



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

Barney S. Heath
Director of Planning and
Development

**COMMUNITY
PRESERVATION
COMMITTEE**

Eliza Datta, Chair
Susan Lunin, Vice Chair
Mark Armstrong
Dan Brody
Byron Dunker
Jennifer Molinsky
Martin Smargiassi
Judy Weber

www.newtonma.gov/cpa

Program Staff

Mollie Hutchings
Community Preservation
Program Manager

mhutchings@newtonma.gov

617-796-1147

1000 Commonwealth Ave
Newton, MA 02459

T 617.796.1120

www.newtonma.gov



**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
AGENDA**

March 12, 2023 at 7:00 P.M.

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) will hold this meeting as a virtual meeting. No in-person meeting will take place at City Hall.

To view and participate in this virtual meeting on your phone, download the "Zoom Cloud Meetings" app in any app store or at www.zoom.us. At the above date and time, click on "Join a Meeting" and enter the following Meeting ID: **85840273531**

To join this meeting on your computer, go to: <https://newtonma.gov.zoom.us/j/85840273531> One tap mobile: **+16469313860,,85840273531**

At the start of the meeting, CPC members will designate a member to be responsible for reviewing the draft minutes for this meeting.

7:00 P.M. – Spears Park Community Gardens Pre-Proposal Meeting

OTHER BUSINESS

- 1) Review of Existing and Potential Future Projects
- 2) Review of Current Finances
- 3) Approval of Minutes
- 4) Other

Please note that the times noted above are approximate and discussions may happen earlier or later in the meeting as needed. Pre meeting packets with additional information on each agenda item are posted on the website before each meeting.

The location of this meeting/event is wheelchair accessible and Reasonable Accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities who require assistance. If you need a Reasonable Accommodation, please contact the city of Newton's ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, Jini Fairley, at least two business days in advance (2 weeks for ASL or CART) of the meeting/event: jfairley@newtonma.gov or (617) 796-1253. The city's TTY/TDD direct line is: 617-796-1089. For the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), please dial 711.



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**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
STAFF MEMO**

March 12, 2024 at 7:00 P.M.

Pre-proposal Meeting for [Spears Park Community Garden](#)

Spears Park, at the corner of Walnut Park and Washington Street, is currently an open green lot. The project would install 30 raised beds for a community garden in the space, with storage for tools and picnic tables. This project has already been through design and is applying for \$150,00 of open space funding for construction. The total project budget is just under \$350,000.

Questions to keep in mind:

1. Will the fencing include a locked gate, and if so, who will have access? Is there a plan for balancing protection of the community garden with community access to the space?
2. What do the accessible raised beds look like?
3. What can you tell us about the community process? Will Friends groups be involved?

OTHER BUSINESS

- 1) Review of Existing and Potential Future Projects
I have attached the updated list of existing and future projects.
- 2) Review of Current Finances
I have attached the most recent Finances-at-a-Glance Sheet. This is updated to reflect the approval of the Second Church in Newton on March 4, 2024.
- 3) Approval of Minutes
Three sets of minutes are included in the packet (November, January and February)
- 4) Updates from the Coalition
 - Webinar in May – details to come
 - State Match forecast
- 5) Other
Just in case.

City of Newton



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

Newton, Massachusetts Community Preservation Program FUNDING REQUEST

PRE-PROPOSAL

PROPOSAL

(For staff use)
date rec'd:

Last updated October 2020.

Please submit this completed file directly – do not convert to PDF or other formats.

For full instructions, see www.newtonma.gov/cpa or contact:

Mollie Hutchings, Community Preservation Program Manager

City of Newton Planning & Development Department, 1000 Commonwealth Ave., Newton, MA 02459

ahutchings@newtonma.gov 617.796.1144

You may adjust the space for each question, but the combined answers to all questions on this page must fit on this page.

Project TITLE	Community Garden at Spears Park			
Project LOCATION	Corner of Walnut Pk and Washington st, Newton			
Project CONTACTS	Name & title or organization	Email	Phone	Mailing address
Project Manager	Luis Perez Demorizi, Director of Parks and Open Space Parks, Recreation & Culture Ahron Lerman Assistant Director of Parks & Open Space Parks, Recreation & Culture	lpdemorizi@newtonma.gov Alerman@newtonma.gov	617-796-1500	246 Dudley Road, Newton, MA 02459
Other Contacts	Nicole Banks, Commissioner Parks, Recreation & Culture	nbanks@newtonma.gov	617-796-1500	246 Dudley Road, Newton, MA 02459
Project FUNDING	A. CPA funds requested: 150,000.00	B. Other funds to be used: \$199,519	C. Total project cost (A+B): \$349,519	
Project SUMMARY	Explain how the project will use the requested CPA funds. You may provide more detail in attachments, but your PROJECT SUMMARY MUST FIT IN THE SPACE BELOW. Use a cover letter for general information about the sponsoring organization's accomplishments.			

A new community Garden space for Newton at Spears Park

Spears Park is a quarter (.25) acre park located at the corner of Washington Street and Walnut Park. The park is bound by the Jackson Walnut Park Schools to the west and north, Washington street to the south and Walnut Park to the east. This small parcel of open space was a private residential property that was deeded to the City of Newton in 1934. The residence and carriage house dated back to as early as 1848. The park is also located within a few steps of the Jackson-Homestead Museum. The surrounding land use is comprises residential and institutional use. Currently, the park is an open lawn with surrounding declining trees with some invasive tree species taking hold. Spears Park currently does not have any programmed uses.

Over the past 2 years, the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department has partnered with the Friends of Tasun Community Gardens at Spears Park to bring forward the second publicly accessible community garden space in the city to better serve residents living north of the MassPike. Currently, the city leases 120 community garden plots at Nahanton Park. Those gardens have been booked for years and currently have a recurring waitlist of an average of 20 potential gardeners. Throughout the 2-year planning and development process, the city underwent 3 community meetings, 1 of which was held on-site with neighbors and other stakeholders. The project has also received unanimous approval from the Parks & Recreation Commission in their November 2022 meeting, along with full support from the city council and from various local entities such as Green Newton and the Newton Conservators. The project was also supported by the Jackson Walnut Park Schools and the Friends of Tasun Garden at Spears Park.

PROJECT GOALS:

- Provide up to 30 raised beds, including 2 accessible beds
- Provide accessibility throughout the garden area
- Provide critter-resistant fence enclosure
- Provide site amenities such as bike racks, benches, picnic tables, and signage
- Use sustainable materials
- Enhance pollinator habitat
- Provide garden tool storage and composting station
- Provide yard hydrants
- Provide amenities for the community outside of the fenced-in gardens

Project Title	Community Garden at Spears Park		
Proposed Funding Category: Recreation	Proposed Recreation Funding will be used to:	Acquire	
		Create	To create a community garden
		Preserve	
		Rehabilitate/ Restore	
Community Needs	From each of at least 2 plans linked to the Guidelines & Forms page of www.newtonma.gov/cpa , provide a brief quote with plan title, year, and page number, showing how this project meets previously recognized community needs. You may also list other community benefits not mentioned in any plan.		

