

**Minutes for Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, January 8, 2020, 7:30 PM – 9:25 PM  
Home of Henry Finch, 153 Windsor Road, Waban**

Present were Ted Kuklinski, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, David Backer, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Henry Finch, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson.

**Pot Luck Dinner:** The business meeting was preceded from 6-7:30 pm by a pot luck dinner. Thanks to Henry Finch for hosting the dinner and coordinating the gustatory contributions.

**Approval of Minutes for Nov. 26, 2019:** The minutes were approved with two corrections: Pete Gilmore was present; and CR monitoring was edited to “Dan Green reported that he helped a surveyor install rebar survey stake markers showing the boundaries of Ordway Park with the adjacent house and has put photos of their location on the CR website for future reference.”

**Treasurer’s Report:** (Katherine) Statements and budget will be at the next meeting. Katherine asked for any suggested budget items or changes. She has been processing large numbers of renewals and gifts. 2019 Unrestricted Dues and Gifts (combined) will be close to the \$26K budget. Large amounts were also received for Cold Spring Park, Riverside Trails, and the new Trail Fund, bringing total cash received in 2019 to \$97K. Because those items were unusual, we can continue to say for IRS purposes that our income is normally less than \$50K. The Riverside/Pigeon Hill project is expected to cost about \$40K per month over the next 5 months.

**Annual Meeting Awards Nominations:** Dan Brody sent a letter suggesting that the Environmentalist of the Year award go to those who made acquisition of Webster Woods possible. Following some discussion, the board decided the award should go to the Friends of Webster Woods and to the Webster Woods Advisory Panel. The Charles Johnson Maynard Award will go to Alan Noguee (Friends of Cold Spring Park). Directors Awards will go to Ouida Young (who is also on the WW Advisory Panel) and Alice Ingerson, who is retiring as Community Preservation Program Manager. Because of the number of recipients, the EOY recipients will receive one invitation to the dinner, rather than the usual two, and only the executive committee of the Advisory Panel will be included. A MOTION to approve these awards was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

**Northland** Ted has corrected the record so that we will no longer be listed among supporters of the project. Whether we should vote to support it will be discussed at the next board meeting..

**Website Manager:** Dan Brody is resigning after 16 years of setting up and managing the site. He has outlined how several persons can perform the duties. Barbara Bates agreed to provide the technical support. Peter Barrer will be the content manager to coordinate others’ input; he will present his plan for this at the next board meeting.

**Updates:**

- **Solomon Foundation\$20,000 grant for Trails Fund:** We received the funds, as discussed at the November meeting. A MOTION to set up a separate fund for this grant was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED

- **Newsletter: Newsletter:** Ken asked to receive articles for the Spring Newsletter by February 1, slightly earlier than he had previously said.

- **Annual Meeting Speaker:** Sam Jaffe is confirmed as speaker; Pete Gilmore will clarify information on his topic. The normal honorarium will be offered.

- **CRWA Cheesecake Brook project:** Ted, Pete, Henry, and Barbara together with Jennifer Steel and Maria Rose attended the Jan. 4 meeting. CRWA has put in for a grant for their project. Jennifer Steel and others had concern with spending a large amount on a project with possibly limited benefit. A second meeting with the Conservators representatives will be at the CRWA office (on the grounds of the Leo J Martin Golf Course / Ski Area) on Tuesday, Jan. 14 at 1 pm. Other Conservators are welcome to attend.

- **Open Space Plan:** Beth said the committee has met once; the Conway School of Landscape Design has been engaged to do community outreach and to complete the written plan. Jennifer Steel proposes a city committee to work on the “Goals” section. The committee will meet again on January 14.

- **Webster Woods:** Applause for the acquisition opened the discussion. Beth noted that BC has three years in which to sue over the acquisition price. When to do a celebratory walk is under discussion. A regular walk is scheduled for April 4.

- **Parks and Recreation:** Ted is on the interview committee for a new Commissioner. Of the 39 applications, 8 will be interviewed on Friday. Board members offered ideas for questions to put to the candidates.

- **CR Reports:** Chris thanked team members for the 5 CR reports that are finished and received. The others are requested to get them in ASAP, particularly those for the City properties. He gave a shout out to Peter and Nyssa who completed the CR on the Waban Hill Reservoir last fall. In part because of this, Luis Perez-Demorizi has been working to have the City fix up problems there.

#### **New Business:**

- **New Cal:** Ted noted the Mayor’s announcement that parks (including Albemarle) are off the table as possible sites.

#### **Adjournment at 9:25 PM**

Respectfully submitted,  
*AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary*

#### **DATES:**

- Tue. Jan 14 – CRWA – Cheesecake Brook
- Thu. Jan 16 – NewCAL Community Meeting
- Wed. Jan.22 - Board meeting
- Thu. Jan 30 - Century of Parks & Rec – Mike Clarke
- Wed. Feb 26 – Board meeting
- Wed. Mar 25 – Board Meeting
- Thu. Apr 2 – Sustainability Summit (BU)
- Sat. Apr 4 – Webster Woods Walk
- Wed. May 6 – Annual Meeting

**Minutes for Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Wednesday, January 22, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
**Waban Library Center, 1608 Beacon Street, Waban**

Present were Ted Kuklinski, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, David Backer, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson.

**Approval of Minutes for January 8, 2020:** The minutes were approved as written.

**Treasurer's Report:** Katherine presented the 2019 financial statements that had been sent to the board, noting that unrestricted total revenues were a bit less than budget, expenses were as expected, and investment income continued to rise with the market. Restricted fund receipts were large due to Solomon Fund gifts to the Riverside Trails Fund and the Trails Revolving Fund, and fundraising by Friends of Cold Spring Park. She explained an adjustment made in December 2019 to increase investment income allocated to the Ordway Endowment Fund, needed due to an error in the prior methodology; this adjustment is being reviewed by Larry Burdick. She distributed copies of the proposed 2020 budget. After brief discussion, a MOTION to accept the 2019 statements and the 2020 budget, subject to any additional adjustment from review by Larry Burdick, was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

**Mass Trails Grants:** • **Christina Street:** Claire Rundelli, Assistant Environmental Planner, has asked us for a letter to the DCR in support for the Christina Street Bridge Feasibility Study. Ted distributed copies of the January 22 letter, (appended below) after which a MOTION to approve the letter was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

• **Marty Sender Path and Cold Spring Park:** Ted told us that Mass Trails grant applications will not be submitted this year, as the city management thinks they would be competing with the Christina Street Bridge project.

**Nominating Committee:** Ted asked for volunteers; Bill, Barbara, Peter, and Henry agreed to serve.

**College Intern possibility:** Emma McKee, a Middlebury student wrote to Ted that she was inspired to study environmental science by Beth's presentation at NSHS; she inquired about volunteering for NC this summer. Several possible projects were

discussed: writing about Webster Woods; making the case for open space in Newton, possibly a video with Ellen Gibson Kennedy's son who wants to work with us; Peter would work with him on the connection between what we do and climate change. Ted will get in touch with her.

**Sustainability Conference:** Ted will attend the free April 2 conference at BU; board members were invited to join him but need to let him know soon for registration.

**Updates:**

- **Annual Meeting:** •**Speaker:** Sam Jaffe has agreed to speak; Pete will contact him about topic, a write up and photo. •**Awards:** Ted said that the executive committee suggests that since Alice Ingerson is receiving a Directors Award as she retires, it would be appropriate to have Commissioner DeRubeis receive the second award, as he is also retiring; Ouida Young is continuing to work as a volunteer and should be a candidate next year. A MOTION to make this change was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.
- **Planning:** Barbara, Katherine, Nyssa and Beth agreed to be on the annual meeting committee.
- **Website Manager(s):** Peter distributed copies of his schedule to "ensure that the website is up to date and to make assignments for creating and uploading. (see attached updated version). Dan agreed to hold another library training session.
- **Northland:** The board agreed that no further comment is needed, since we have asked not to be listed as sponsors; our letter of January 10, 2019, can remain as comment.
- **Riverside Trails:** Board members had received the Pigeon Hill-CPA Contract related to a \$50K CPA grant, and following discussion, a MOTION to authorize the appropriate officials to sign this contract with the city as fiscal sponsor for the Riverside Greenway Working Group (RGWG) was SECONDED and APPROVED with 15 ayes and 2 abstentions. A second MOTION to authorize co-signing of a contract with Halverson/HSB (as fiscal sponsor of RGWG) for doing the Pigeon Hill work was SECONDED and APPROVED with 15 ayes and 2 abstentions.
- **CRWA Cheesecake Brook project:** Ted, Henry and Pete attended the Jan. 14 meeting with Emily Norton and Lisa Kumpf at CRWA. CRWA has a grant to study the potential

mitigation that could improve the health of Cheesecake Brook and would like our help in getting word out about a survey. Following discussion, a MOTION to help publicize the survey, subject to review by the executive committee, was SECONDED and APPROVED by 16 ayes and one abstention.

- **Open Space Plan:** Beth reported on the January 14 meeting of the committee. She would like help in getting responses to the draft, which is at <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1mB9iJDm9Yqqpq16uM-DTOHEAySOL3osm?usp=sharing>. Board members are to read it and send suggestions to Beth before January 31, time to be submitted to the Conservation Department before the February 6 public meeting at the War Memorial in City Hall from 7 to 9 pm. She encouraged board members to attend that meeting to advocate for increased care of the city's open space.
- **Webster Woods:** Beth wrote to City staff members of the Webster Woods Executive Committee, requesting a meeting about the ongoing care of Webster Woods and any changes to be made now that it's owned by the City.
- **Parks and Recreation:** Ted said that three finalists remain; the Mayor will choose the next Commissioner.
- **Events:** Katherine has a draft of invasive pulls.
- **CR Monitoring:** Chris hopes the last two reports will be done by the end of January.
- **Newsletter:** Ken would like material early in February. An expanded version of Richard Primack's article on stone walls is one feature.

### New Business

- **Woodcock Meadow:** Marc Welch sent the Conservators an email reporting that invasive trees had been cut, so woodcocks may be back.
- **Children's activity:** Barbara suggested we make a flier of activities for kids at each of our sites, or perhaps a general one for all sites. Nyssa agreed to help with the project.
- **Massachusetts Land Conference:** will be on March 28 in Worcester. Ted, Ken, Nyssa and Beth will attend. We will up our membership level to take advantage of a reduced cost for four attendees.

