

Newton Conservators

2025 Newton Candidate Questionnaire

Respondent: Andrea Kelley

Office Sought: Ward 3 City Councilor At-Large

Question 1:

What are your top 2 or 3 goals and/or objectives from the Newton Open Space Plan:2020-2027 (see pages 147-150 for the Plan's Goals and Objectives) and what do you plan to do to promote them? (FYI, a priority of Newton Conservators, relating to Objective 6C on page 150, is to complete overdue and future Conservation Restrictions in a timely manner.) Are there items that you believe are missing from either the open space plan or conservation discussions in our community, and how would you address that? (400 words or less)

Response:

My priorities are the maintenance and improvement to Newton's open spaces, particularly parks, trails, path, bridges, boardwalks, passive and conservation areas, tree canopy, and accessibility to these. I support a city-wide comprehensive plan and would work on that, to assess both current conditions and future needs.

Question 2:

The climate crisis is one of the biggest detrimental impacts on our open spaces. How would you accelerate or add to the actions recommended in both the Newton Climate Action Plan:A Living Plan for 2020-2025 (focused on reducing greenhouse gases) and the Newton Climate Vulnerability Assessment and Action Plan (focused on changes to protect natural resources and reduce effects of extreme weather events)? (400 words or less)

Response:

In no particular order, these are all paramount to me: reducing greenhouse gas emissions, protection of natural resources, reducing the effects of increasingly extreme weather events -think of Bullough's Pond dam and the flooding consequences-, increasing use of electricity while reducing reliance on "natural" gas (I will continue to oppose new gas line grants of location), more municipal solar arrays and installations, more safe, direct and connected bike and walkways, reduce consumption in all ways, charge for trash pick up, eliminate food waste going into land fills, increase electric vehicle use, reduce parking minimums, continue to enhance all public transit methods: bus, commuter rail, Green Line.

Question 3:

Do you believe current funding levels in the City budget are sufficient to maintain high quality open space and address growing climate mitigation needs? If not, what would you do about it? (400 words or less)

Response:

There is no topic area that I care most about in Newton that is sufficiently funded! That's the constant difficulty where revenues don't match our goals. This deficit includes open space and climate mitigation needs. We must deepen the on-going discussion with the next Mayor in order to have this be forefront before the next round of City Budget deliberations and allocations.