Open Space and Recreation Plan Update 2020-2027

- Section 7: Analysis of Needs, page 143 “Addressing Gaps in the Availability of Open Space Resources” – *Given the demand, Newton would do well to consider creating more community gardens, especially in the northern part of the City.*”
- Section 8
 - Goal 3: Accessibility (p.149)
 - Objective A: Increase accessibility in the City’s Park land
 - Goal 4: Minimized Gaps in the Availability of Open Space Resources (p.150)
 - Objective A: Improved existing open space resources where need is greatest.
 - Objective B: Expanded and diversified park and playground assets where need is greatest.
 - Goal 5: Connectivity (p.150)
 - Objective A: Enhanced bike network that includes not only higher traffic “spines”, but also low-stress components and connections to local open space resources, especially in under-served areas, and is consistent with regional plans
 - Objective E: Improved publicly available bike/pedestrian wayfinding and navigation measures.

Capital Improvement Plan FY2022-2026

- CIP by Priority FY 2022-2026:
 - Priority #48 - Halloran Field Lights at Albemarle
“Replace sports lighting structures and fixtures at Halloran (Albermarle)”
 - Priority #107 – Halloran Sports Complex
“Synthetic Turf field to include baseball and football/soccer/lacrosse field”
- CIP by Priority FY 2022-2026 Page 152:
 - “At Richard McGrath Park (a.k.a., Warren House) Field Complex in West Newton on Washington Street, the Department is looking to enhance field space to house more rectangular field space to accommodate for lacrosse and soccer for both children and adults. This would include constructing a Lacrosse Wall on site to help enhance players’ skills. The wall would be approximately 15’ tall and 30’ wide”
- Supplemental CIP FY 2025-2029:
 - Priority number 34 “Spears Garden – install community garden with raised planter boxes, irrigation, pathways, seating” .

COMMUNITY CONTACTS

List at least 3 Newton residents or organizations willing and able to comment on the project and its manager’s qualifications. No more than 1 should be a supervisor, employee or current work colleague of the project manager or sponsor. Consult staff on the community contacts required for your specific proposal.

Name & title or organization	Email	Phone	Mailing address
Friends of Tasun Community Garden at Spears Park	marcus.breen1@gmail.com	617-987-7660	
Arthur Magni, Chairman Parks & Recreation Commission		617-821-8351	
Maria S Greenberg	msgreenberg@newtonma.gov	617-817-6548	

You may adjust the space for each question, but the combined answers to all questions on this page must fit on this page.
Full proposals must include separate, detailed budgets in addition to this page.

Project TITLE	Community Garden at Spears Park	
SUMMARY CAPITAL/DEVELOPMENT BUDGET		
Uses of Funds		
Topographic Survey (ARPA)		\$6,500
Conceptual Design (ARPA)		\$15,700
Final design and construction administration, Weston & Sampson Inc. (ARPA)		\$37,800
Construction Budget (ARPA, CPA, Donations & Grants)		\$270,619
14 Months approximate Parks and Open Space staff time through final design and construction (@\$50.00/hr, 6 Hrs/week)		\$16,800
42 urban forestry staff hours @ \$50/hr rate (approx. 3 staff) tree maintenance, organic material salvage)		\$2,100
D. TOTAL USES (should equal C. on page 1 and E. below)		\$349,519
Sources of Funds	Status (requested, expected, confirmed)	
State earmark funds	confirmed	\$75,000
The Village Bank donation	expected	\$7,500
Hauser Trust	expected	\$1,455
Green Newton	Confirmed	\$500
America Rescue Plan Act Funds (ARPA)	Confirmed	\$96,164
City of Newton full time employee salaries	expected	\$18,900
CPA Funds	Requested	150,000
E. TOTAL SOURCES (should equal C. on page 1 and D. above)		\$349,519
SUMMARY ANNUAL OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE BUDGET (cannot use CPA funds)		
Uses of Funds		
Seasonal cleaning, mowing, pruning and leaf removal		\$500
F. TOTAL ANNUAL COST (should equal G. below)		\$500
Sources of Funds		
Public Grounds and Maintenance Budget for		\$500
G. TOTAL ANNUAL FUNDING (should equal F. above)		\$500
Project TIMELINE	Phase or Task	Season & Year
	Final Desing and Bidding	February Through June 2024
	Site construction	September 2024 through March 2025

Garden Bed preparation and construction	Spring 2024

Project TITLE		Tasun Community Garden at Spears Park	
↓ Check off submitted attachments here.			
REQUIRED.		PHOTOS	of existing site or resource conditions (2-3 photos may be enough)
		MAP	of site in relation to nearest major roads (omit if project has no site)
Pre-proposals: separate attachments not required, just use page 3 of form. Full proposals: separate, detailed budget attachments REQUIRED.	PROJECT FINANCES printed and as computer spreadsheets, with both uses & sources of funds		
		Development budget: include total cost, hard vs. soft costs and contingencies, and project management – amount and cost of time from contractors or staff (in-kind contributions by existing staff must also be costed) Operating/maintenance budget, projected separately for each of the next 10 years (CPA funds may not be used for operations or maintenance)	
		Non-CPA funding: commitment letters, letters of inquiry to other funders, fundraising plans, etc., including both cash and est. dollar value of in-kind contributions Purchasing of goods & services: briefly summarize sponsor’s understanding of applicable state statutes and City policies	
REQUIRED for all full proposals.	SPONSOR FINANCES & QUALIFICATIONS, INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT		
		For sponsoring department or organization, most recent annual operating budget (revenue & expenses) & financial statement (assets & liabilities); each must include both public (City) and private resources (“friends” organizations, fundraising, etc.) For project manager: relevant training & track record of managing similar projects	
		CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN current listing/ranking & risk factors for this project COVER LETTER from head of City department, board or commission confirming: current custody, or willingness to accept custody, of the resource and commitment of staff time for project management	
REQUIRED for all full proposals involving City govt., incl. land acquisition.	ZONING & PERMITTING		
		Permits required: including building permits, environmental permitting, parking waivers, demolition, comprehensive permit, or special permits (if applicable) Other approvals required: Newton Conservation Commission, Newton Historical Commission, Newton Commission on Disabilities, Parks and Recreation Commission, Massachusetts Historical Commission, Massachusetts Architectural Access Board, etc.	
	DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION		
		Professional design & cost estimates: include site plans, landscape plans, etc. Materials & finishes; highlight “green” or sustainable features & materials	
		LETTERS of SUPPORT from Newton residents, organizations, or businesses	
OPTIONAL for all proposals.			

SPEARS COMMUNITY GARDEN SCHEMATIC DESIGN

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 21, 2022



An aerial photograph of a residential street, showing a road with several cars, bare trees, and houses. The image is faded and serves as a background for the text.