• **Historic Newton House Tour:** The May 17 house tour will include a house that abuts the Charles River Pathway, and we are invited to have a table there with literature promoting our causes. A MOTION that we have a table there was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

### **Adjournment at 9:35 PM**

Respectfully submitted,  
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary

### **DATES:**

- Wed Jan 29 – Ollie Komar Bird Walk
- Thu. Jan 30 - Century of Parks & Rec – Mike Clarke
- Wed. Feb 5 – Doug Tallamy – Grow Native - Harvard Science Center
- Thurs. Feb. 6 – Open Space Plan Public Meeting
- Wed. Feb 26 – Board meeting
- Wed. Mar. 4 – Second Open Space Plan Public Meeting
- Mar 20 – MA Land Conference
- Wed. Mar 25 – Board Meeting
- Thu. Apr 2 – Sustainability Summit (BU)
- Sat. Apr 4 - Webster Woods Walk
- Sun. Apr 26 - Newton SERVES
- Wed. May 6 – Annual Meeting



**Officers**

Ted Kuklinski, President  
Chris Hepburn, Vice President  
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary  
Katherine Howard, Treasurer  
Beth Wilkinson, Past President

**Board of Directors**

David Backer  
Peter Barrer  
Barbara Bates  
Dan Brody  
Bonnie Carter  
Michael Clarke  
Margaret Doris  
Henry Finch  
Robert Fizek  
Maurice Gilmore  
Daniel Green  
William Hagar  
Ken Mallory  
George Mansfield  
Nyssa Patten  
Larry Smith

**Advisors**

Margaret Albright  
Lisle Baker  
John Bliss  
Lee Breckenridge  
Lalor Burdick  
Lucy Caldwell-Stair  
Michael Collora  
Ann Dorfman  
Bart Hague  
Alison Leary  
William Leitch  
Don Lubin  
Brooks Mathewson  
Eric Olson  
Anne Pearson  
Richard Primack  
Eric Reenstierna  
Jon Regosin  
Patricia Robinson  
Jane Sender  
William Shaevel  
Willis Wang  
Bruce Wenning

January 22, 2020

Amanda Lewis  
Department of Conservation and Recreation  
136 Damon Road  
Northampton, MA 01060

Dear Ms. Lewis:

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Directors of Newton Conservators in support of the City of Newton's proposed Mass Trails Grant project entitled "The Christina Street Bridge Feasibility Study and Conceptual Design."

The proposed project aims to assess the feasibility of creating a pedestrian and bicycle trail from the Blue Heron Trail Network in Needham to Christina Street in Newton across a currently unused rail bridge. This feasibility study is the first step in connecting Newton and Needham via a dedicated bicycle/pedestrian pathway.

This bridge connects the Needham Street corridor and impending Northland mixed-use development in Newton with the Charles River Landing apartment complex and the Highland Ave. corridor in Needham, two substantial commercial/industrial/residential areas. Overall, the project will help answer the increasing demand for alternative transportation corridors to growing transportation hubs.

Continuing to connect people with the Charles River is a goal for Newton, Needham, and the region. This project will directly facilitate access to open space resources in Newton including the Upper Falls Greenway, Goddard-Christina Conservation Area, the Charles River Pathway, and to Needham/DCR's Cutler Park and Blue Heron Trail system. This project will also increase non-vehicular access to the Wells Ave. business park, Nahanton Park, and the UMass Mount Ida campus in Newton.

In line with our mission, this project provides residents with greater access to open space and trails on both sides of the river. Our organization sees this proposed project as helping to fulfill environmental, recreational, transportation, social and economic goals of Newton and Needham.

We hope you will consider this project favorably.

Sincerely,

Theodore T. Kuklinski  
President, Newton Conservators

Cc: Newton Conservation Offices, 1000 Commonwealth Avenue,  
Basement level, Newton, MA 02459

Website Content Manager role - 1/23/20 Peter B

Content Manager is not creating or uploading content. The job is to ensure that the website is up to date and to make assignments for creating and uploading. After content has been uploaded, Content Manager will give final approval by "publishing" to the site.

Receive comments and proposals for improving website content, ideas for additions, and make appropriate assignments. Everyone on the Board to be aware of news and events.

**Weekly checks:**

Check weekly that front page is current. **Peter**

- Manage "Featured". Manage dates on news postings

Assign to create postings of conservation-related news **Peter**

Assign to create postings of conservation-related events **Peter**

**Monthly checks**

E-bulletin: **Ted** manages uploads

Review "Management Calendar" for tasks **Peter**

**Quarterly checks**

Confirm quarterly newsletter is uploaded: **Ken**

Spring and fall updates:

- For each scheduled walk and invasive plant session, the person responsible (**Beth and Katherine**) for the event will create a WordPress event for it and upload.
- The complete lists of upcoming walks and of invasive plant sessions will be copied from the newsletter and added to the Additional Event and Calendar Information section at the bottom of the events page, replacing the one from the prior season. **Ken**

**Semi-Annual updates**

Grants awarded **Grants committee**

**Annual updates:**

Awards at annual meeting **Ken**

Report from annual meeting **Ted**

History: yearly chronicle **Ted**

History: summary **Ted**

**Occasional and as needed:**

Board of Directors list and bio links: **David**

Board of Advisors list: **David**

Update CR's list when they are added: **Chris**

Update "Management Calendar" **Peter** for Website, **Other Board Members** as appropriate



**Minutes for Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Wednesday, February 26, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
**Waban Library Center, 1608 Beacon Street, Waban**

Present were Ted Kuklinski, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, David Backer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Dan Green, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson.

**Approval of Minutes for January 22, 2020:** The minutes were approved as written.

**Treasurer's Report:** Katherine has filed the Form 3ABC with the City, including the Wabasso and Rogers St. CRs. Renewals are trickling in; Over 100 members have not yet renewed, so a reminder letter will be sent. Because the various grants will lead to revenue over \$200K this year, per state regulations a CPA must review our statement. Members are asked for suggestions, possibly a pro bono volunteer.

**NWF – Garden for Wildlife Community Certification:** Ted explained the National Wildlife Federation program which encourages homeowners and communities to plant native species and have wildlife friendly yards. After some discussion it was agreed that Ted would distribute the information by email, and we would discuss it next month.

**Vernal Pool 1114 Beacon Street:** The Conservation Commission has agreed with the developer to preserve the pool, but an appeal has been filed by an abutter. Katherine will contact the Mass DEP representative dealing with the appeal and who recently did a site visit, and plan to attend the Land Use committee hearing on March 10.

**Amazon Smile:** Brandeis professor emerita Deborah Stone has written to Ted objecting to our raising funds through Amazon Smile, because “Amazon’s operations are antithetical to everything we and other environmental organizations stand for.” Following discussion, it was agreed to acknowledge her concern, but to continue using the program.

**Updates:** • **Annual Meeting:** Environmentalist of the Year Award: Mayor Fuller has agreed to accept the award for the Webster Woods contingent, Beth will present; Maynard Award: Henry will present to Alan Noguee;

Directors Awards: Ted will present to Commissioner DeRubeis; Dan Brody will present to Alice Ingerson; and following discussion and a MOTION to add Ouida Young – who is also retiring - was SECONDED and APPROVED, Chris will present to her.

Additional sponsorships for the dinner would be appreciated and sponsorships forms were available at the meeting and will be provided by email to the board.

- **Deborah Howard's death** was noted, and AnnaMaria agreed to write a condolence note to her daughters.
- **Nominating Committee:** a new list of directors and advisors, with cell phone numbers, will be prepared.
- **Website:** Barbara praised Dan's training session for Beth, Ken, Pete and her. It enabled her to post several items on her own and to update the property page for the Newton Cemetery to show their new logo and new name (The Newton Cemetery & Arboretum.)
- **CR Monitoring:** Nyssa reported on Webster Park. Chris thanked those who have participated in CR monitoring. He has sent hard copies of the reports to all concerned and has received thanks from them. Larry reported on the Golf Course monitoring. David Backer thanked Chris for standardizing the process.
- **Golf Course Development:** Chris reported on the Commonwealth Golf Course's plans to renovate the existing 4000 sq. ft. building and add a 3000 sq. ft. cold storage building to the back. This conflicts with the CR, which would allow only 120% footprint of the existing building. He will consult Lisle Baker, and Henry will investigate the documentation at City Hall. We have an ongoing need for some pro-bono legal assistance.
- **Riverside Greenway Working Group (RGWG) Items:**
  - Pony Truss Trail work is about to begin. The \$73K proposed contract with Conservation Works is about \$20K higher than originally planned due in part to need to add a small boardwalk on one segment. This increase will be financed by the Solomon Revolving Trails gift and by some reallocation from the Pigeon Hill project. A MOTION to sign the Conservation Works contract was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

- The Pigeon Hill design is expected to be less costly than planned; the steep slope precludes ADA compliance so it will not be a Mass DOT project.
- Down payment (\$24K) on the Conservation Works project and the first invoice for Pigeon Hill (also \$24K) have come due at the same time, and total \$3K more than the \$45K Riverside/trails available funds (Solomon gifts). This \$3K cash need is only temporary, while waiting for grant reimbursement. A MOTION to temporarily fund the \$3K from available cash balance was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.
- The board reviewed a proposed Memorandum of Understanding written by Ted Chapman to document the agreement between RGWG and Mark Development, LLC (MD) on the types, conditions, and dollar amounts of Riverside area open space initiatives to be funded by MD and to be included by the city in any special permit. The MOU includes a \$50K trails monitoring fund proposed to be administered by Newton Conservators. After discussion it was decided that the Conservators do not need to sign the MOU; it could be between the RGWG and MD.
- **Mass Trails Grant:** a letter of support was sent.
- **CRWA – Cheesecake Brook:** The Sunday (Feb. 23) meeting was well attended, with good attendee feedback on problems and possible improvements given to CRWA for the planned study.
- **Open Space Plan:** Beth finds the Conway School (consulting on the plan) on top of the issues. The next open meeting will be on March 4, from 7 to 9 PM, at the Barry Price Center. Katherine will attend.
- **Trails:** Luis Demorizi has obtained a grant from the Committee on Disabilities for approximately 1000 ft. of work on the Marty Sender Trail.
- **Dexter Woods:** Katherine said that we have a large project to get some planting done this spring and asked for a sub-committee to undertake it. Nyssa, Bill Hagar and Beth will join Katherine.
- **Land Acquisition:** There was discussion of reviving contact relative to the Woods property on Islington Rd.

- **Webster Woods:** The Conservation Commission is discussing having a ceremony with the Conservators.
- **Parks and Recreation Commission:** Nicole Banks is the new Commissioner. We will invite her to the May 6 annual dinner meeting.
- **Events:** Ollie Komar's bird walk was a success, with a one-day email announcement leading to 12 attending. Mike Clarke gave a fine talk on Parks & Rec history on Jan. 30. The first spring walk will be the Aqueduct Walk on March 15 with Henry Finch. The Invasives schedule runs from NewtonSERVES on Apr 26 through the end of July. George M. won't be able to attend our meetings for the near future but had volunteered to assist with the village day events. The board approved having Chris purchase a tablecloth with logo for our upcoming events to give better visibility (with 3 abstentions).
- **Interns:** Emma McKee of Middlebury College is still interested in a interning over the summer with the Conservators. Lara Simshauser, a Winsor School senior interested in Environmental Studies, also has asked about an unpaid internship during May. The board was generally not enthused over taking on an intern. However, it was suggested to learn more about the program requirements and if volunteer work was permitted outside of school hours (e.g. on weekends when we might utilize assistance more of invasives or walks).
- **Newsletter:** The spring newsletter will be emailed to members who requested that format.

