PARK

Meet at Nahanton Park Nature Center Building. Enter park from Nahanton Street at the drive nearest the Charles River; parking available. Leader: Paula Chasan, 965-4431.

May 26 - HOUGHTON GARDEN

Meet at brown "Houghton Garden" sign on Suffolk Rd., Chestnut Hill (Beacon St. to Hammond St. at B.C., r. on Hammond St. to Suffolk Rd. just before bridge over MBTA tracks).

Leader: Flora Houghteling, 969-7764.

June 2 - CUTLER PARK, Once Newton's Water Lands

This park, just across the Charles River in Needham, belongs to the M.D.C. Meet in parking lot on the far side of the first left-hand building on Nahanton St. across the river.

Leader: Jean Husher, 527-5981.

June 9 - AQUEDUCT WALK

Meet at the parking lot of the Waban MBTA Green Line station.

Leader: Nick Yannoni, 332-6683.

June 16 - KENNARD CONSERVATION AREA

Enter the park at 244/246 Dudley Rd. (off Rte. 9) Drive into small orchard area and park cars on the grass.

Leader: Toni Wallace, 965-4431.

[Leo Levi cont.]

world's environment. It's a great gift that he has and everyone benefits from his energy and generosity of spirit..."

Amy Montague, Chairman, Zervas School Landscape Committee: "Leo is charming and absolutely a gentleman. He knows everyone and has connected me with just the people I need to know to help improve the Zervas School grounds."

Katherine Heanue, landscape designer: [He] "deserves this award more than anyone I can think of."

Betsey Brown, landscape designer: "He's generous with his time and a truly inspiring guy. He's a model for all of us to follow."

Polly Bryson, Alderman: "I think a lot of Leo. He is [creating] more beauty in Newton for the benefit and enjoyment of us all."

NEWTON EARTH DAY CELEBRATION - 1991

Sunday, April 28th, 12 noon to 5 p.m.

Hyde Community Center

90 Lincoln Street, Newton Highlands

COME AND CELEBRATE THIS SPRING AND THE SPRINGS OF THE FUTURE!!

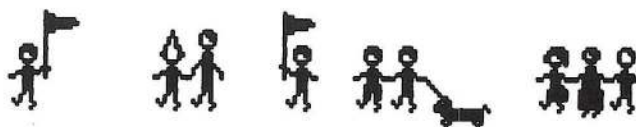
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|--------------|--|
| 12:00 - 5:00 | All Art Contest entries on exhibit |
| | Environmental Booths & Information |
| 12:30 | Meet at Newton Centre Green. |
| | Music |
| | Gather in groups (neighborhoods, schools, Brownies, Conservators etc.) with banners. All invited to join in. |
| 1:00 - 1:30 | Walk to Hyde Community Center via Beacon St. and Lake St. |
| 1:30 - 2:00 | Music |
| 2:00 | Awards for School Tee Shirt Environmental Designs |
| | Tree Planting |
| 2:30 | Speeches on the environment |
| 3:00 - 5:00 | Live Music |

FOOD - FUN - ENTERTAINMENT!

Information: phone Susan at 332-6896

Barbara at 969-7463 or

Annabelle at 3 EARTH 1



SPRING CLEAN-UPS !!**ORDWAY PARK - Saturday, April 27, 10 a.m. to Noon**

The Newton Conservators plan a clean-up and a dig-up of saplings at their own small park, located on the corner of Grant Ave. and Everett St., Newton Centre, on Saturday, April 27th, 10 a.m. to noon. Please bring gloves, loppers, hand pruners, spading forks and rakes. The Conservators will provide containers for trash and brush.

COLD SPRING PARK - Sat., April 27, 10 a.m. to Noon

On the same date and time, the Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council and the Newton Conservators are sponsoring a clean-up of Cold Spring Park, with a rain date for Sunday at the same hours. Volunteers will meet at the Duncklee Street entrance to the park.

All residents who use the Cold Spring Playgrounds and Wilderness Park are invited to commune with nature and remove man-made junk from this beautiful resource.

Wear comfortable boots, work pants and gloves. A favored tool for retrieving junk is a 3-tined cultivating rake. If you have one, bring it.

The City of Newton will provide trucking service to remove trash from two or three collection points.

For more information, phone Robert Smith, 244-9599.