AGENDA

SCHEDULE

OVERALL PROJECT GOALS

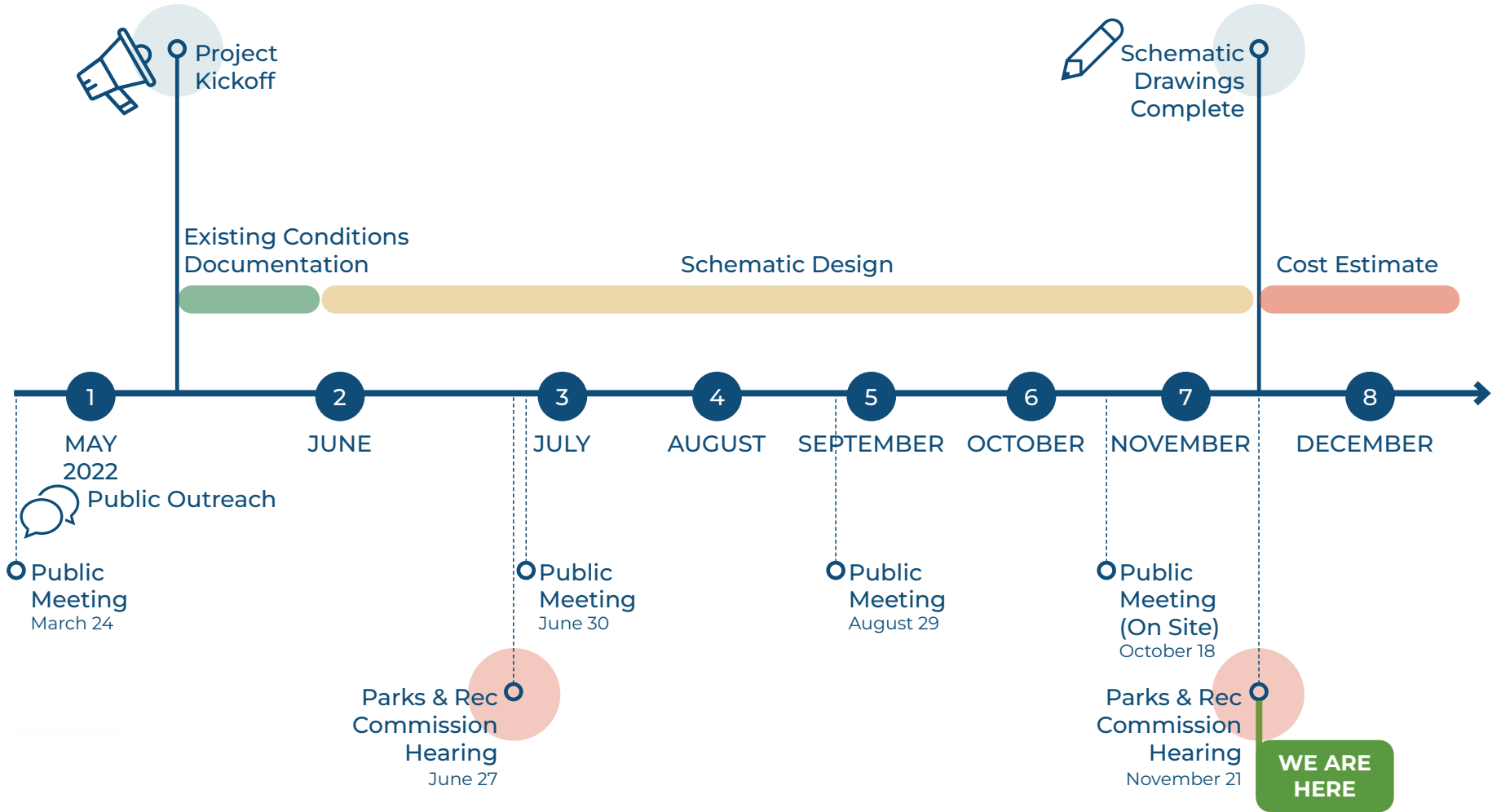
OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

WHAT WE HEARD

PREFERRED CONCEPT

DISCUSSION AND NEXT STEPS

SCHEDULE



OVERALL PROJECT GOALS

- Provide enclosed garden beds with gardening medium (clean soil in beds).
- Design accessible garden beds that provide ability to work at seating height.
- Create a seating area/gathering space for site users.
- Use accessible stone dust materials for pathways between garden beds.
- Provide water service and distribute a sufficient number of yard hydrants throughout the plots.
- Provide a perimeter planting buffer.
- Add fencing that protects the raised beds from animals.
- Incorporate a storage area and compost collection area.
- Locate seating in shaded areas, utilizing shade from existing trees.

EXISTING SITE IMAGES



View from above



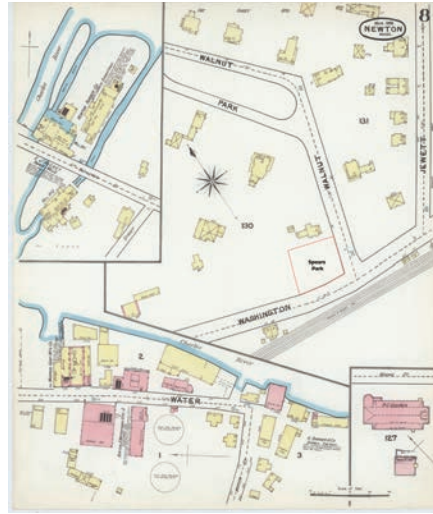
View looking east

SITE INVESTIGATION

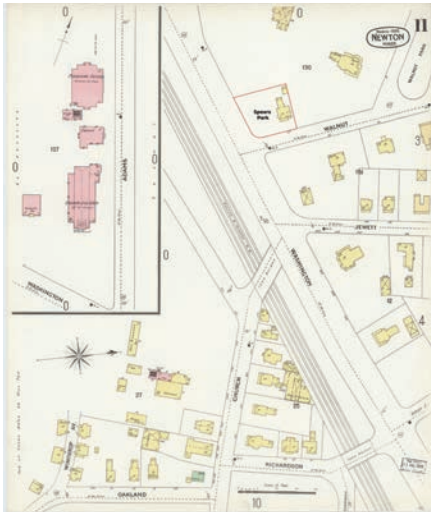
SANBORN MAPS



1884



1892



1898



1910

- Sanborn maps show general commercial and industrial use (including RR operations) dating back to the late 1800s in the surrounding area.
- The property appears to have been developed as a single family residential dwelling around 1892.
- Based on the limited information available right now, we can assume there is typical urban fill underlying the property.

WHAT WE HEARD

SECOND AND THIRD MEETING



SECOND MEETING



THIRD MEETING

- Provide a variety in seating types, chair seating is preferred over benches.
- Community gathering space outside of fence/community garden confines, and located away from Washington Street.
- Place tables in an area with shade.
- Add a bike rack, community notice board, and welcome sign.
- Add more picnic tables.

WHAT WE HEARD

ON-SITE MEETING RECAP



- Creating a community gathering space/seating area outside of garden space was endorsed.
- Standardize the bed sizes.
- No parking at the vehicular entrance.
- Provide more material storage to back of property.
- Buffer planting with pollinator species endorsed.



PREFERRED CONCEPT

2,400 SF TOTAL - 30 GARDEN BEDS 20'X4' EACH



BENCH



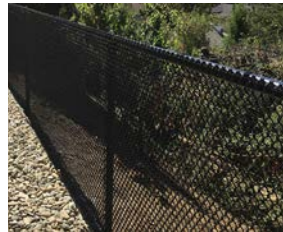
PICNIC TABLE



GARDEN BEDS



COMPOST BIN



1" FABRIC BLACK VINYL CHAIN LINK FENCE



MATERIAL STORAGE AREA



THANK YOU

.....
LET'S DISCUSS!