## Adjournment at 9:20 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary

## DATES:

- Wed. Mar. 4 – Second Open Space Plan Public Meeting
  - Sun. Mar.15 – Aqueduct Walk, 2pm, Henry Finch
  - Mar 20 – MA Land Conference
  - Wed. Mar 25 – Board Meeting
  - Sat. Mar 28 – Stone Wall Walk at Sawmill Brook – Richard Primack – 1 pm
  - Sat. Apr 5 - Webster Woods Vernal Pool Walk – Eric Olson – 1 pm
  - Sat. Apr 11 - Webster Woods Vernal Pool Walk – Jon Regosin – 1 pm
  - Sun. Apr 26 - Newton SERVES
- Wed. May 6

**Minutes for Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Wednesday, March 25, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
**Via ZOOM**

Participating were Ted Kuklinski, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, David Backer, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Mike Clarke, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson.

**Approval of Minutes for Feb 26, 2020:** The minutes were approved as written.

**Treasurer's Report:** Katherine has sent the Forms 990EZ and PC to the board for a week's review time prior to filing. Reimbursement by the state for \$48K of Riverside costs has not yet been received, so there will be a delay in paying the next invoices. A few renewals continue to come in, including from Deborah Stone (see Feb. 26 minutes). Katherine has done all the FCSP filings (incorporation and tax exemption) and will contact a CPA after the tax season. A MOTION to accept the report was SECONDED and UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED, with thanks for all Katherine's work.

**Zoom Meetings:** are working well, as is this one.

**Role of Conservators in the COVID-19 ERA:** Ted had a letter in today's TAB encouraging the use of parks and one of the Mayor's updates included the Conservators' message (from Beth) to enjoy the city's open spaces. Beth has put a number of suggestions on our Facebook page, and has received email and Facebook responses. Katherine suggested we contribute to people's lives, e.g., by offering 50% discount on the Trail Guide and Almanac. Following discussion, a MOTION that after consulting with the Mayor about possible closures, we consider a one-month 50% reduction in the cost of the Trail Guides was SECONDED and APPROVED by a vote of 10-3. A second MOTION to consider the one-month discount on the Almanac was SECONDED and APPROVED by a vote of 13 pro, 1 opposed.

**Updates:**

- **Annual Meeting:** The executive committee agreed to postpone the annual meeting to Oct. 14 or 21; Sam Jaffe's response about availability is awaited. Katherine had paid \$100 deposit to Post 440; she will cancel May 6 and check the October dates. Barbara made a MOTION to empower the executive committee to determine the date for the meeting. It was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED [*update: The Annual Meeting is now set for Oct. 21*]. Katherine has received three sponsorships; will ask the donors how to handle their checks. Ted will write to the other former sponsors and hold on to the awards.

- **NC Spring Events:** *NewtonSERVES* has been canceled. A MOTION to cancel all NC walks through June was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

While we cannot currently convene large groups to work on invasives removal, Katherine suggested that those who wish should be encouraged to work on their own. She will ask Claire Rundelli for support in disposing of the bags of invasive. She said rather than completely canceling, we could post “disorganized events” for individual work. Beth suggested a Newsletter article encouraging people to pull Invasives on their own. In response to Barbara’s question about untrained volunteers, the Newsletter article will encourage people with less experience to check with Katherine. Katherine & Barbara will beef up the website to make invasives information easier to find.

- **Nominating Committee:** Pete has not continued checking advisors because of the cancellation.
- **Website:** Peter Barrer has met with Dan Brody, has not yet followed up. Barbara will meet with Peter.
- **Newsletter:** Ken said mid-May will be the deadline for articles, for mailing early in June. He thanked all who have helped with the current issue. Ted has extra copies.
- **Vernal Pool** behind former Korean restaurant on Beacon St.: Katherine said it has been protected by the Conservation Commission. Citizens Bank neighbor is opposing.
- **CR Monitoring:** Chris said he will put off further reports unless someone sees a problem to bring up
- **Commonwealth Golf Club expansion:** The management of the golf club wishes to build a second structure for office space and maintenance equipment, adding 3000 sf. to the existing 4000 s.f. The CR held by the Conservators restricts expansion to 120% of the original footprint. Chris has consulted Councilor Lisle Baker and attorney Steve Small, who both were involved in the writing of the CR. The Conservators as grantee of the CR have the right to approve any modifications. See the attached message from Steve Small reviewing the issues. Chris said we can accept their proposal if, after due diligence, we agree that it enhances the golf course. Peter thinks we need to see the drawings and visit the site. Chris will set up a site visit by Dave Backer, Peter Barrer, Henry Finch, and George Mansfield.
- **Riverside Trails Working Group:** Larry explained that the Pony Truss Trail work is about to begin. Katherine reported on a Zoom meeting at which 2 neighbors in favor and 2 opposed spoke; Halverson responded that they will address the objections in the design.

- **Open Space Plan:** Conway students submitted their preliminary draft on Monday. Beth reported on a spirited meeting on Tuesday, at which she objected to the lack of coverage of preserving more open space in the draft. Also, there was the assumption that everyone approved of artificial turf, which Parks & Rec. pushes for. The Conway students will end their work on April 30, but the city will continue to revise the document.
- **Cold Spring Park:** Katherine reported on the March 9 check ceremony. Trail work and FCSP application for tax exempt status are proceeding.
- **Webster Woods:** The June 6 event is on hold. The Conservation Commission is discussing having a ceremony with the Conservators sometime in the future.
- **Dexter Woods:** Katherine canceled the group project; Barbara is doing a sunlight analysis. Neighbors have agreed to furnish water, which we will pay for. Soil depths need to be ascertained. Katherine thinks plants will be available. Construction projects can proceed.
- **Interns:** Ted mentioned that in addition to the three students already known, a junior at NNHS, Veer Gadodia, has offered to volunteer; he is very computer savvy, has helped the Waltham Land Trust develop a website, and may be able to help write an app and/or develop our invasives page. Emma McKee from the Winsor School, is very interested in working on projects, possibly including the Riverside trail, and Jennifer Steel is also interested in her help. Ted is following up on these possibilities.

**New Business:** none.

Barbara observed how nice to hear everyone and see our names with our faces!

**Adjournment at 8:50 PM**

Respectfully submitted,  
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary

Message from Attorney S. J. Small to Cris Hepburn March 25, 2020:

**Hello Chris – glad we had the opportunity to talk.**

**I understand David Stowe, from Sterling Golf Management, the Director of Maintenance at Newton Commonwealth Golf Course, has been in touch with you in your capacity as Vice President of the Newton Conservators. David is the Director of Maintenance at the Golf Course, and he has reached out to you about proposed improvements to the existing maintenance building and maintenance area at the Golf Course.**

**As all parties know, the Conservators holds a conservation restriction (the “Restriction”) on the golf course. The purpose of the Restriction was and is to protect the golf course as open space, available for public outdoor recreation, in perpetuity. I know you have a copy of the recorded conservation restriction, so I am not including a copy with this email. I am also informed that since the Restriction was conveyed by the City of Newton, the owner of record of the golf course, no federal income tax deduction was claimed in connection with the conveyance of the Restriction.**

**As I understand it, Sterling Golf Management proposes to replace the existing concrete block maintenance building on the golf course with a newer structure and add a 30’ x 100’ cold storage building on the back side of the maintenance building.**

**You have asked for my guidance on whether the Conservators has the authority to agree to Sterling’s proposed request, under the provisions of the Restriction, and, if it appears the Conservators does have such authority, what steps should the Conservators take to evaluate the request.**

**I have the following questions and due diligence chores for the Conservators, in connection with responding to your question. These are, in no particular order of priority:**

- 1. Is there specific language in the Restriction that gives the Conservators the authority to review this request and respond to it? Is there specific language in the Restriction that would prohibit the Conservators from approving this request?**



2. **As I noted above, the purpose of the Restriction is to protect the golf course in perpetuity, as open space available for public outdoor recreation. Would the replacement of the existing maintenance facility, and the addition of the proposed cold storage building, have any adverse impact on that perpetual protection?**
3. **If the answer to #2 is “no,” then would the proposed improvements by Sterling be in furtherance of the purpose of the Restriction? That is, would the proposed improvements add to, or detract from, the use of the subject property as a public golf course? Perhaps put another way, would the proposed improvements be supportive of, and subordinate to, the use of the property as a public golf course?**
4. **Could the proposed improvements in any way detract from the public’s enjoyment of the golf course and the golf experience?**
5. **In connection with #3 and #4, the Conservators must make a site visit, take photographs of the existing site, and have a graphic prepared that will show the physical distance and/or relationship of the proposed improvements with play by the public on the golf course.**
6. **Throughout this process, there should be full disclosure of these issues, and the steps the Conservators are taking to be able to respond to the proposal. There should be full disclosure to the Board of the Conservators, to the appropriate representatives of the City of Newton, and to the Newton Commonwealth Foundation, Inc., the licensee of the golf course from the City of Newton.**
7. **If after all of the due diligence by the Conservators is completed, there is a preliminary determination by the Conservators that the request be approved, the results of the due diligence should be memorialized in a short memo, specifically covering the above questions and issues. If you would like, I can review that memo and give you my comments before a formal vote is taken by the Conservators. My comments would not be in the form of a formal “opinion letter,” but would be my good faith response to your work and your conclusions.**

8. **If after all of the due diligence by the Conservators is completed (1-7 above), a decision is made to approve the request, the results of the due diligence should be memorialized in a memo that should become part of the official records of the Conservators, the City of Newton, the Newton Commonwealth Foundation, Inc., and Sterling Golf Management.**

**I hope this is helpful. Please let me know if you need any additional information from me. Also, after you have reviewed this email, please let me know what decision the Conservators makes with respect to proceeding with this matter.**

**SJ**

***Stephen J. Small***

***Law Office of Stephen J. Small, Esq., P.C.***

**Minutes for Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, April 22, 2020, 7:00 PM  
Via ZOOM**

Participating were Ted Kuklinski, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, David Backer, Peter Barrer, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Mike Clarke, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Dan Green, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson.

Also present: Todd Macalister, project manager for the new Walking Trails Guide.

**Approval of Minutes for March 25, 2020:** The minutes were approved as written.

**Treasurer's Report:** Katherine has filed Form 990EZ with the IRS and Form PC with the MA Attorney General. She reviewed the 1st quarter financial statements that had been distributed. As expected, at 3/31 there was a (\$40K) unrealized loss on our investments. Since then, \$11K was gained back. Membership revenue was \$5K better than budget - due to late renewal mailing in Dec. 2019, responses to reminders sent in Feb, and more people at the \$250 Directors Circle level, with 10 or so checks from IRA Distribution accounts. There was \$60K of expenditures (Riverside Pigeon Hill design, Riverside Pony Truss trail, FoCSP trail work). Katherine noted that FoCSP had been incorporated, registered with the MA Attorney General, applied for IRS tax exemption, and opened a checking account. She requested approval to transfer \$13K we are holding for FoCSP to this new bank account. A MOTION to accept the report and approve this transfer was SECONDED and UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED, with thanks for all Katherine's work.