NEWTON BURIAL GROUND PROJECT
Clean-up Day, Saturday, May 18th

The Newton Burial Ground Project, a new project of the Newton Historic Preservation Association, will have a clean-up day of the old East Burial Ground on Saturday, May 18th, 9 a.m. to noon. This burial ground, which is Newton's earliest and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is located on Centre Street at the corner of Cotton Street, opposite Boston College Law School. Its fascinating old slate markers date back to the 1670s. Some have poems as part of the inscriptions and most have interesting carved designs. Although the burial ground is owned by the city, its maintenance has been most marginal for many years. Underbrush, blackberry vines and spurious trees need cutting back with stumps painted with a chemical to stop them from growing again. Your help is needed to begin the process of restoring this historic site. Wear long pants, long sleeves and gloves. Bring pruning shears, bow saws, rakes and a good sense of humor. Come at 9 a.m. and stay as long as you can.

The leader for the clean-up is Thelma Fleishman, phone 244-5598.

NAHANTON PARK PHOTO CONTEST

by Bonnie Carter

The First Winner

Richard Brown of West Newton was recently named winner of the first Nahanton Park Photo Contest. Brown has done nature photography for years, but never before submitted a photo for judging. Self-employed as a certified public accountant, he finds photography to be a pleasant release from the hassles of work. The theme of tranquility is conveyed by his photograph of a duck swimming on the pond surrounded by autumnal colors and their reflections. It is on display at City Hall, on the second floor, until May when it will be moved to the Nature Center at the park.

May Contest

The quarterly photo contest is sponsored by the Friends of Nahanton Park, the Newton Parks and Recreation Department and Newtonville Camera. The next deadline for submitting photos is May 1. Photos must be taken in Nahanton Park of activities, scenery, or nature subjects. Entries can be in color or black and white, any size (3x5 to 11x14) or slides. Amateur photographers wishing to submit photos can send or take them to: Friends of Nahanton Park, c/o Department of Parks and Recreation, 70 Crescent Street, Auburndale, MA 02166 or to: Paul Roberts, Newtonville Camera, 249 Walnut Street, Newtonville, MA 02160. The photographer should include his or her name, address, phone number, and the date of the photograph.

NEWTON CONSERVATORS, INC. CELEBRATES THIRTY YEARS!

by Jean Husher

June of this year marks thirty years since the Newton Conservators was incorporated, and so it is an appropriate time to present a short history of our organization.

Throughout the 1950s, Newton was under enormous development pressures. At first this seemed beneficial to most citizens for little in the way of home construction had occurred throughout the Great Depression of the 1930s and none whatever during World War II. Returning young veterans and their growing families found few affordable homes. Our city government reacted imaginatively to this shortage by taking a large land tract in Oak Hill by eminent domain and building affordable homes especially for veterans in the late 1940s. Private construction companies followed suit over the following ten years. New schools were needed all over Newton. Shopping complexes and large industrial buildings took up more land. Ambitious developers proposed high rise apartment and office buildings for a number of sites in the city. Boston College, which had been a 6-building complex until the end of W.W.II, went on a building spree as did the Newton College of the Sacred Heart (now B.C. Law School). The M.D.C. began to sell off much of its woodland near Hammond Pond for development as did the privately-owned Norumbega Park, and the state presented a series of plans for a super east-west highway to cross the city.

By 1960, Newton citizens became deeply concerned that their beautiful "garden city" would soon become a victim of uncontrolled construction. A small group of persons from various sections of Newton met to discuss what could be done. Each of them had been involved in trying to protect open land in their own neighborhoods. Allard M. Valentine, president of the Auburndale Cooperative Bank, and Murray I Rothman, rabbi of Temple Shalom, were concerned over plans first for a race track and then for high rise buildings proposed for Norumbega Park. Benjamin F. Shattuck, a former alderman, saw developers replacing fine old Victorian

houses in Newton Corner with brick apartment complexes of unimaginative design. Jack M. Roberts and Helen A. Heyn, both members of the Oak Hill District Improvement Association, had seen most of the farm and woodland of their village disappear, and then the Shaw Estate at the edge of the Charles River came up for sale. The first development proposal for this land included three 20-story apartment buildings. When this was rejected, Sylvania Corporation proposed constructing a vast science park on the same site. Dr. Richard Lennihan, Jr. found Edmands Park in Newtonville badly neglected and fast becoming a handy local dump. Deborah Howard, involved in ornithology research for Massachusetts Audubon Society, was concerned that wildlife habitats would soon be decimated in Newton. Lorenz F. Muther, state representative and director of the Newton Taxpayers Association, felt strongly that a balance was needed between developed space and open areas.