Spears Park - Community Gardens - Newton, MA

Schematic Design Opinion of Probable Cost

		Quantity	Unit	Unit Price	Sub totals
1	Site Prep				
	Temporary Construction Fence	447	LF	\$ 10.00	\$ 4,470
	Temporary Construction Entrance	1	EA	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000
	Strip & Stockpile Topsoil (6" depth)	1,120	SY	\$ 6.00	\$ 6,720
	Tree Protection	15	EA	\$ 300.00	\$ 4,500
	R&D Fence	245	LF	\$ 15.00	\$ 3,675
	R&D Paving (Concrete)	1	LS	\$ 750.00	\$ 750
	Clear & Grub Vegetation	150	SY	\$ 5.00	\$ 750
	Misc. Salvage and Demolition	1	LS	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000
				Subtotal	\$ 29,865
2	Earthwork				
	Truck & Dispose Soil	550	TONS	\$ 35.00	\$ 19,250
	Rough/Fine Grading & Compaction	1,150	SY	\$ 8.00	\$ 9,200
				Subtotal	\$ 28,450
3	Site Amenities				
	Trash Receptacle/Recycling	2	EA	\$ 1,200	\$ 2,400
	Benches	3	EA	\$ 2,500	\$ 7,500
	Picnic Tables	2	EA	\$ 5,000	\$ 10,000
	Bike Racks	2	EA	\$ 900	\$ 1,800
	Park Signage	1	LS	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
	Material Storage	1	LS	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
	Compost Bin	2	EA	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,000
				Subtotal	\$ 31,700
4	Garden Beds				
	Raised Garden Beds	1	LS	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000
				Subtotal	\$ 15,000
5	Fencing				
	4' HT. BVCL Fence	430	LF	\$ 75	\$ 32,250
	4' HT. BVCL Single Wide Gate	2	EA	\$ 1,500	\$ 3,000
	4' HT. BVCL Double Wide Gate	1	EA	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
				Subtotal	\$ 37,750
6	Surfacing				
	Concrete Paving	65	SY	\$ 120	\$ 7,800
	Gravel Base	50	CY	\$ 35	\$ 1,750
	Accessible Stone Dust Surfacing (Compacted)	190	TON	\$ 60	\$ 11,400
	Steel Edger	175	LF	\$ 30	\$ 5,250
				Subtotal	\$ 26,200
7	Planting				
	Tree Planting	3	EA	\$ 500	\$ 1,500
	Evergreen Shrub	4	EA	tbd	
	Shrub Planting	250	EA	tbd	
	Vegetable Garden Soil	110	CY	\$ 45	\$ 4,950
	Pine Bark Mulch (3" depth)	25	CY	\$ 75	\$ 1,875
				Subtotal	\$ 8,325
8	Water / Utility				
	Connection to Existing Water Service	1	LS	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
	Backflow Preventer and Cabinet	1	LS	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
	Yard Hydrants	4	EA	\$ 1,000	\$ 4,000
				Subtotal	\$ 19,000
				Subtotal	\$ 181,290
	Mobilization, Overhead & Profit 15%				\$ 27,194
	Contingency 20%				\$ 36,258

Construction year, 2023 escalation 6%	\$ 10,877
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST	
	\$ 270,619
Weston & Sampson Design Fee	
Final Design	\$ 30,000
Construction Administration Support	\$ 6,000
Annual Designer hourly rates, 2023 escalation 4%	\$ 1,800
TOTAL FINAL DESIGN BUDGET	
	\$ 37,800
TOTAL ALL IN PROJECT BUDGET	
	\$ 308,419

Newton Parks & Recreation Commission

Meeting Minutes

Zoom On-Line Meeting

7:00 p.m. – Monday, November 21, 2022

Attending: Chairman Magni, Vice-Chairman Byron Dunker, Commissioner Nicole Banks, Jack Neville, Beth Wilkinson, Midge Connolly, Ted Chapman, Gloria Gavis, John Rice, Mark Feldhusen, Randy Johnson

Meeting began 7pm

1. Meeting Minutes – October 17, 2022

- Approved

2. Spears Park Community Garden- Public Hearing

- Presented by Luis Perez Demorizi, Parks & Open Space Director, Cassie Bethoney, Weston & Sampson, Farah Dakkak, Weston & Sampson
- The presentation may be view on-line:
 - <https://www.newtonma.gov/government/parks-recreation-culture/parks-open-space>
- Presenters reviewed:
 - The project timeline
 - Goals determined after input from the Community:
 - Enclosed, raised, garden beds
 - Seating Area
 - Pathway
 - Water service
 - Perimeter fence
 - Storage
 - Visibility: Screening, evergreen trees, material storage, and an elevated compost area
 - A tighter knit perimeter fence to address the rodent concern
 - Include art in the design
- Ms. Gavis asked if the orientation of the sun was checked. Ms. Bethoney stated a sun/shade was done. Beds will be in the sun and seating in the shade.
- Ms. Gavis asked the height of the fence. Mr. Perez Demorizi replied 4'
- Ms. Gavis asked if netting or another product could be added to the fence to make it attractive. Mr. Perez Demorizi commented possibly artist panels could be added.
- Mr. Feldhusen asked if the garden area will be open to the public or gated. Mr. Perez Demorizi replied, the gardens will be gated. Ms. Gavis asked if the gate will be locked. Mr. Perez Demorizi responded this is the first of its type, there is no clear definition for security. Commissioner Banks replied there is vandalism in all areas, we will work with the Friends group. Commissioner Banks stated a policy will be developed and any Commission member may be part of the group developing the policy.
- Mr. Neville asked if there is vandalism at the Nahanton Park Community gardens. Mr. Luis Perez Demorizi replied, no, mostly the handbook policies are not being followed.
- Mr. Feldhusen requested signage be added and make the signage consistent around the city.
- Mr. Feldhusen recommended digging down 18" when installing the fence to keep the critters out of the gardens and asked if the city will be providing hoses. Mr. Perez Demorizi commented PRC staff will work with the Friends of Spears Park on the details.

- Mr. Magni asked who will be maintaining the area and keeping it tidy. Mr. Perez Demorizi replied, it will be a shared effort.
- Mr. Chapman will there be a plan for the new plantings, maybe add some edible fruit trees. Mr. Perez Demorizi commented the plan will be reviewed with the Friends group.
- Ms. Gavis asked if there will be lighting. Mr. Perez replied there will be no lighting or electricity.
- Chairman Magni opened the meeting to public comment, a 3-minute limit per speaker:
 - Bonnie Lerner – requested the dimensions of the garden beds, and asked if there will be any height limitations
 - Susan Thompson is currently a gardener in Nahanton Park.
 - Standing compost is not good for big plants
 - Concern with sunlight in the area
 - Abutters are concerned but gardeners are good for the area
 - Jen & David Frenetele
 - Lots of concerns, there is a petition going around.
 - This plot was deeded to the city, there should be no fencing
 - This is a small road and a congested area
 - Having a locked gate is an issue
 - Concerned about maintenance and upkeep
 - Maren
 - Lives a couple of blocks away and is excited about the project
 - Pro locked gate
 - Rebecca
 - Thanked the group for the hard work, looking forward to this project
 - Marcus Breen
 - Looking forward to the project with the community
 - There has been great support from surrounding community
 - Councilor Greenberg
 - Thanked Mayor Fuller for providing ARPA funds for this project
 - The pike has divided this neighborhood, this project is bringing the neighborhood together
 - Agi
 - Would like to see a pollinator garden
 - A locked gate is required
 - Work together with abutters
 - Sister Mary Anne Doyle
 - Owns the land around the garden
 - This is an attractive project and will improve the area
- Chairman Magni closed the meeting to public comment
- Chairman Magni asked about the deed, height of beds and cost
- Mr. Perez Demorizi responded:
 - And read the deed, the Law Department reviewed the deed and determined this project fits within the terms of the deed
 - Height of beds is TBD
- Commissioner Banks replied to the question of the cost:
 - ARPA funds for design
 - \$75K state earmarked funds
 - Fundraising
- Ms. Gavis asked if the City will construct the beds for continuity will the beds be ADA compliant. Mr. Perez Demorizi replied there will be standard beds and, yes, the beds will be ADA compliant.