**Trail Guide Update:** Dan Brody noted that since publication of the 2013 edition, new parks have been added and some descriptions and maps have changed on the web site, so a revision is overdue. Todd Macalister has volunteered to help: he will manage the project and Dan will create the maps (using the city's GIS), but we will need to pay for a project graphic designer, as a volunteer has not been found. Todd has worked for many years with designer Greg Lipson and some examples of his work were shown to the board. Dan recommends we spend up to \$1000 to retain Greg (whose hourly rate ranges from \$50 to \$80 based on type of work) to do the initial proposal/mockup of the guide, needed to develop a firm project budget. Todd and Dan expect to have this in about two months. The executive committee had reviewed this in detail with Dan and Todd and see this as reasonable. Dan MOVED that we appropriate \$1,000 for initial mockup/design of the new trail guide. The motion was SECONDED and APPROVED by unanimous vote.

**Board contact information:** Ted showed a spreadsheet with the current information and asked members to check it and add cell phone numbers if they choose to.

**Guide/Almanac Promotion:** The E-bulletin announced the temporary 50% discount decided at the March meeting, and some 15 orders have ensued so far. Ted will put a notice about the sale on the website as well.

- **Annual Meeting:** Will be postponed to Oct. 21; Post 440 and Maria's catering are both available and Sam Jaffe has been alerted and still willing to be the speaker if possible. The three sponsors so far have responded that their checks should be cashed.
- **NC Spring Events:** Several ideas were discussed for observance of Earth Day/week using iNaturalist. It was agreed that CR monitors would note the vegetation in their sites, and that when walks resume, we should have one teaching members how to use iNaturalist.
- **Land Trust Coalition Webinars:** Barbara reported on two MLTC webinars that are available to watch until about May 21: *Approaching Forest Health Threats in a Changing Climate*, and *Implementing Natural Solutions to Climate Change*. She can provide the URL and passwords.
- **Invasives:** Katherine reiterated that while the group sessions have been officially canceled through mid-June, individual invasives pullers will continue to work. Parks & Rec. will pick up bags collected by volunteers starting next week. Beth noted that in the draft of the new Open Space Plan, "invasives removal" is the only item that lists the Conservators as responsible rather than a City department.
- **Web Site:** Peter reported that he is learning the technical details and hopes soon to take the burden off Dan. Intern Veer Gadodia has jumped in and is organizing the information on invasives. Barbara added that he has a work plan giving structure and is working well. Peter next showed the list of website tasks and assignments (see attached).
- **Ordway Park:** Dan Green reported that Newman Landscape's spring clean-up had been done today. The renovated Ordway house above our park has had a lot of landscaping; the developer nicely avoided altering the triangle that looks like it is part of our park but is actually owned by the Ordway house.
- **Newsletter:** Ken listed the contents of the next Newsletter: Ted Chapman update, Pete on disappearing birds, Nogee update on CSP, Katherine on invasives, and President's message. Richard Primack is working on "the effects of Coronavirus on Newton's parks" for a future newsletter and welcomes suggestions.

- **Newton Commonwealth Golf Course CR:** Chris reported on the proposal to build an additional 3000 sf maintenance building. We can approve it if 1) the building is needed to improve the golf course and make it more enjoyable to the public; and 2) the building does not have a major impact on the open space of the property.
- Ted explained the photos he and Henry had taken and the plans showing existing and projected construction. Following lengthy discussion, Chris proposed a MOTION “that the Conservators approve the Golf Course’s plan to build a new maintenance structure with a footprint of 3000 sq. ft. in the location designated adjacent to the old maintenance building.” Following further discussion, the motion was SECONDED and APPROVED by a vote of 17-2.
- In addition, following more discussion, a MOTION to include with the approval a letter stating “that the Conservators convey to the golf course that during construction they should be sure to follow City tree ordinances to compensate for any trees removed and protect the remaining trees. We also encourage the Golf Course to provide a vegetative buffer to screen the view of the new building from the adjacent apartments. After construction and in the future, the Golf Course needs to clean up the area around the maintenance buildings and keep it free of trash, clutter and stored items to ensure that the open space remains attractive” was SECONDED and APPROVED by a unanimous 19-0 vote.
- **CR Monitoring:** Chris repeated his March statement that he will put off further reports unless someone sees a problem to bring up.
- **Riverside Trails Working Group:** Larry said Pony Truss Trail construction will begin quite soon. Katherine said DCR has suggested there may be changes in the timeline and deadlines due to the virus. On Pony Truss Trail some project work may go past the current December deadline. The Pigeon Hill design is the one that currently has to be done by June 30.
- **Open Space Plan:** The revised version is going forward. The City, not the Conway students, is doing the final draft. It will be available on April 30. City Council hearings will be on May 7 and 11. The best innovation is the addition of an implementation committee to make sure things happen. Unfortunate is that 117 actions are listed, that are not prioritized, and would cost much more than the City will have to spend, particularly as funds will be steeply curtailed from the COVID19 effect. We are encouraged to attend the hearings and send comments to City Council or Jennifer Steel & Claire Rundelli. Board members thanked Beth for the hard work she has done.
- **Dexter Woods:** Katherine said the plants for the slope have been ordered; volunteers will be planting and watering. Pete offered to help. A water meter will be installed so NC will pay for water from neighbor’s supply.

- **Interns:** Veer Gadodia has begun work on the website invasives pages. Lara Simshauser from the Winsor School will have 10-15 hours/week between May 8 and May 31. Ted thinks she may help with the Dexter planting.

**New Business:** Claire Rundelli has discussed with Ted that one of the trails at Dolan Pond is not accessible, and that the Conservation Commission on Thursday will discuss the possibility of changing the path from the current wood chips to stone dust, to render it accessible.

### Adjournment at 9:10 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary

NC website tasks									
File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Add-ons Help									
100% View only									
NC website tasks									
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	NC website tasks		make comments in this sheet or send email message to Peter Barrer			pbarrar@gmail.com			
2									
3		date initiated	description	reference	task 1	task 2	who assigned to	Status	
4									
5		3/7	Quinobequin page adder/ Downs	Brody email	read/analyze	post	PJB		
6		3/9	Waban Hill Reservoir construction	Brody email	read/analyze	post	PJB		
7		4/1	updates status Open Space plan		write, post		Beth		
8		4/10	Photos of Webster woods	Ted email 4/10	upload, assign tags		Bates		
9		4/14	Photo essay on Webster woods	PJB idea					
10		4/14	Farm seedling sale		post event & post		PJB	Published	online orderi
11		4/24	Edits to Trail Guide and Almanac sale	Kath email 4/24	edits		Bates?		
12		4/24	Edits to Invasive Pulls	Kath email 4/24	done yet? - PJB		??		
13									
14									
15									
16		Completed							
17		4/18	Cold Spring trail work in progress		solicit from Nogee	PJB write/post	PJB	published	
18		4/22	announce promotion TG and Almanac	Board mtg			ted	done	
19									
20									

**Minutes for Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Wednesday, May 27, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
**Via ZOOM**

Participating were Ted Kuklinski, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Mike Clarke, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Dan Green, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson.

Also present were summer interns Veer Gadodia and Lara Simshauser.

**Approval of Minutes for April 22, 2020:** The minutes were approved as written.

**Meet the Interns:** Ted introduced Lara Simshauser, who is graduating from the Windsor School and going to Brown in the fall; she has been removing invasives and helped with Dexter Woods planting. Veer Gadodia, a rising senior at NNHS, is creating the Invasives pages on our website, working with Peter Barrer.

**Website Update:** Peter showed pages from Veer's mock-up of the Invasives section on our web site. It is an impressive work, providing information about invasives under many different headings and categories. Board members volunteered to submit pictures to use for the page; Barbara will send instructions on how to store and access them on Google Share.

**Treasurer's Report:** Katherine said all items will be covered in discussion of related updates.

**IPM Pilot Projects.** Beth referred to the correspondence sent by Andreae Downs and included in our packet for this meeting. The City wishes to apply pesticides on three playing fields, and the IPM Advisory Committee has agreed. Margaret summarized her response (also attached), commenting that the City has come a long way on pesticides. AnnaMaria appreciated Margaret's response, thanking for all her work with IPM. The question is whether the Conservator should weigh in on the issue. A ZOOM informational meeting is scheduled for June 4. Following discussion, a MOTION that "if a question arises, the board authorizes the executive committee to state that we have no objection" was SECONDED and APPROVED, with two abstentions.

**Houghton Garden Hydro-raking Project: (See material in packet sent for the meeting)**

Dan Green explained that the Conservation Commission agreed to fund the \$27,000 hydro-raking if the neighbors raised \$27,000 for the complementary site preparation and clean-up. The community raised \$54,000, making possible additional needed restoration of trails and removal of debris from inlets and outlets to the pond. The Chestnut Hill Association (CHA) is asking the Conservators to receive and expend the funds and coordinate with two CHA representatives who will oversee the day-to-day work. Katherine is willing to take donations and

pay bills, but asks that another board member provide the contract oversight and the coordination with the 2 CHA representatives and ConCom. Following a lengthy and heated discussion, a MOTION “to receive funds for this project and authorize Ted or his designee to work with the CHA and the Conservation Commission to finalize and sign the work contract between Robert Hanss and the Conservators and oversee it to conclusion” was SECONDED and APPROVED by a vote of 8 for, 3 against, 5 abstentions.

**Riverside Trail Team – Volunteers and RGWG update:** Larry said work has begun on the Pony Truss Trail restoration under contractor Walker Corbin. However, our plan to use some volunteer labor to help with the trail restoration (and function as our match for grant purposes) has been impacted by COVID-19 because DCR is currently not permitting volunteer work on its property. However, we still intend to recruit volunteers in anticipation of DCR soon allowing this type of trails work to take place. Ted K will post the volunteer opportunity in a Conservators e-Bulletin, and the message will also go out to Bike Newton and the Lower Falls Improvement Association. Larry has agreed to coordinate this volunteer Trails Team, which could also be used on other/future trails projects.

For the Pigeon Hill design project, Katherine said that because we have now used all available volunteer hours on that project, the grant will pay only 75% of our submitted paid invoices henceforth. This will result in depleting the Solomon Foundation funds that were intended to provide cash flow, and there could be times when the Conservators will again need to temporarily fund the cash flow. She and Ted Chapman will meet with Lara Kritzer, the new Community Preservation Program Manager, next week, and possibly we can start submitting these unpaid balances to be paid from the approved \$50K CPC grant. A MOTION that we agree to start recruiting a volunteer Trails team was SECONDED and UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

#### **Updates:**

- **Open Space Plan Update:** Beth reported that Jennifer Steel and Claire Rundelli are working on the comments that have been received, and a final plan is expected by June 1. More information regarding the implementation team: it has been decided that only City employees will be on it, and citizens will be involved only when asked. Beth would like Conservators to express support of the plan.

