

# NEWTON CONSERVATORS, INC.



## NEWSLETTER

December, 1979

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Vice-President:	Ted Tedesco	332-0807
Treasurer:	Ron Bocage	332-6512
Secretary:	Peter Harrington	244-1015
Newsletter Editor:	Ed Lerner	965-2381
Membership Chmn:	Jean Thompson	244-9472
Open Space Chmn:	Cay Morrison	332-6539
	and Joan Lerner	965-2381

All meetings of the Board of Directors are open to any member of the Newton Conservators. If you would like to take a more active role in our organization, please come to the next Board meeting on Tuesday, December 11, at 7:45 p.m. at the home of Ted Tedesco, 80 Atwood Avenue, Newtonville.

## NEWS UPDATES:

### Newton Open Space Plan

The City of Newton is in the process of drawing up a new Open Space and Recreation Plan, through a procedure which is explained in the article on the subject that begins on page 2. Conservators attended the Nov. 29 meeting of the Newton Conservation Commission with City Planning Director Barry Canner on the subject of finalizing the new Plan. The commission has invited written comments on the 1978 Draft Plan to be submitted from the public prior to their January 24 meeting.

The Newton Conservators plan to file our written comments prior to that meeting. People interested in this topic, and in filing their own comments, are urged to obtain copies of the Draft Plan from Conservation Commission Secretary Helen Heyn at City Hall (552-7021), or to get in touch with Conservators' President John Bliss about further questions.

### Cut in Open Space Funding

The \$5 million allocation in the State Capital Improvements Budget for urban parkland acquisition was vetoed by Governor King. Although acquisition of the Novitiate land is probably not affected, municipal acquisition of the Chestnut Hill Country Club land is now in jeopardy. We should reopen the question of funding the urban parks program when the legislature goes back into session.



## NEWTON'S OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN

On October 9, 1979, the Newton Board of Aldermen adopted the Goals and Policies element of the Newton Open Space and Recreation Plan. The text is printed following this report. Although the Plan should be updated every five years in order for the City to remain eligible for state and federal open space funds, the last new plan was published in 1969. A statement of open space goals and policies must also be part of Newton's Comprehensive Plan, which is required by the City charter.

The Newton Conservators, Inc. participated in the various Planning Board and Aldermanic hearings from which the statements of goals and policies emerged. Although we had no disagreement with the protection of conservation land provided by Goal 1 and Policy A, we were concerned that the statement failed to include several important criteria in the Policies section. These criteria would have recognized the City's increased need for active and passive recreation space that has developed from increased participation in sports by women and youth and from the increased costs of gasoline and its uncertain availability for travel to recreation areas far from Newton. In addition, we found no reference in the Goals and Policies to improved management and protection of existing park land from abuse, a problem frequently mentioned when the purchase of new open space is proposed. We believe the Goals and Policies should contain these references in order to guide the Planning Department in drafting the actual substance of the Open Space Action Plan.

While our arguments were not accepted by the Aldermanic Administration and Planning Committee, many of the Committee members acknowledged that our concerns should be addressed in the action plan. Consequently, we intend to express our concerns again when the process of writing the action plan begins. We believe that a properly written open space plan will provide an important foundation for reminding Newton's citizens and decision-makers in the future that certain open lands are needed and should be protected for public benefit. Any members wishing to assist our efforts are urged to write John Bliss at 9 Lewis St., 02158, or call him at 244-6495.

It is important to mention here that some changes of substance in the Goals and Policies were made as a result of proposals made by former David Jackson, a Conservators' Director and Newton's representative to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). Acting in his MAPC capacity, Mr. Jackson suggested adding "for public benefit" to Goal 2, in order to make clear that open space included in the Plan actually be available for public use. He



also questioned the use of the word "balance" in Policy C.2 s seeming to require all open space to be divided in half to accomodate residential and commercial development. The word "reconcile" was substituted by the Aldermen. Finally, David requested a stronger commitment to regionally significant open space (Policy C.3), and the words "Place priority on the protection of" replaced "Are sensitive to."

In view of David Jackson's success in making important last minute changes, we should be encouraged to participate further in the planning process in order to improve the protection of Newton's open space in the future.

#### LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Recently, I read an article on "Selfishness" in one of the weekly tabloids distributed free to all Newton residences. The subject, of course, was the social effect of an increased pre-occupation with self and a reluctance by many people for whatever reasons to actively participate in community activities. However, one assertion made in support of the main thesis surprised me. That is, that people who merely contribute membership dues to an organization are really avoiding their real responsibility for active participation. Well, I certainly want to make clear that I do not feel that any Conservators who pay their dues (and something extra, too, in many cases) are in the least being selfish. All of us with social concerns must make hard choices as to where we commiy our time as well as our money. The other Officers and Directors and I are deeply grateful for the regular membership support that pays the Conservators' on-going expenses and helps to finance efforts to inform the public on conservation matters.