- Ms. Gavris asked who manages the finances. Mr. Perez Demorizi replied, the PRC Department will manage the finances.
- Ms. Wilkinson asked if there is a ballpark fee? And if there is a scholarship fund
- Commissioner Banks commented fees & policies will be based on what we already have in place, but also the input from the friends group. The gardens are self-funding. We have scholarships for other programs and will review options for garden beds.
- Mr. Perez Demorizi commented there will be test pits and soil analysis to check the soils is safe for growing.

*Mr. Chapman made the motion to accept the proposal as presented. Ms. Wilkinson seconded the motion.
Motion passed 8-0*

3. Wellington Playground – Public Hearing

- Presented by Greg Mellett, Asst. Director of Parks & Open Space, Friends of Wellington Park members, Eyal Dechter, and Amanda Kovalcik
- The presentation may be view on-line:
 - <https://www.newtonma.gov/government/parks-recreation-culture/parks-open-space>
- Mr. Dechter commented the park users have outgrown the tot lot. The location is underutilized, the new structure will be ADA compliant and have sensory focused activities.
- Mr. Chapman asked if any other location has been explored, the fence/ structure seems to encroach on the field.
- Ms Kovalcik commented there is no fence surrounding the structure
- Mr. Mellett replied no other locations were reviewed
- Mr. Dechter commented there is another field on the other side of the park, not shown in the photo. Commissioner Banks commented the additional field is not actively permitted for sports, only pick-up games.
- Ms. Gavris commented this project is a good idea for the neighborhood and community, is the group confident they can raise funds.
- Mr. Dechter commented the 2021 fundraising effort was put on hold after the informational meeting and the project plans changed from a community build to a vendor build. Once the project is approved by the Commission the fundraising will begin.
- Mr. Rice commented the cost difference of a vendor build vs. a community build is not that much, and this structure is too complex for the community.
- Mr. Neville asked if Recreation Manager, CPSI approved the location and the plan. Ms. Kovalcik responded yes; Ms. Lapham was involved in the process.
- Ms. Wilkinson asked if the netting can be cut. Mr. Chapman checked the materials of the netting online; the ropes are steel wrapped in fiber. Ms. Kovalcik commented the ropes have a 10-year warranty.
- Chairman Magni opened the meeting to public comment, a 3-minute limit per speaker:
 - Mary Stehle lives ¼ of a mile from the park and is thrilled about the project, her 2- and 5-year-old are aging out of the tot lot
 - Cheryl Wermer has 3 kids who have outgrown the tot lot and appreciates the location, near the tot lot so she can see her children on both structures.
 - Rose McCozie, Friend of Wellington Park has 3 children. The location of the structure is well thought out and the other open space is wide open
 - Heather Lockrow has been going to the park for years, her kids are aging out. This is truly a community park.
 - Angela Erb, Supports the structure.

- Jane lives next to park this project is out of sync with the park, it is the size of a three-bedroom ranch and intruding on the green space. Jane thought Newton wanted to hold on to green space, this is a mistake someone must think about the park.
- Chairman Magni closed the meeting to public comment
- Chairman Magni noted that Jane’s comment was passionate and thoughtful. Chairman Magni is familiar with the park and if the energy is channeled to have a safe structure, the project is a good idea, there is open space on the other side of the park.

Mr. Rice made the motion to accept the proposal as presented. Mr. Dunker seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0-1

4. Commissioner’s Report

- Budget review: City Council approved the request to hold a special election for the budget override in March 2023. to \$1.5 Million is earmarked for PRC.
- McGrath Park met onsite with neighbors, Councilors Malakie, and Norton to discuss the location of the lacrosse wall. Consensus was found and plan is being further studied.
- Artificial turf replacement at NSHS has been presented to the Program & Services committee.
- Tennis, lights on the courts has ended
- RFP is out for a new tennis contract
- Newton Centre Playground resurfacing is scheduled for the spring. A tile system will be installed, and the work is weather dependent.
- Levingston Cove groundbreaking ceremony will be scheduled in December.

5. Committee Reports

- Community Preservation Committee -B. Dunker
 - No report
- Urban Tree Commission – B. Wilkinson
 - There is \$500K in the override money for the Forestry Division. Marc Welch made two presentations on how the money would be utilized
 - Planting
 - Pruning
 - Additional tree care
 - Expand in-house staff
- Farm Commission – B. Wilkinson
 - Year ended well
 - Director of Education, Matt Durham is moving on, the farm is trying a new structure/direction
- Off-Leash Area Working Group (OLAWG) – Commissioner
 - Fence at Claflin playground is being replaced, adding pedestrian gates, and doing some concrete stair repair
 - Park Ranger has been hired, Adam Nahabedian. The Park Ranger will provide presence and education
- Arts & Culture – G. Gavris
 - No report

6. New Business

- Mr. Dunker proposed time limits on approvals of projects, such as the Lacrosse Wall
- Mr. Johnson proposed the Commission members have site visits before a public hearing

- Chairman Magni agreed, this would be a policy update

Meeting Adjourned 9:27pm

Robin McLaughlin

Commission Secretary



NEWTON CONSERVATORS

5 November 2022

Dear Parks & Recreation Commission,

On Wednesday October 26, 2022, the Board of the Newton Conservators, Newton's all-volunteer open space advocacy and educational organization, voted strongly to support the concept of creating community gardens at Spears Park, at the corner of Washington Street and Walnut Park. Community gardens at this site would

- activate an underused public space on Newton's north side, where such open space is scarce
- offer outdoor respite, learning, and fellowship to both gardeners and the community at large
- allow neighborhood residents who might otherwise have limited or no opportunity for gardening -- including those living in nearby existing and proposed multifamily housing -- to grow food and flowers both for themselves and for donation to those experiencing food insecurity

In discussion, our Board members raised a few issues that we know Parks, Recreation & Culture staff and the newly formed, neighborhood-based friends group for this project are already thinking about, such as ensuring that it is safe to eat food grown next to the heavy traffic of Washington Street and the Mass Pike, and that the site serves the open space needs of the public at large, as well as of the relatively small number of people who can garden there in any given year. Though we did not discuss how to resolve these issues in detail,

- We are glad the gardens' fencing, beds, bins and sheds will be designed to exclude pests such as rats, but we also hope materials brought onto the site will be screened or treated for less obvious invaders, such as ["jumping worms"](#) (information attached), which have egg cases only a few millimeters in diameter that can easily be transported in soils and mulches.
- Although the site's soil will be tested and any contamination mitigated before construction, we also hope the beds themselves can be tested periodically.
- Some of us would prefer to see more public space for passive recreation at the site, more like the "preferred alternative" presented in August 2022 than like the plans shown at the October 2022 on-site meeting (plans attached).
- Multi-year access will encourage gardeners to invest in soil quality and grow perennials such as asparagus or raspberries but also runs some risk of "privatizing" this public resource. Perhaps just a few beds can be set aside for perennials, and we hope all vacancies will be advertised as widely as possible.
- Finally, we hope the City will approach Newton Community Farm as a potential partner for educational programs at this site that will be open to all. NCF staff and volunteers have significant expertise in urban gardening and have expressed interest in being more active on the City's north side.