A MOTION “that the board give approval to the executive committee to decide, after the release of the final plan, whether to write a letter of support, and that we would like to have stakeholder participation in the implementation of the plan” was SECONDED and UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

The Conservation Commission will vote on the plan on June 4, and the State will decide shortly thereafter.



- **Trail Guide Update:** Dan Brody reported that next he and Todd Macalister will work with designer Greg Lipson, who is asked to show two sample pages if possible, one for a large property and one for a smaller one..
- **Trail Guide/Almanac Promotion:** The executive committee decided to end the promotion on May 31. Katherine said 56 trail guides and 26 almanacs were sold and several new members joined. The board expressed a huge vote of thanks to Katherine for administering the promotion, including delivering the guides and almanacs.
- **Newton Commonwealth Golf Course CR:** Chris reported that a letter was sent to the Golf Course, with copies to the other interested parties, that the Conservators found the proposed new maintenance building for the course and the modifications of the old one fall within the terms of the CR. Thus, the Conservators granted the Golf Course permission to proceed with their building plans as far as the CR is concerned. The Golf Course responded that they would abide by the city tree ordinances during the construction, build a vegetation screen between the new building and the adjoining apartments and clean up the junk and trash stored in the area. They thanked the Conservators for their work on this proposal.
- **CR Signup:** Chris has put the monitoring sign-up sheet online with Henry's help: [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1xYnto2kqZZTvumRak2wVpn3edjj-g0KLFroAfhlj\\_Q/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1xYnto2kqZZTvumRak2wVpn3edjj-g0KLFroAfhlj_Q/edit?usp=sharing). He noted the two new properties 20 Rogers St. and 30 Wabasso St. The Rogers St. and Crystal Lake monitoring can easily be done by one team since they are adjacent small properties. For the others, he hoped members will continue to sign up for the sites they've monitored before.
- **Dexter Woods:** Katherine, Beth, Nyssa and Barbara worked four hours on Tuesday afternoon planting on the slope, and Katherine went back Wednesday to water; Barbara showed photos of the work, which she was sending to the board.
- **Newsletter:** Ken said the issue has been put together and is with Suzette.
- **Cold Spring Park:** Katherine said the FoCSP board and park users are very happy with the recently completed trail restoration work, which covered about half of the trails. Additional sections will be more expensive as they may not get the partial city funding, and the board is discussing which are most important to undertake next. The board is also discussing issues of park user COVID-19 behavior and potential rules that may be needed.

**Adjournment at 9:15 PM**

Respectfully submitted,  
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secret

**Wednesday, June 24, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
**Via ZOOM**

Participating were Ted Kuklinski, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Bonnie Carter, Mike Clarke, Pete Gilmore, Dan Green, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson.

**Approval of Minutes for May 27, 2020:** The minutes were approved as written.

**Treasurer's Report:** Katherine is working on the financial statements for June 30. Friends of Cold Spring Park (FoCSP) has obtained 501(c)(3) status, so Katherine has transferred to them the funds donated for CSP in the amount of \$13,416; It will show on our IRS 990 filing as a grant to FoCSP. She will seek to schedule the audit committee, which did not meet in the usual April due to the Corona virus.

**Black Lives Matter:** Following considerable discussion, a MOTION to put the statement "Black Lives Matter in the Open Spaces of Newton" (see appended) on the Conservator web site was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED.

**Updates:**

- **Annual Meeting** – The board decided that given the continuing pandemic and the older age of our membership, we should not try to have an in-person annual meeting this October. The board discussed various possibilities for doing the October meeting electronically. The decision was to have a Zoom type meeting with a business meeting to elect officers and board, the president's message including announcement (but not presentation) of the awardees, and the talk by Sam Jaffe. The awardees will receive their awards at the next in-person annual meeting, planned for May 2021. The Newsletter will also report the awards and the deferral of the celebration to the next in-person annual meeting.
- **Nominating Committee:** Pete said the committee have reached about half of the advisors, who all agree to continue to serve. The committee may need to find a new secretary.
- **Legal Counsel:** We still need to find a lawyer who will serve pro bono since Leigh Gilligan is now on the Conservation Commission. Beth agreed to ask Leigh for any suggestions.
- **Fall Walks:** It will be difficult to conduct our usual walks with social distancing. For a discussion of the guidelines needed for any walks, Pete offered that the Brookline Bird Club would meet the following day to decide on rules for walks, which may be helpful. Currently, it was felt that only the canoe trip would be possible. A schedule would be needed by mid-August for inclusion in the fall newsletter. Doing some walks via webinar was discussed, and Beth will solicit authors. Pete offered for birds, Barbara for an animal topic, Ted for monarch butterfly raising, and Don Lubin was mentioned for ferns.
- **Invasives:** Katherine said a small group is working, and the City is picking up the bags. Shaw Miller, a Brown U. student, is helping, and there have been a few other good additions to the group, but the task remains Sisyphean.

- **Riverside Greenway Working Group:** Larry explained the new DCR policy, taking over the work for the 100% design and ending the Halvorson contract at the 25% stage, and that DCR itself and not 3rd parties like ourselves now must do all 100% design construction documents. Additional complicating news is that Mass DOT will do road work at some point in the next few years on the turnpike overpass directly over the proposed trail, and its work might hurt the new trail construction. Therefore, it is now planned to end the Pigeon Hill design work at the current 25% design stage, and end or renegotiate the Halvorson contract. It is hoped that a basic and inexpensive footpath can be installed now so that the trail and river access benefits can be enjoyed soon; it would also serve as a place holder for an eventual more permanent design. Care and control issues have to be settled; DCR indicated they will definitely be involved in care. Jennifer Steel offered to have Con Com do part of the maintenance.

- **Riverside Development:** The draft language for the special permit for Riverside includes that Mark Development will design and construct several Greenway trails and connections, estimated to cost \$3M. The draft language from the city would have the Conservators, if Mark Development fails to get this work done, receive the \$3M and be responsible for completing the permitting and construction. Ted, for the executive committee, had responded firmly that the Conservators cannot and will not take on the funds or that responsibility. Also, the draft document characterized the \$50,000 for the Conservators as being for trail maintenance, whereas the original intent was only for oversight and monitoring. The RGWG will go back to the city for further discussion of the options.

- **Houghton Garden Project:** Katherine said donations of ~ \$32,000 from Houghton Garden neighbors had been received, more than required to start the initial phase of site prep work. Ted said he has signed the agreement with Robert Hanss Inc., and he had met with the three representatives of the Chestnut Hill Association and toured the garden with Jennifer Steel, the contractors, and CHA representative. Hydro-raking may need higher water levels, but preparatory work could proceed after the project's awaited DEP approval. Ted received a Permit agreement from the City, between the City, Conservators, and Hanss to permit this work to proceed. A MOTION to authorize Ted to sign the permit agreement was SECONDED and APPROVED by 15 in favor, with one abstention for having missed the discussion. The board discussed how best to recruit the Houghton Garden donors to also support or become members of the Conservators. Ted will discuss this with Lisle Baker and propose an outreach plan.

- **Website Update:** Peter reported slow and steady progress on the website invasives section and the contributions of additional invasive photos had been helpful.

- **Open Space & Recreation Plan Update:** Beth and Ted said that following the vote at the May meeting, a letter of support for the plan was formulated and sent to the Open Space Planners with copies to Mayor Fuller, PRC Commissioner Nicole Banks, and Planning Director Barney Heath, noting that "Since the implementation team will be comprised of only city staff, we would like to encourage strong stakeholder participation as priorities are set and the plan is implemented."

- **Newsletter:** Ken thanked Bonnie for having done the mailing alone. It arrived in record time, but several members noted that they had not received theirs. The fall issue is in progress, with articles needed by mid-August. Possible articles include Paul Spagnoli photo essay, Pete Gilmore on birds, and Mike Clarke on the History of the Parks & Recreation Department.

- **CR Sign-ups:** Chris thanked all those who have signed up. The Rogers Street CR will be done by the Crystal Lake group. Deborah Stone has volunteered to help Chris monitor the Elgin Street CR. They should be completed by the end of October.
- **Dexter Woods:** Katherine said Beth, Barbara, Nyssa have completed the planting and the plants are thriving. The watering team, which includes intern Lara Simshauser, needs expansion, and Ted, Ken, and Bill have volunteered. Katherine will conduct a training session soon.
- **Friends of Quinobequin Listening Session:** on Thursday 6/25 will relate to Riverside trails – see the information appended to the agenda. The meeting material is available online.
- **Events/Meetings:** Ted said the Library's Spotted Lantern Fly webinar, which we co-sponsored, went well, and he is preparing a video from it to be posted on the Newton Conservators YouTube channel.

#### **New Business:**

- **Artificial Island in the Charles:** Ken called attention to the article in the day's Boston Globe about the launch of a 700' artificial island to combat invasive algae.
- **Eric Olson:** Beth suggested we send a farewell message to Eric who is moving to Nicaragua; Ken will inform us of the time.
- **Instagram:** Lara Simshauser is doing our Instagram postings.
- **Labeling Street Trees:** Kalpana Guttman, retired Burr School teacher who has had grants from NC, wrote to Ted suggesting that street trees be identified with simple aluminum labels. Marc Welch is interested and will be discussing with her.
- **Noted:** The meadow at Cold Spring Park is full of Common Milkweed; The Parks & Rec budget is online; Councilman Baker's motion to permit the park ranger to issue tickets to dog walkers passed the Council but needs agreement also from the Police Union.

Adjournment at 9:05 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary

## **Black Lives Matter in the Open Spaces of Newton**

Those who live in and near Newton are fortunate to have more than forty conservation areas and parks to turn to for appreciation of nature, for exercise, and for a release from stress. Newton Conservators is committed to working to make sure that those open spaces are accessible and welcoming to people of all races.

To quote Ned Friedman, Director of the Arnold Arboretum, “As a country, we face a reckoning with the devastating effects of more than 400 years of racial, social, economic, and environmental injustice that continue to be baked into the very foundations of our public spaces, educational systems, cities, states, and indeed our republic.”

We are rededicating ourselves to building an open space community that understands, values, and embraces diversity.

**Wednesday, July 22, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
**Via ZOOM**

Participating were Ted Kuklinski, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Mike Clarke, Henry Finch, Dan Green, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith.

Also present was Ethan Kramer, recent arrival to the area, advocate for open space.

**Approval of Minutes for June 24, 2020:** The minutes were approved as written.

**Introduction of Ethan Kramer:** Ethan is a mechanical engineer; he moved recently to Newton and found the Conservators in searching for open space advocates to join.