I should add, however, from a purely "selfish" point of view, Conservator members should bring to the attention of the officers and Directors any and all conservation matters that concern them. If we are to adequately play the role of educator and stimulator of public opinion on issues of open space and conservation in Newton, we must be kept informed on as many issues as possible. There is a list of Officers and Committeee Chairpersons on Page 1 of this Newsletter. There is no question that active participation by more embers, whether as Directors or not, can only strengthen the cause of effective and responsible environmental protection in Newton.

Thanks very much for your past and  
continued help,

John S. Bliss



CITY OF NEWTON  
OPEN SPACE GOALS AND POLICIES  
OF THE  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

(Adopted October 9, 1979)

GOALS

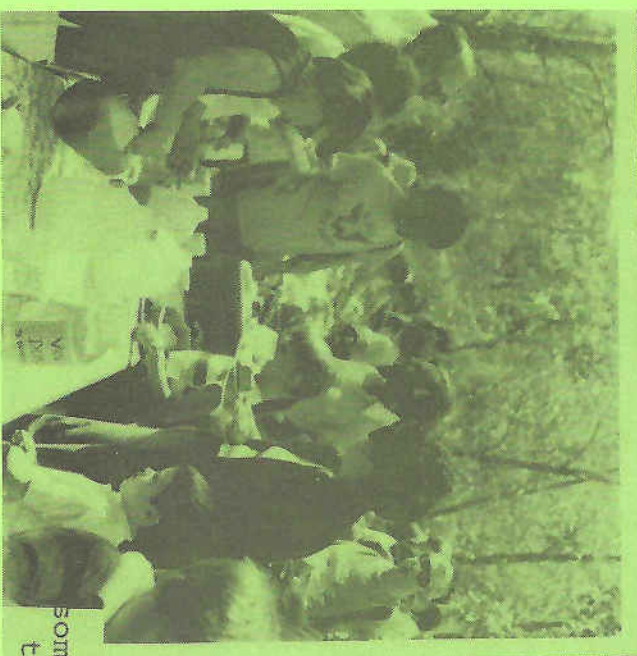
- GOAL: TO PRESERVE THE CITY'S NATURAL RESOURCES
- GOAL: TO ENSURE AN ADEQUATE AMOUNT, VARIETY, AND DISTRIBUTION OF OPEN SPACE FOR PUBLIC BENEFIT
- GOAL: TO INTEGRATE COMPATIBLE RECREATION AND CONSERVATION USES

POLICIES

- A. POLICY: ENSURE THE PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE CITY'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BY PROTECTION OF:
- o The Charles River and the City's streams, brooks, ponds and their banks
  - o Aquifers and groundwater recharge areas
  - o Wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas
  - o Unique natural features, such as drumlins, bedrock outcrops and woodlands, and unique vegetation and habitats
  - o Land with scenic character
- B. POLICY: ENSURE A VARIETY AND DISTRIBUTION OF OPEN SPACE WHICH PROVIDE:
- o Active and passive recreation at convenient locations throughout the City
  - o Linkage of open space, where appropriate
  - o Opportunities for "special needs" groups, such as the elderly, and the handicapped
  - o A sufficient amount of open space to fulfill the needs of residents on both a City-wide and village level
- C. POLICY: ENSURE THAT ALL OPEN SPACE STRATEGIES AND POLICIES:
- o Are consistent with the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan
  - o Reconcile the need for open space with the need for land to accommodate future housing and economic development
  - o Place priority on the protection of Newton's regionally significant natural resources and open space
  - o Are supportive of energy conservation and greater efficiency in energy use



NOVITIATE PICNIC - 1979



Some of the 400 people who came to enjoy the proposed park and hear Sen. Tsongas





If you are not a current member of the Newton Conservators, you may use this form for enrollment. Checks should be made payable to "Newton Conservators, Inc." and be sent to Ron Bocage at 12 Pleasant Street West Newton, MA 02165. Dues and donations are tax-deductible.

I support the activities of the Newton Conservators

Attached find my            check            cash for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Annual membership \$5

\_\_\_\_ Life membership \$100

\_\_\_\_ I'd like a member to call and bring me up to date on Conservator activities.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Newton Conservators, Inc.  
9 Lewis Street  
Newton, MA 02158

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