We urge you to approve further work on this concept and look forward to the project's future progress.

Sincerely,

Alice E. Ingerson, Vice President
for the Newton Conservators Board of Directors

Officers

Chris Hepburn, Co-President
William Hagar, Co-President
Alice Ingerson, Vice President
Michael Clarke, Secretary
Katherine Howard, Treasurer
Ted Kuklinski, Past President

Board of Directors

David Backer
Peter Barrer
Barbara Bates
Dan Brody
Bonnie Carter
Samantha Corbin
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Margaret Albright
Lisle Baker
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Larry Burdick
Lucy Caldwell-Stair
Michael Collora
Ann Dorfman
Bart Hague
Alison Leary
William Leitch
Don Lubin
Brooks Mathewson
Eric Olson
Richard Primack
Eric Reenstierna
Jon Regosin
Patricia Robinson
Jane Sender
William Shaevel
Diane Tillotson
Willis Wang
Bruce Wenning

PREFERRED CONCEPT

1,900 SF OF GARDEN BEDS



BENCH



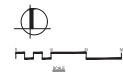
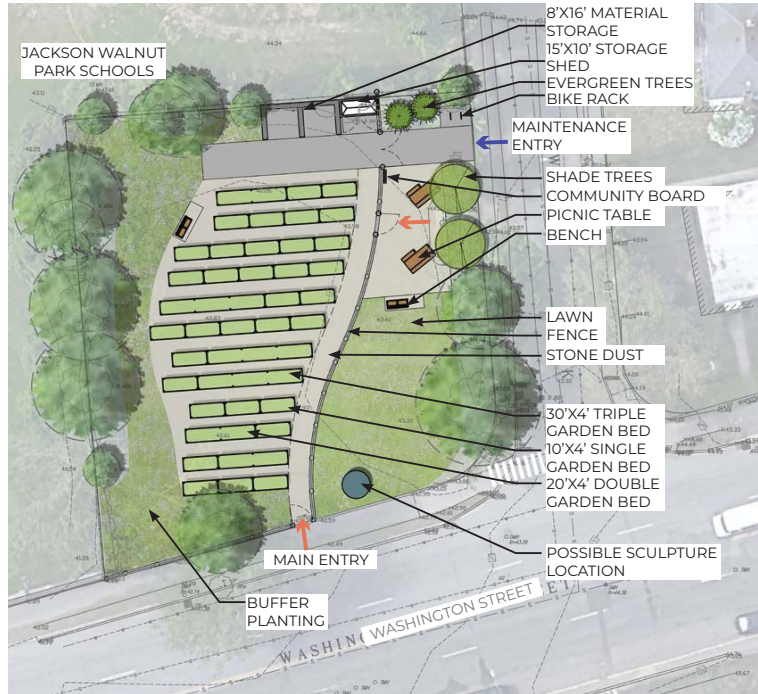
PICNIC TABLE



GARDEN BEDS



STORAGE SHED



18 October 2022



BENCH



PICNIC TABLE



GARDEN BEDS

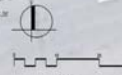
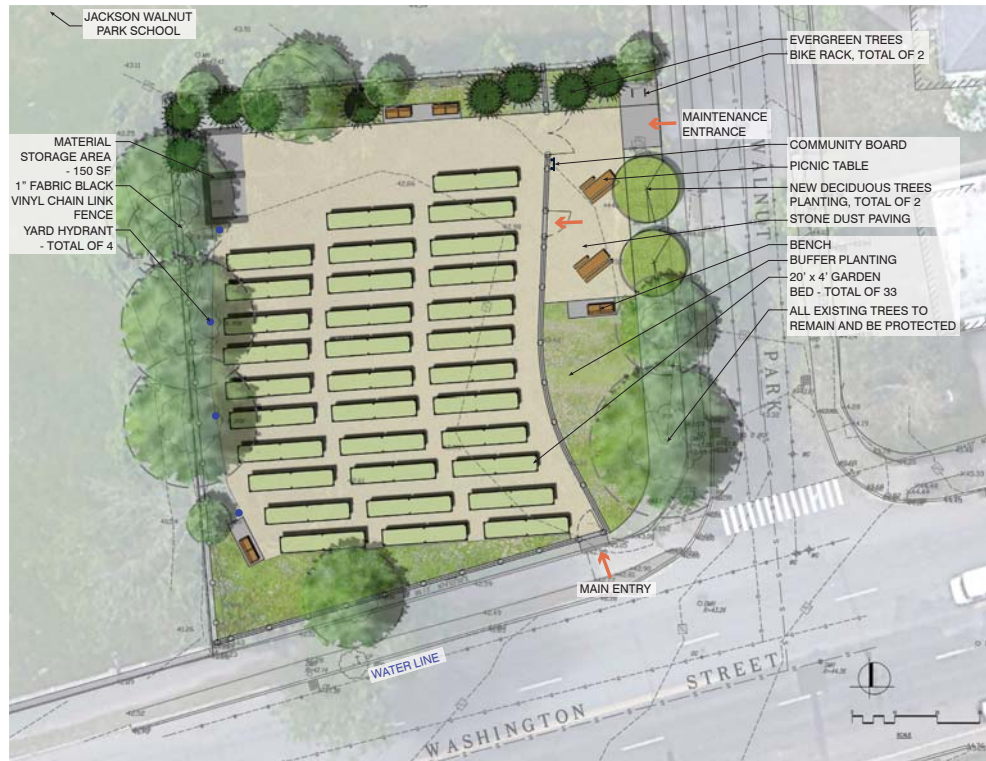


COMPOST BIN

1" FABRIC BLACK VINYL CHAIN LINK FENCE



MATERIAL STORAGE AREA



raised composter with thin legs preferred to discourage animals

CONCEPT PLAN
SPEARS PARK COMMUNITY GARDEN



[Lectures](#)

Jumping Worms in Field and Forest

[Newton Conservators](#)

Originally presented online by Dr. Annise Dobson of the Yale School of the Environment on Wednesday, April 20, 2022 as part of the Newton Conservators 2022 Spring Webinar Series hosted by Beth Wilkinson.

Dr. Dobson presents a distressing topic in a masterful way. Nearly all earthworms in New England are introduced from Europe and Asia. While some species of earthworms benefit some species of plants, invasive earthworms have caused major shifts in North American plant communities. Jumping worms alter the structure and chemistry of the soil dramatically, leaving a grainy soil full of worm excrement (castings), and they can damage lawns, landscapes and forest habitat. This talk presents the impacts and history of earthworms (and jumping worms in particular) and provides information on identification of jumping worms.