**Octo Barnett:** The passing of long time Conservator Octo Barnett on July 10 was noted.

**Treasurer's Report:** Katherine had emailed the June 30 financial statements. Favorable variances were from Dues (late renewal package in 2019), the sale of 100 Trail Guides and 40 Almanacs during our spring 50%-off promotion; \$1250 from Annual Meeting sponsorships, no Grants expense and low other expenses. Offsetting these favorable variances was the Unrealized loss on investments, though it was greatly reduced from Q1.

On the balance sheet, the Riverside Trails projects had large payments with lagging grant reimbursement, \$13K was transferred to newly incorporated Friends of Cold Spring Park representing funds remaining after trail work, and new Houghton Garden donations totaled \$34.5K. Dexter Woods planting costs were \$1221; the donation from the previous owner covered \$1K of that, the remaining \$221 appears on the Projects section of the Income Statement.

Katherine renewed our Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition membership at the \$250 level.

The audit committee will meet on Aug. 4 or 5. Bill Hagar volunteered to join Katherine, Pete, Beth, and chair Larry Burdick, at whose house the committee will meet (outdoors).

Katherine asked for a board vote on two matters: 1) to change authorized individuals on our existing Fidelity account (to facilitate changing over our linked Village Bank checking account) 2) to open a new Fidelity Brokerage Account to accept a Houghton Garden supporter's gift of stock. A CORPORATE RESOLUTION to authorize Katherine and Ted to carry out these matters, was SECONDED and unanimously APPROVED. Chris will be the certifying officer on the forms.

**Updates:**

- **Riverside Greenway Working Group** – Katherine explained that the Pigeon Hill Design grant ended on June 30; work for the \$100,000 grant was successfully completed, and the 25% level was reached;

reimbursement is pending. The ongoing Pigeon Hill trail design work has been taken over by DCR, so the contract with Halverson has had to be ended at the 25% level. Katherine will send a letter to formalize that.

Larry reported that work is proceeding well on the Pony Truss Trail. The Terramor trail contractor has suggested August 8 as a date for a volunteer session that would include some trail surfacing work and some landscaping and/or invasives removal to provide volunteer hours needed for the match to our grant. Additional volunteer sessions can happen later.

- **Houghton Garden Project:** Ted reported that the project has received DEP approval. Donations of \$41,500 have been received. Robert Hanss will start work along the creek while the water level is too low for hydoraking. He expects the work to be completed by the end of September.
  - **Black Lives Matter:** Nyssa regretted missing the June board meeting. She considers the statement approved then is inadequate; a serious long term purpose and some action items are needed. A committee to work on this was formed: Ted, Ken and Barbara will join Nyssa; she will convene the group.
  - **Annual Meeting:** Ted repeated the June decision to hold a ZOOM meeting in October, and the board agreed that the awardees will be announced shortly before that meeting. The next in-person Annual Meeting , where the awards will be presented in person, is scheduled for Wed May 5, 2021.
  - **Nominating Committee:** Ted read Pete's update that most of the advisors had been contacted and agreed to continue to serve. AnnaMaria noted that a new secretary is needed as she has decided to step down from that position.
- Woods Property – 122 Islington Road:** Ted related that the 5.6-acre property may be put on the market in the near future. He would like to reconstitute a Land Acquisition committee and has enlisted advisor Eric Reenstierna to assist. Peter Barrer suggested that potential acquisition of this property, which has long been a goal in the City's Open Space Plan, should be researched by a subcommittee. Ted, Henry, and AnnaMaria will join Eric on the committee. Ted will try contacting Zach Woods to follow up on our 2014 communication with him.
- **Webinar Series:** Beth has lined up several commitments for the fall and the dates will be decided in the near future; ; included are sessions on invasives (Eric Olson, Bruce Wenning), monarchs (Ted), birds (Pete G), wildlife (Barbara, and ferns (Don Lubin.)
  - **Website:** Peter said the new invasives section is moving very rapidly. He would like to publish it privately soon, so board members can review and help make corrections.
  - **Trail Guide:** Dan Brody is working with Todd Macalister and Greg Lipson. He has added sites that are not on the Newton GIS system and needs to decide which elements in that system to include. He will

create a sample map for Greg to use in making designs, different for sites of various sizes. Ethan Kramer volunteered to help.

- **Newsletter:** Ken said copy is due in mid-August for the fall Newsletter, with article about turtles by Barbara Bates, Paul Spagnoli photos, Virtual Annual Meeting, Webinar Series, a memorial to Octo Barnett, and a repeat of suggestion for IRA giving. Planned for winter are Mike Clarke's article on the history of Parks & Rec. and an explanation of conservation restrictions.
- **CR Monitoring:** Chris said almost all the sites are signed up.
- **Invasives:** Katherine said one more session is scheduled, for this weekend; she will add some more dates for the fall and consider whether they should be publicized in the newsletter or only publicized to the small group of invasive regulars.
- **Dexter Woods:** Katherine reported that the plants are thriving, watering must continue to get through the summer. Neighbors' water is being used and monitored with a meter and paid for.

**New Business:** None

Adjournment at 8:40 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary



**Minutes for Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Wednesday, September 30, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
**Via ZOOM**

Participating were Ted Kuklinski, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Mike Clarke, Margaret Doris, Pete Gilmore, Dan Green, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson.

Also present were new volunteers Ellen Seaward and Amber Apfel.

**Introduction of new volunteers:** Ellen and Amber told us about their background and skills (see appended cv's). Both found the Conservators at Cold Spring Park. They will work well together on publicity and web materials.

Ted said that two members of the BC EcoTeam (the group that was active about Webster Woods), Siobhan Pender and Maureen Kelly, emailed to him that they are looking for occasions to volunteer. They will be invited to our fall invasives and trails activities.

**Approval of Minutes for July 22, 2020:** The minutes were approved as written.

**Treasurer's Report:** Katherine will send out the report for the quarter that ended today. Contributions for the Houghton Garden project have reached \$51,000. The audit committee met in August and approved the records.

**Updates:**

- **Webinar Series:** Beth said the three webinars so far had gone wonderfully. 106 people had signed up for Pete's Birdwalk the following day. They will be posted on the web site and on YouTube.
- **Nominating Committee:** Pete reported that most advisors have been contacted; the two remaining one are certain to also continue to serve. A new secretary is still needed: Ted has asked a couple of members with no success, and asks for a volunteer.
- **Annual Meeting:** Barbara and Beth have been working on it. ZOOM membership will be upped to 500 for the month. The executive committee will decide whether to send the financial report ahead of the meeting. There will be brief descriptions of the awardees. Officers will be elected by polling first the single members and one family member, second by the second family member where applicable. The awards will be announced with slides, and only the Mayor will speak briefly in accepting the EOY for Webster Woods contingent.
- **Riverside Greenway Working Group:** Larry reported that the trail is finished, and the volunteers will put in some native plants on Saturday, using money that was left over. Ted Chapman will lead Open House walks on Thursday and Friday, Oct. 1 & 2, at 4 PM and 10:30 AM respectively. Ellen will record a Video of the Friday morning event.

- **DCR Meeting on the Lower Falls Project:** following discussion of the two routes through Lower Falls, a MOTION that the Conservators write to DCR in support of having a walking trail on the circuitous path along the river and a bike path along the railroad track, and of a resolution in all haste of the legal issues. The motion was SECONDED and UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED. Comments are due by October 6; Ted suggested members also write their own letters.
- **Diversity Equity Inclusion Team:** Nyssa (chair, members: Barbara Bates, Ted Kuklinski, Ken Mallory, and Ethan Kramer) presented the group's report, pointed out that 26% of Newton's population are **black, Indigenous and people of color**, and reviewed the charge from the board, the first steps to be taken before the October and November board meetings - See appended slides. Ken added that he has contacted other groups that have been working on these issues and will share their experiences. Nyssa will send the Guidelines, asking us to rate how we perform, and to circle the practices on the Continuum page that we engage in. Members agreed in a straw poll to meet on October 28 in addition to the Oct. 21 annual meeting, where this initiative will be mentioned.
- **Invasives Team:** Katherine said that on Saturday volunteers will be planting on the Pony Truss Trail. They worked at Cold Spring Park on Tuesday, at Quinobequin Road last week. On Oct. 17 a session with CRWA will remove bittersweet at Quinobequin Road; she will send the details to the board.
- **Website:** Peter said the information on invasives is now alive; hats off to Katherine, Veer, and Barbara. It has been made public so that the invasives group can review it, but has not yet been publicized to the general public. Veer especially needs to be thanked.
- **Houghton Garden Project:** Ted said only the hydroraking is yet to be done, as rain is needed. More than enough funds to complete the project have been raised. Ted will write to the donors inviting them to become Conservators.
- **Woods Property:** no news.
- **Newsletter:** Ken said the fall issue is out. How to distribute it remains a question: possibly with a link to the Library site. He has contacted Myrtle Baptist Church officials about distributing it, and they were receptive. Margaret Doris volunteered to help with others. The winter issue will be printed at the end of November.
- **Trail Guide:** Dan Brody said he will resume work on it after the election.
- **CR Monitoring:** Chris said two reports are complete and urged that others get done soon.
- **Dexter Woods:** Katherine said it has taken a huge effort to get it planted and to water all summer.
- **Cheesecake Brook:** Lisa Kumpf of CRWA wrote to Ted on Sept. 18 asking NC to co-sponsor an October 27 meeting reporting the project. Following a brief discussion, Barbara MOVED that we publicize this event but do not take a position. The motion was SECONDED and approved by a vote of 16-0, with one abstention by Dan Green, who being on the Conservation Commission avoided a conflict of interest.
- **Publicity:** Ellen hopes to use TikTok to reach younger environmentalists. She listed numerous other possibilities. Ted said she has posted much material. She volunteered her email: [ellen.Seaward@gmail.com](mailto:ellen.Seaward@gmail.com).
- **Legal Counsel:** We are still seeking one.
- **New Business:** None.