These eight persons became the charter members of the Newton Conservators, Inc. thirty years ago. Its purpose as stated in the bylaws drawn up in 1961 was "...to foster for the public interest in the City of Newton the protection, preservation and conservation of natural objects and areas including parks, parklands, forests and streams, and other areas which are open or may be converted to open areas for the enjoyment and benefit of the general public...." This purpose remains the same.

The Conservators first took on several small projects which were carried out successfully, earning the new organization publicity and credibility: the city was persuaded to amend its zoning laws to prohibit developers from stripping and selling loam and sod before construction; and high school student with Conservators members planted 700 evergreen trees in Edmands Park.

Very soon, the new organization tackled the major issue of the appropriate reuse of the old privately owned Norumbega Park on the Charles River at the western end of Commonwealth Avenue. After a number of years of petitions, challenges, and public hearings, the Newton Conservators, working together

Continued →

with Auburndale neighborhood organizations, persuaded the city to purchase more than half of the land for a public park for passive recreation. The remainder was developed by the Marriott Corporation. Periodically over the following decades, Marriott has petitioned to be allowed to expand in one way or another. However, most Newton citizens feel that the hotel is large enough for this suburban "garden city," and so all the petitions have been voted down at the recommendation of the Newton Conservators, the Newton Conservation Commission and many Auburndale community organizations.

It became clear in the battles to control development during the early 1960s that the city needed a Conservation Commission within its government, and this was created at the urging of the Conservators in 1966. The Newton Conservators has since worked closely with the Commission to preserve the best of Newton's remaining open spaces and to control development. To this end, the city has taken land by eminent domain, it has purchased land outright for parks and conservation areas, it has established conservation restrictions and conservation areas on private land to be developed as bargaining chips for special permits, it has accepted bequests of land, and it has made enormous use of Newton's Floodplain/Watershed Protection Ordinance of 1971 to restrict development of land more appropriately held open.

In 1973, the Planning Committee of the Newton Board of Aldermen requested that the Conservation Commission make a study of the remaining open land in the city and establish priorities for possible acquisition. The Conservators followed suit the following year, creating its own Open Space Committee to take on the task. Although the studies were made independently, the results were in close agreement so that the combination served to strengthen the arguments for an outstanding program of land acquisition by the city during the following years.

The Newton Conservators have always relied on public education as a means for promoting its programs. A regularly appearing newsletter was created early in its history to inform its members of projects, issues, activities, threats to open

spaces and how each person can help. Education within the schools has also been of great concern. The Environmental Science Program for junior high and high school students, a summer program, was begun in 1967 as a joint project with the Newton School Department and the Conservation Commission. Since the program's beginning, the Newton Conservators has given yearly scholarships and supporting funds, and supported the program fully between 1975 and 1981. The Conservators published its "Visit Your Parks" in 1981, a map locating the city's public open spaces with small maps of the individual parks and conservation areas showing the walking trails. This popular publication is now being updated and the new version will soon be published.

The following is a list of parks, playgrounds and conservation areas which the City of Newton has acquired and/or developed during the past thirty years at the urging of the Newton Conservators:

Cold Spring Park (addition): developed the portion facing Beacon St. in 1983

Flowed Meadow Conservation Area: 6.85 acres attached to Auburndale Park (est. in 1893), in 1983

Saw Mill Brook Conservation Area: 20 acres acquired in three parcels in 1979, 1982, and 1985

Dolan Pond Conservation Area: 8 acres, in 1979

Newton Commonwealth Golf Course: 71 acres, in 1981

Nahanton Park: 57 acres (25 acres, 1900), 28+ acres in 1979, developed in 1989

Norumbega Park Conservation Area: 13 acres, in 1976

Webster Conservation Area: 113 acres total
103 acres in 1968
Webster Vale in 1973
Houghton Garden addition in 1979.