Dr. Annise Dobson is a postdoctoral researcher at the Yale School of the Environment. Currently, she is working to identify the movement of jumping worms through New York City and assessing their impacts on urban plant communities. Her contact info is available at her lab's website:

<http://schmitz.environment.yale.edu/annise-dobson.html>

She provided a link to the following publication:

<https://ecommons.cornell.edu/handle/1813/103692>

INVASIVE SPECIES FOR HOMEOWNERS
ASIAN JUMPING WORM *Amythas agrestis*, *A. tokiensis*, and *Metaphire hilgendorfi*. Family Megascolecidae

BACKGROUND
Earthworms might be a friendly sight in gardens or your favorite tool for catching fish, but almost all earthworms in the northeast U.S. are non-native. Jumping worms, a group of species originally from Asia, are invasive species that alter soil qualities and make it inhospitable for some plants and animals. They do this by consuming the upper organic layer of soil, which leaches nutrients and erodes the ground. This makes it hard for many plants (including garden plants) to grow and threatens even the most well-tended lawns. What's worse—humans spread worms without realizing it, carrying jumping worm egg cases (cocoons) in soil, mulch, potted plants, landscaping equipment, and even the treads of shoes and tires.

KNOW THE WORM
Life Cycle: Most jumping worms have an annual life cycle. In the spring they hatch from poppy-seed-sized cocoons and after 70-90 days become mature and can produce new cocoons. In the late fall, adults die but the cocoons over-winter to start the next generation.
Behavior: These worms thrash wildly and often jump or flip over. Sometimes they cast off the end of their tail.
Castings: Their castings (feces) appear like coarse coffee grounds that create a loose layer between leaf litter and mineral soil beneath.

IN A NUTSHELL
When jumping worms invade, they consume and degrade soil which threatens the future of gardens, forests, and lawns.
Jumping worms are often spread by people through mulch, compost, gardening tools, and tires.
Stop the spread! Use our checklist (pg. 2) to be worm-smart.

Look-alikes: Jumping worms might be confused with another invasive worm, the nightcrawler (*Lumbricus* spp.); both can be large with dark coloring. Jumping worm adults have a smooth milky-white collar (clitellum) close to the head end (14-16 segments away), whereas nightcrawlers have a raised pink-red collar more central along the worm's body.

JUMPING WORM **NIGHTCRAWLER**

COCOONS
Cocoons overwinter in soil until conditions are favorable. Cocoons continue to hatch into the following year.
A jumping worm holds their eggs in cocoons the size of a poppy seed. Like this, can you find the 7 other cocoons?

JWORM
Jumping Worm Outreach, Research & Management
2019-2021

A Note the collar's color and its distance from the head. Credit: UW Madison Arboretum

Asian Jumping Worms: A Homeowner's Guide

Date Issued: 2021

Author: Bezrutczyk, Abigail; Bowe, Audrey; Brown-Lima, Carrie; Dávalos, Andrea; Dobson, Annise; Herrick, Bradley; McCay, Timothy; Wickings, Kyle

Abstract: ... most earthworms in the northeast U.S. are non-native[, but] jumping worms, a group of species originally from Asia, are invasive species that alter soil qualities and make it inhospitable for some plants and animals. They do this by consuming the upper organic layer of soil, which leaches nutrients and erodes the ground. This makes it hard for many plants (including garden plants) to grow and threatens even the most well-tended lawns. What's worse – humans spread [these] worms without realizing it, carrying jumping worm egg cases (cocoons) in soil, mulch, potted plants, landscaping equipment, and even the treads of shoes and tires.

This guide was developed by the Jumping Worm Outreach, Research & Management (JWORM) working group to help homeowners identify and prevent the spread of jumping worms.



November 16, 2022

Dear Honorable Members of the Parks and Recreation Commission,

We the following members of the Newton City Council are writing in full support of the Spears Community Garden.

This project:

1. Transforms this currently underutilized greenspace into a garden where folks can grow their own food (food insecurity is an increasing problem), share extra harvest with the Newton Food Pantry and Freedge, allow for increased outdoor activity and socialization for our residents which has been especially important during COVID and in a small way help address climate change by promoting sustainable agriculture, reducing water runoff, and increasing biodiversity.
2. Enhances an area outside the garden plots for public, passive recreation.
3. Will be well managed and maintained by a group of enthusiastic residents who have formed a nonprofit 501-3-C whose mission is to create an inclusive, accessible, sustainable, and peaceful greenspace.
4. Has been endorsed by Newton Community Farm, Newton Conservators, Green Newton, Newton Corner, Neighborhood Association, Nonantum Neighborhood Association, and Historic Newton.
5. Currently the project will be funded with ARPA funds, State funds of \$75,000 (with deep gratitude to Senator Cynthia Creem) and \$5000 from The Village Bank.
6. Aligns with the goals of the Newton's Open Space and Recreation Plan and the Washington St. Vision Plan by maintaining, improving, and protecting the City's open space resources along Washington St.

We urge the Commission to vote to approve this worthy project.

Respectfully,

Maria Scibelli Greenberg, Ward Councilor, Ward 1

Susan Albright, President

Rick Lipof, Vice President

R. Lisle Baker, President Emeritus

Alison M. Leary, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 1

John Oliver, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 1

Tarik Lucas, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 2
Emily Norton, Ward Councilor, Ward 2
Pamela Wright, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 3
Andrea Kelley, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 3
Julia Malakie, Ward Councilor, Ward 3
Leonard Gentile, Councilor-at Large, Ward 4
Joshua Krintzman, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 4
Christopher Markiewicz, Ward Councilor, Ward 4
Deb Crossley, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 5
Andreae Downs, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 5
Bill Humphrey, Ward Councilor, Ward 5
Alicia Bowman, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 6
Vicki Danberg, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 6
Brenda Noel, Ward Councilor, Ward 6
Marc C. Laredo, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 7
Rebecca Walker Grossman, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 7
David Kalis, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 8
Holly Ryan, Ward Councilor, Ward 8