Adjournment at 9 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
AnnaMaria Abernathy, Secretary

## Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Organization

MONOCULTURAL ==> MULTICULTURAL ==> ANTI-RACIST ==> ANTI-RACIST MULTICULTURAL					
<i>Racial and Cultural Differences Seen as Deficits ==&gt; Tolerant of Racial and Cultural Differences ==&gt; Racial and Cultural Differences Seen as Assets</i>					
Exclusive An Exclusionary Institution	2. Passive A "Club" Institution	3. Symbolic Change A Compliance Organization	4. Identity Change An Affirming Institution	5. Structural Change A Transforming Institution	6. Fully Inclusive Anti-Racist Multicultural Organization in a Transformed Society
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intentionally and publicly excludes or segregates African Americans, Native Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans</li> <li>Intentionally and publicly enforces the racist status quo throughout institution</li> <li>Institutionalization of racism includes formal policies and practices, teachings, and decision making on all levels</li> <li>Usually has similar intentional policies and practices toward other socially oppressed groups such as women, gays and lesbians, Third World citizens, etc.</li> <li>Openly maintains the dominant group's power and privilege</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tolerant of a limited number of "token" People of Color and members from other social identity groups allowed in with "proper" perspective and credentials.</li> <li>May still secretly limit or exclude People of Color in contradiction to public policies</li> <li>Continues to intentionally maintain white power and privilege through its formal policies and practices, teachings, and decision making on all levels of institutional life</li> <li>Often declares, "We don't have a problem."</li> <li>Monocultural norms, policies and procedures of dominant culture viewed as the "right" way" business as usual"</li> <li>Engages issues of diversity and social justice only on club member's terms and within their comfort zone.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Makes official policy pronouncements regarding multicultural diversity</li> <li>Sees itself as "non-racist" institution with open doors to People of Color</li> <li>Carries out intentional inclusiveness efforts, recruiting "someone of color" on committees or office staff</li> <li>Expanding view of diversity includes other socially oppressed groups</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>But...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Not those who make waves"</li> <li>Little or no contextual change in culture, policies, and decision making</li> <li>Is still relatively unaware of continuing patterns of privilege, paternalism and control</li> <li>Token placements in staff positions: must assimilate into organizational culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growing understanding of racism as barrier to effective diversity</li> <li>Develops analysis of systemic racism</li> <li>Sponsors programs of anti-racism training</li> <li>New consciousness of institutionalized white power and privilege</li> <li>Develops intentional identity as an "anti-racist" institution</li> <li>Begins to develop accountability to racially oppressed communities</li> <li>Increasing commitment to dismantle racism and eliminate inherent white advantage</li> <li>Actively recruits and promotes members of groups have been historically denied access and opportunity</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>But...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institutional structures and culture that maintain white power and privilege still intact and relatively untouched</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commits to process of intentional institutional restructuring, based upon anti-racist analysis and identity</li> <li>Audits and restructures all aspects of institutional life to ensure full participation of People of Color, including their world-view, culture and lifestyles</li> <li>Implements structures, policies and practices with inclusive decision making and other forms of power sharing on all levels of the institutions life and work</li> <li>Commits to struggle to dismantle racism in the wider community, and builds clear lines of accountability to racially oppressed communities</li> <li>Anti-racist multicultural diversity becomes an institutionalized asset</li> <li>Redefines and rebuilds all relationships and activities in society, based on anti-racist commitments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Future vision of an institution and wider community that has overcome systemic racism and all other forms of oppression.</li> <li>Institution's life reflects full participation and shared power with diverse racial, cultural and economic groups in determining its mission, structure, constituency, policies and practices</li> <li>Members across all identity groups are full participants in decisions that shape the institution, and inclusion of diverse cultures, lifestyles, and interest</li> <li>A sense of restored community and mutual caring</li> <li>Allies with others in combating all forms of social oppression</li> <li>Actively works in larger communities (regional, national, global) to eliminate all forms of oppression and to create multicultural organizations.</li> </ul>

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### DEI Team Charge from Board

- To explore whether the Newton Conservators' Board should pursue an anti-racist approach to our work
  - How is anti-racism related to mission?
    - It's personal and individual, implicit bias
    - If we are unaware of our blind spots, how can we be effective at making open spaces welcoming?
  - An anti-racist Board is mission critical to making open spaces welcoming
- To explore how the Newton Conservators might do so (e.g. via a public statement on website or something more substantive)
  - First steps involve assessing Board its practices before devising action plan

DEIT Sept. 30 statement

## First Steps

- Now (tomorrow):
  - Board members study Spectrum of Anti-racism Practices to determine how they might rate the Board's practices
  - Board members read articles to be sent by DEI Team
- Oct. 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting:
  - Board members rate NC Board (anonymously)
- Early Nov.:
  - DEI Team analyzes ratings
  - Prepares a structured discussion of results
  - Drafts "next steps" and distributes "Guidelines for Multicultural Interactions"
- Nov. Board Meeting:
  - DEI Team facilitates structured reflection & conversation covering
    - Summary rating results
    - Potential next steps

**Minutes for Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Wednesday, October 28, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
*Via ZOOM*

Participating were Ted Kuklinski, presiding; Mike Clarke, AnnaMaria Abernathy, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Margaret Doris, Pete Gilmore, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson.

1. **Minutes:** Minutes from 9/30/2020 were approved.
2. **Treasurer's Report** (Katherine): Financial statements were sent out prior to the meeting. Revenue, including that involving special funds, have put the NC in a different tax category, so a CPA, Bo Wilson, has been engaged. The annual meeting was well funded by sponsors. As there was no dinner, the entire cost of the sponsorships is tax deductible and Katherine will send the thank you letters. An insurance notice regarding coverage for computer hacking had been received, and Katherine will follow up with those involved in the website.
3. **Membership Renewal:** It is time to solicit our annual membership renewals. Ted will coordinate with Bonnie and Beth who agreed to help with the labels. The mailing activity may be broken up with several board members each assisting on a portion.
4. **LTA – Open Space & Housing:** Beth and Ted will attend the Land Trust Association meeting on Thursday on Open Space and Housing along with Alice Ingerson.
5. **Working Together to Improve Our Greenspaces Along the Charles River:** Barbara suggested that we serve as a resource for this upcoming meeting particularly with regard to anti-invasives techniques. Katherine volunteered to help.
6. **UPDATES:**
  - a. **The Diversity Equity Inclusion Team:** Nyssa reported that the DEIT has studied what other land trusts have done along the lines of involving Black Indigenous and People of Color (BIPoC). The place to start is to first assess the board's own biases by making comments on the attached table. Barbara reviewed the DEIT members assessment and mailed it to the board after the meeting. Board members should complete their own assessment by November 4 and return to Nyssa.
  - b. **Board / Secretary Nominations:** Ted thanked AnnaMaria for all the work she has done in recent history as Secretary and her more than 50 years of continuous effort for the Conservators in the many capacities she has served including as President in 1984-86. Mike will serve as interim secretary. Ted indicated that we should look for new and younger people to join the board. Ted also indicated that he will step down at the end of his current term.
  - c. **Webinar Series:** Kudos were given to Beth and Barbara (and others who assisted with preparation) for the very successful Fall Webinar series. Suggestions for additional webinar topics were pollinators, vernal pools, and specific properties. It was decided not to engage in physical walks this coming spring. There will be another webinar series likely being March to June with possibly one during the winter. The idea of prerecording a slide show with live questions was entertained afterwards.



- d. **Annual Meeting:** The annual meeting was held over Zoom on Oct. 21, 2020. Attending: 120 registered, 101 unique viewers, 93 max concurrent views. Voting for the proposed slate: 56 – Yes; 3 – Abstained. Evaluation comments were often “wow” and all were favorable with many focusing on the presentation by Sam Jaffe. On the other hand, 10 mentioned missing the facetime camaraderie. We need to think about next year’s speaker now. It seems unlikely that our Annual Meeting will be held live in May due to Covid. This will be considered in a future meeting.

- e. **DCR Trails (Lower Falls):** Since the last meeting, Dan Brody has walked the southern section of the Lower Falls area and consulted with Jennifer Steel. The City of Newton’s position includes the statement that DCR should: “Re-assess the feasibility of improving and extending the pedestrian trail along the Wellesley side of the river and crossing over on the aqueduct bridge to the Newton side and constructing a walkway under the I-95 overpass (the dark grey dashed line, below).” Such a trail segment would be much more pleasant and safer for pedestrians than the proposed alignment along Quinobequin Rd.” [The Wellesley trails map](#) compares two alternate routes. The DCR proposal is shown in purple; the alternate route is highlighted in yellow. Dan Brody proposed (seconded by Barbara Bates) that we send a new letter to DCR, adding the following



language to our position: “The Board of the Newton Conservators urges DCR, in its planning for the proposed Lower Falls Shared-Use Trail, to follow the recommendation of the City of Newton to re-assess the feasibility of improving and extending the pedestrian trail along the Wellesley side of the river and crossing over on the aqueduct bridge to the Newton side and constructing a walkway under the I-95 overpass.” Voted: unanimously passed. Ted will write the letter to DCR.

- f. **DCR Trails (Quinobequin):** Katherine presented the DCR’s three alternatives for the Quinobequin Rd. trail improvements. It was recommended that the board members review the presentation before making a formal recommendation. See <https://www.mass.gov/doc/quinobequin-road-and-trail-improvements-public-comments-deadline-2020-10-23/download>.
- g. **Riverside Greenway:** The Riverside Trail projects (Pigeon Hill and Pony Truss) are being finalized and the submission to the CPC, for its approved Pigeon Hill support, is being prepared. There is an \$8K match still being figured, as is a possible simple footpath for Pigeon Hill given the changes in Mass DOT and DCR plans for the area. Our existing Solomon Foundation funds may help with these issues.
- h. **Website:** The Invasives section is working and will continue to be improved. Also, the website in general is working, and attempts will be made to keep it more up to date.
- i. **Invasives:** The collaboration with the CRWA, on the previous Saturday to remove bittersweet along the Quinobequin trail, went well.
- j. **Cheesecake Brook:** 39 people attended the CRWA online event on Tuesday to discuss removing the channeling of Cheesecake Brook.
- k. **Houghton Garden:** Funds are now trickling in from the neighborhood after a successful fund raising. There likely is enough water in Houghton Pond now to do hydro-raking project and if it gets done, we have sufficient funds to pay for the balance of the work by Robert Hanss. Ted will draft a special letter to go to the donors encouraging them to join the Newton Conservators.

- l. **Newsletter:** The winter Newsletter is full with sufficient articles and should go out in December. Distribution at the library may now be possible again.
  - m. **CR Monitoring:** Chris reported that most of the CR properties have been visited, but only 3 reports have been received. Bracebridge Road is one that needs to be done on time.
  - n. **Dexter Woods:** Some more planting needs to be done; then it will be done for the winter.
7. **New Business**
- a. **Orienteering:** We received a request about orienteering from Parks & Rec. Six parks have been proposed including Cold Spring Park. Child orienteers will be limited to the trails or open spaces.
  - b. **Sculpture Trail:** The Sculpture Trail at Kennard Park has been extended to the end of November.
  - c. **Dolan Pond:** There is a new surface on the Cumberland Path at Dolan Pond.
8. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 9:32 pm. Move to Adjourn by Barbara, seconded by Mike, unanimous approval.

Respectfully submitted,

*Mike Clarke, Acting Secretary*



**Minutes: Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Tuesday, November 24, 2020 – 7:00 PM**  
**Via Zoom**

Participating were Ted Kuklinski, presiding; Mike Clarke, AnnaMaria Abernathy, David Backer, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Bonnie Carter, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Dan Green, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson.

1. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from 10/28/2020 were approved unanimously.
2. **Treasurer's Report:** Katherine reported that the annual report to the Secretary of State was filed on November 1. It is now time to work on the budget, and Katherine requested to be told of any changes needed. In view of the costs for Dexter Woods, Peter Barrer asked whether we have sufficient funds to support the properties we own, and Katherine agreed to report back.
3. **In Memoriam for Duane Hillis:** The group observed a minute of reflection for Duane Hillis, who had been active in the Conservators and instrumental in saving the Newton Community Farm and was president of Friends of Nahanton Park for 30 years. The winter newsletter will recognize his passing.
4. **Nahanton Park CR:** The pending CR on Nahanton Park has not gone forward because the city has neither realized funds for an external survey nor enabled its own survey team to complete a survey and map of the site, which are needed for the CR. It is conceivable that the city could want to use the site for a school to serve the added population from the nearby Northland development. The Hillis house at 499 Winchester St. adjacent to the park had been sold to a developer (499 Winchester St. LLC) and will likely have two units of housing placed on it without needing a special permit
5. **Parks, Recreation, and Culture Commission:** The mayor has appointed three new PRC Commissioners: Ellen Gibson, Maria Mastrocola Gavris,<sup>1</sup> Beth Wilkinson and one new alternate member, Randall Jackson. Members replaced include Andy Stern, Al Cecchinelli, and Mike Clarke.

**Updates:**

- a. **Diversity Equity Inclusion Team (DEIT):** Barbara related that 15 directors responded to the survey request for feedback, which will be discussed at the December meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> **Maria Mastrocola Gavris:** 21 Monadnock Road, Chestnut Hill, MA replaced Dick Tucker as the Ward 7 PRC commissioner and has a background in law. Her resume indicates an interest in preserving parks and recreation opportunities in Ward 7. She led efforts to preserve the DCR properties of Hammond Pond and the recently acquired Heartbreak Hill Reservoir Park. Resumes were not available for Gibson and Jackson.

- b. **Board Nominations:** Suggestions for new board member nominations were solicited. Barbara Bates moved that we should determine a set of qualifications for new board members before appointing new ones. Seconded by Bonnie, passed unanimously. Further action was tabled until the December meeting.
- c. **Membership Renewal / Mailing:** The membership renewal letter has been reviewed by the Board and should be ready for mailing in the near future. There was a suggestion that a special version for Houghton Garden donors might be cosigned by Lisle Baker.
- d. **Annual Meeting:** The Conservators' 60th anniversary meeting is in May 2021. Speaker ideas were discussed. Suggestions were solicited and Ken agreed to compile a list with references.
- e. **CR Monitoring:** Chris asked for the status of this year's CR reports. With the exception of Wabasso St., all were well on the way. Dan reported that Parks, Rec & Culture (PRC) would address the hazard trees at Bracebridge on Conservation Comm. Land.
- f. **Woods Property:** A committee chaired by Henry was formed to assess the status of the woodland property on the Charles. It was suggested that advisor Eric Reenstierna might assist and that Ellen Katz was also interested in preserving the property.
- g. **Webinar Series:** The webinar series was judged to be very successful, with all webinars receiving good survey feedback. Barbara moved and Pete seconded that webinars should continue along with walks, as Covid will still necessitate social distancing. This passed unanimously. The Globe may have a favorable article about the Conservators and the webinar series in the near future.
- h. **Website:** Barbara indicated that our website's security (Word Press) is strong. Google has re-branded G-Suite as Google Workspace and changed the way some things work. We are experiencing problems setting up working emails at our Google Workspace and are attempting to solve the problem. Peter indicated that he is bringing the content of the website up to date; however, it was not clear who would be posting the minutes and whether they belong on the website or in the online archives.
- i. **Newsletter:** Ken reported that a full winter issue newsletter will be out in December.
- j. **Publicity:** Ellen Seaward is managing a new Tik Tok account (@newtonconservators) that has been set up. Short videos are a way to pique viewer interest. Ken showed the Hemlock Gorge video from our account on his cell phone to the board.
- k. **Riverside Greenway:** Concerns about accessibility for the Pigeon Hill trail were raised, which Ted Chapman has been trying to address with the city's ADA coordinator. The city's Open Space Plan has been declined by the State also because of lack of ADA relevant data and maps for the city's parks and playgrounds. Consequently, the city is not eligible for open space grants from the State.

- l. **Invasives/Dexter Woods:** Katherine reported that a Newton North HS group (teachers and students) helped pull invasives at Dexter woods and that new native plants have been installed.
- m. **Houghton Garden Project:** Someone has repeatedly removed the board on the dam on the pond which has prevented the scheduled hydro-raking of the pond. Rains were expected to fill up the pond again sufficiently for work to continue.
- n. **Open Space & Housing:** Ted and Beth (along with Alice Ingerson) attended a Land Trust Association meeting on open space and affordable housing. Crescent St. was discussed at the LTA meeting, which may again be a topic in Newton as to whether it should be open space or mixed with affordable housing.
- o. **Orienteering:** Henry has been involved in planning for setting up some courses with Channon Aimes of the PRC Department.

**6. New Business:**

- a. **Trail Guide:** Jennifer Steel has agreed to ask her list of “stewards” of the conservation areas to give us their suggestions for changes to the new edition of the trail guide. Dan requests that NC members mark-up version of the map at [this website page](#) with their suggestions and corrections and send it to Dan.

**7. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke  
Acting Secretary

**Minutes: Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Tuesday, December 29, 2020 – 7:08 PM**  
**Via Zoom**

**Participants** were Ted Kuklinski, presiding; AnnaMaria Abernathy, David Backer, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Bonnie Carter, Mike Clarke, Henry Finch, Dan Green, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson.

1. **Approval of Minutes.** The minutes from 11/24/2020 will be presented for approval at the next meeting in order to incorporate a suggested change by Barbara Bates.
2. **Treasurer's Report.** Katherine reported that with year-end in a few days, we are far better than budget, with Dues/Gifts already over by \$6K, Annual Meeting with sponsorships of \$2K and little expense due to holding the meeting virtually, and none of our \$4K grants budget disbursed. Further, it appears the year is ending with a large unrealized gain in our 4-in-1 Index Fund investment. We will incur a \$1.5K additional cost to have our financial statements reviewed by a CPA, a state requirement due to exceeding \$200K of revenues. The statements will require a lot of work and complete footnotes. The expected \$45K of CR monitoring funds from the City for three properties is delayed due to need for legal review of the somewhat problematic draft grant agreement from the city. We also need to find a pro bono attorney; Ted has contacted advisor Michael Collora who has a lead that we will pursue. There is also a need for a membership volunteer who would use the 123-Signup system to manage our membership activity, a function that Katherine currently does.
3. **Ordway Park.** There was a complaint this Fall about leaves covering the sidewalk on Grant Ave. Dan Green contacted our landscaper, Kevin Newman, who addressed the problem and cleared the leaves on the property except for around the shrubbery which were left in place. He also automatically takes care of clearing the sidewalks of snow.

**4. Updates**

- a. **Diversity Equity Inclusion Team (DEIT).** Barbara and Nyssa reviewed the compiled comments, most of which were relevant to columns 2-4. There was general agreement about our current status in that we are a compliant and affirming organization (columns 3&4) and that we are committed to eliminate any possible racism through a process we have already begun. Dan asked whether the Conservators board should look like the demographics of Newton (80% White, 13% Asian, Hispanic 4.9%, 3.5% Black). Mike suggested that our mission statement (Bylaws II:1) should be explicit about diversity. The next step is to move forward with actions. Barbara suggested that we provide

packages for new board members that document our guiding values, reach out to minority communities, provide a job description for officers and directors and criteria as to how to select them, and be transparent as to how decisions are reached.

- b. **Annual Meeting.** Possible speakers were discussed and there was a thought that it might be easier to get a virtual speaker. It was agreed it would not be advisable to try for a face-to-face meeting in May due to the virus, and also that we need more time to plan for this 60th anniversary celebration. It was voted to postpone the meeting to October.
- c. **Membership.** Renewal letters went out - many thanks to Suzette for the quick work on the layout and all those who helped with the mailing.
- d. **CR Monitoring.** Chris indicated that the CRs for Dexter Woods, Awtrey, Wabasso, Crystal Lake, and Webster Park all need to be completed to be provided to relevant city agencies. The Nahanton Park CR draft by Ouida Young must include state mandated surveys of conservation areas with accessibility documented. City surveyors cannot do it this year and \$60K is required for outside surveyors. Chris suggested matching funds (\$5K) from Friends of Nahanton Park and \$5-10K from the Conservators. We will need advice from a CR cognizant lawyer on this.
- e. **Woods Property.** Ted contacted the tenant with whom he left a note for Zach Woods. Ted will follow up with Henry and Eric Reenstierna.
- f. **Riverside Greenway.** A number of different proposals for safer routes around 128 and Commonwealth Avenue have been proposed. A preferred one is a modern roundabout at Austin St so that the Greenway can cross Commonwealth Ave. A new sign has been designed for the Pony Truss Bridge.
- g. **Houghton Garden.** Work has finished for the winter. Hydroraking was done before Christmas and got down to the bottom of pond. Jennifer Steel arranged for the extra cost of some hydroraking from a Conservation Commission fund. Overall, the project was successful and had very substantial neighborhood financial support for the auxiliary work done by Robert Hanss, Inc. Some minor trail and planting work should proceed in the spring.
- h. **Orienteering.** The Parks, Recreation and Culture Orienteering Program has been getting under way this Fall. Eagle scouts set up permanent orienteering trails in Auburndale and in Edmands Parks. Other parks are on track for additional trails including Cold Spring Park. A news item concerning this on the NC website might be appropriate.
- i. **Website.** Barbara indicated that posting of the approved minutes has been delayed. Thanks to Barbara our newsletters will now be easier to post on our website.

- j. **Newsletter.** Ken reported that the Winter 2020-2021 Newsletter has gone out through the mail. Thanks to Suzette for formatting the newsletter and to Bonnie for getting the mailing out. The Spring newsletter already has articles coming in.
- k. **Trail Guide.** About 300-400 copies of the existing Trail Guide remain for distribution which should be adequate until the new Trail Guide is completed.
- l. **Publicity.** Richard Primack had an article in the Tab dealing with nature sightings in Newton during covid times. The article referred readers to the Conservators website to view a video of a great blue heron swallowing an American eel at Dolan Pond. Ellen Seaward has been assembling more videos for Tok-tok and Instagram which have been quite popular. The Conservators were mentioned in a Patch article on the most liked Newton non-profits (Green Newton was #1).
- m. **499 Winchester** has a construction fence around it, but no new construction has begun.

- 5. **New Business:** The idea of maintaining urban biodiversity by preserving connected back yards through CRs was discussed. The Woods Hole Center for Climate Research was indicated as a possible resource for this.<sup>1</sup>
- 6. **Adjournment:** Barbara moved to adjourn. Mike seconded. Passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke  
Acting Secretary

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.ecolandscaping.org/12/designing-ecological-landscapes/backyard-biodiversity-study/could-we-manage-backyards-to-increase-biodiversity/>. This idea was also included in the last two Open Space Plans and was a recent webinar topic at the Woods Hole Center.