Kennard Park: 16 acres in 1982

Kennard Conservation Area: 32+ acres in 1978

CONSERVATION COMMISSION BUDGET

Newton's FY92 budget for the Conservation Commission calls for a reduction of 51%. The cuts include a 22% reduction in funding for repair and maintenance of conservation lands (from \$30,000 to \$23,500) and the elimination of the \$21,000 Commission's executive secretary position from which Helen Heyn is retiring.

At the March 27th budget review by the Aldermanic Planning and Zoning Committee, representatives of the Newton Conservators and the League of Women Voters strongly objected to the proposed FY92 Conservation Commission budget, noting that it carried the entire budget reduction for the Planning Department except for the loss of a .5 secretarial position. They also stated that the plan to have Planning Department personnel assume the work of the departing Commission's Executive Secretary would not provide the Commission with the necessary staff to carry out its statutory work. The Newton Conservators noted the possible institutional conflict of interest between economic development and land conservation, as well as the need to develop sufficient resources within the Commission to assure that its interests are properly represented within the city.

In defending his budget before the Planning and Zoning Committee, Eugene A. Bober, Director of Planning and Development, argued that cuts in maintenance and repair funding could be made up by increased support from other city departments and that the remaining members of the Planning Department would be expected to carry out the responsibilities of the executive secretary of the Conservation Commission which he estimated at around 12 hours per week. Mr. Bober indicated his appreciation for the contributions of Helen Heyn over the past years, but felt that he would not want to terminate a current employee of the Planning Department to hire a specialist to replace her. He stated that individuals within the department could be trained to carry out the basic work needed by the Commission. Mr. Bober noted that, with decreasing resources, it might be possible to find voluntary financial support to replace some of the lost Commission services.

Based on a motion by Ald. Lisle Baker, the Planning and Zoning Committee agreed to recommend approval of the Planning Department's budget pending an update of the department's job descriptions in order to indicate which specific individuals would be assigned to the Conservation Commission.

According to Peter Kastner, President of the Newton Conservators, "the actions of the Aldermen have lessened the damage, but the basic fact remains that the Conservation Commission will have suffered a 51% reduction in its budget; and an allocation of 12 hours of support time from the Planning Department is a poor substitution for a full-time individual who is trained, interested and experienced in the work of the Conservation Commission."

The deadline for the Board of Aldermen to pass the FY92 budget is April 18. Inform your aldermen of your concern!

COMMONWEALTH AVENUE

by Peter Kastner.

Alderman John Umina has proposed making modifications to the intersection at Commonwealth Avenue and Lexington Street, Auburndale, by creating a cul de sac for the avenue's carriage road at Lexington Street. This arrangement would allow for a larger green area on the avenue across from the Mobil gas station. The plan also calls for creating a third west-bound lane on Commonwealth Avenue for cars turning right onto Lexington Street.

The current proposal, a compromise plan to improve the traffic flow on Commonwealth Avenue, while incorporates the recommendations from the village study of the late 1980s to return part of the avenue's green space, and some of the recommendations of the Commonwealth Avenue Task Force.

The decision was made, following a March meeting with the Commonwealth Avenue Advisory Committee, to delay making any changes to this intersection until a planner is hired to study and make recommendations for the entire avenue. The Advisory Committee members felt that drawing up a specific ad hoc plan for just this one intersection might have an adverse impact upon the future development of a unified approach to the entire avenue and the linear park its green strip creates.

The Newton Conservators, Inc., is a non-profit, volunteer, citizens' organization founded in 1961 for the purpose of protecting Newton's natural resources.

The Newton Conservators welcomes new members to continue the efforts to protect and improve Newton's open lands, and to maintain and enhance the quality of Newton's environment.

I would like to renew my membership in the Newton Conservators _____

I would like to join the Newton Conservators _____

Enclosed find my check for the membership category indicated below:

____Member \$10.00

____Sustaining Member \$25.00

____Family \$15.00

____Patron \$100.00

____Additional Contribution:_____

Name_____ Phone_____

Address_____

(street)

(village)

(zip)

Please make checks payable to Newton Conservators, Inc.

Please send this form and membership dues to: Membership Chairman, Newton Conservators,

P.O. Box 11

Newton Centre, MA 02159

Dues and contributions are tax-deductible.



Newton Conservators, Inc.

P.O. Box 11

Newton Centre, MA 02159

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