**Community Preservation Act Funds
Current Status of Active Funded Projects**

Fiscal Year	Project Title	Address	Funding Category	CPA Funding Appropriated	Total Expended to Date	CPA Funds Remaining	Notes on Progress
FY23	Athletic Fields Construction Funding	Three Sites - Albemarle Park, McGrath Field and the Burr School Fields	Recreation	\$9,099,787	\$0	\$9,099,787	Part existing funds, part bonding. Work to begin in 2024.
FY22	Athletic Fields Improvements	Four to Six Sites (See Project Website)	Recreation	\$420,000	\$188,442.37	\$231,558	Work in progress - Parks and Rec working with two consulting firms who will share the design work
FY21	Coleman House Senior Housing Preservation	677 Winchester Street, Newton Highlands	Community Housing	\$4,214,622	\$3,793,160	\$421,462	Compleio report shared at February meeting
FY21, FY23	Commonwealth Avenue Carriageway Redesign	Auburndale - Charles River to Lyons Field	Recreation	\$523,002	\$506,111	\$16,891	Design work nearly complete - contract extensions required to complete existing payments at this time.
FY16, FY17	Crescent Street Site Assessment, Feasibility and Design	70 Crescent Street, Auburndale	Community Housing/Recreation	\$360,000	\$229,203.00	\$130,797.00	Project on hold since 2018.
FY23	Gath Memorial Pool Enhancements - Phase II	256 Albemarle Road Newtonville	Recreation	\$486,500	\$70,600	\$415,900	In Progress - Bargmann Hendrie + Archetype will complete once Phase I finalized
FY23	Gath Memorial Pool Enhancements - Phase III Construction	256 Albemarle Road Newtonville	Recreation	\$7,034,362	\$1,352,277	\$5,682,085	Construction underway with demolition of existing pool All funding approved Oct. 2023
Multiple	HISTORIC BURYING GROUNDS 3, East Parish Burying Ground	Newton Corner, MA 02458	Historic Resources	\$208,700	\$164,454	\$44,246	Retaining wall work complete, Project Design has been changed to eliminate chain link fencing. Will install bollards along parking lot property line and leave rest open.
FY23	Jackson Homestead Basement Rehabilitation, Phase I	537 Washington Street, -2458	Historic Resources	\$75,000	\$15,550	\$59,450	Consultants Habeeb & Associates hired to complete assessment
FY21	Jackson Homestead Fence Replacement	537 Washington Street, -2458	Historic Resources	\$28,990	\$2,200	\$26,790	Project originally delayed to 2022 - now working with new vendor and fende posts are being milled for possible installation this fall.
FY22	Levingston Cove Improvements Project	Crystal Lake, Lake Avenue, Newton Highlands	Open Space/Recreation	\$1,440,344	\$1,440,344	\$0.00	Work Completed- in closeout
FY23	Newton Affordable Housing Trust	Various	Community Housing	\$1,948,056	\$0	\$1,948,056	Trust waiting for future applications.
FY20	NEWTON CONSERVATORS, Conservation Restrictions (Kessler Woods)	200 Vine Street (bordered by La Grange St.), Chestnut Hill, MA 02467	Open Space	\$15,000	\$0	\$15,000	On hold pending completion of Conservation Restriction
FY04, FY06, FY09, FY14, FY15	Newton HOMEBUYER ASSISTANCE Program, Phases 1-5	Citywide	Community Housing	\$762,723	\$221,815	\$540,908	In Progress
FY22	Nonantum Village Senior Housing Preservation	241 Watertown Street	Community Housing	\$500,000	\$419,183	\$80,817	Roof work complete, HVAC equipment purchased
FY20	PIGEON HILL TRAIL (Riverside Greenway) Design	Connecting Evergreen Street to Lasell Boathouse to Charles Street in Auburndale, including two underpasses under Interstate 90	Recreation	\$50,000	\$3,737.93	\$46,262	10/4/22 - Working with MassDOT to coordinate design/build contract with upcoming work on I90 and would like to use CPA funding to integrate this project into the larger construction work. Anticipate requesting a time extension for this work
FY24	Second Church in Newton	60 Highland Ave West Newton	Historic Resources	\$125,500	\$0	\$125,500	Approved at City Council March 5, 2024
FY20	Webster Woods/ 300 Hammond Pond Parkway (Land Acquisition)	300 Hammond Pond Parkway, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467	Open Space	\$15,740,000	\$15,219,426	\$520,574	Includes both purchase funds and legal fees. Remaining funds include legal fees and discount received from bond sale; Conservation Restriction in Progress.
FY22	West Newton Armory Affordable Housing Development	1135 Washington Street	Community Housing	\$3,000,000	\$616,999	\$2,383,001	City Council approved funding July 11, 2022. Grant Agreement under review by applicant.
Project Totals				\$36,932,798.90	\$24,243,502.00	\$12,689,296.90	

Finances At a Glance

As of January 9, 2024

*Expenses as %
of total current
year revenue*

Fiscal Year 2024

Revenue

Beginning balance	4,323,992
Local CPA surcharge	4,125,028
State match	
Budget for this FY	837,723
Additional from prior FY	714,416
Total Available Resources	10,001,159

*Actual FY24 State Match 21.02%, 20% Budgeted
Actual FY23 State Match 38.5%, 20% Budgeted*

Expenses

Bond repayment obligations	694,853	12%
New funding authorizations	2,092,619	37%
Administrative costs	182,907	3%
Total Expenses	2,970,379	52%

*Webster Woods
Includes funding recommended by CPC*

Current Fund Balance 7,030,780

Fiscal Year 2025

Revenue

Beginning balance	7,030,780
Local CPA surcharge	4,269,404
State match	
Budget for this FY	825,006
Additional from prior FY	40,651
Total Available Resources	12,165,841

Expenses

Bond repayment obligations	1,560,081	30%
New funding authorizations	-	0%
Administrative costs	182,907	4%
Total Expenses	1,742,988	34%

Webster Woods, Gath Pool, and Athletic Fields
Includes funding recommended by CPC*

Projected Fund Balance 10,422,853

*The Gath Pool and Athletic Field Bonds will be issued in FY24 - repayment obligations are estimated at this time

Spending Compared to Program Area Targets

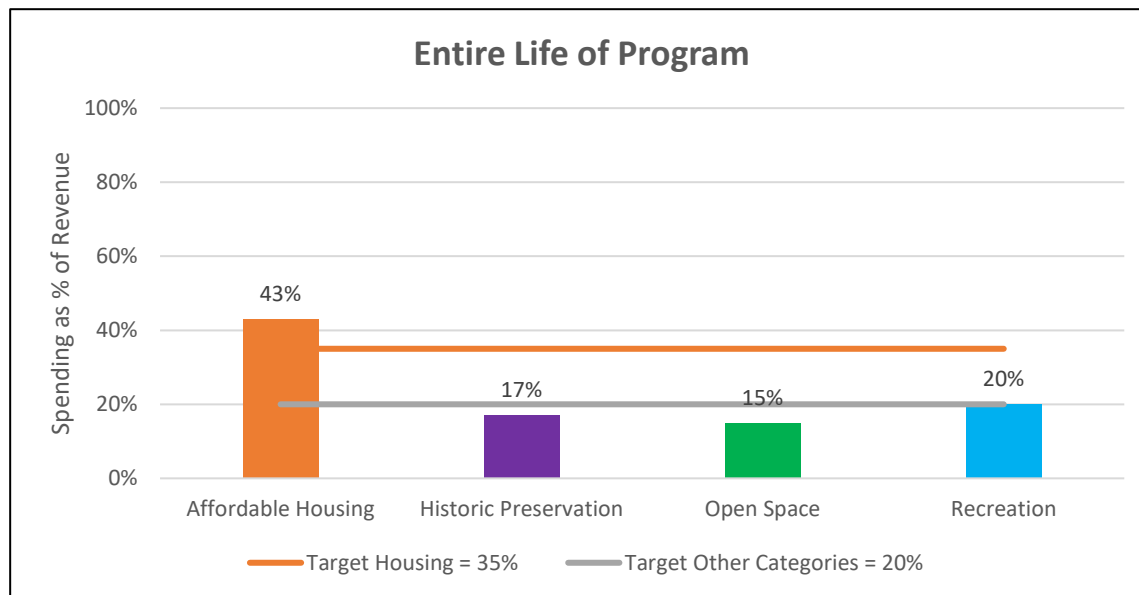
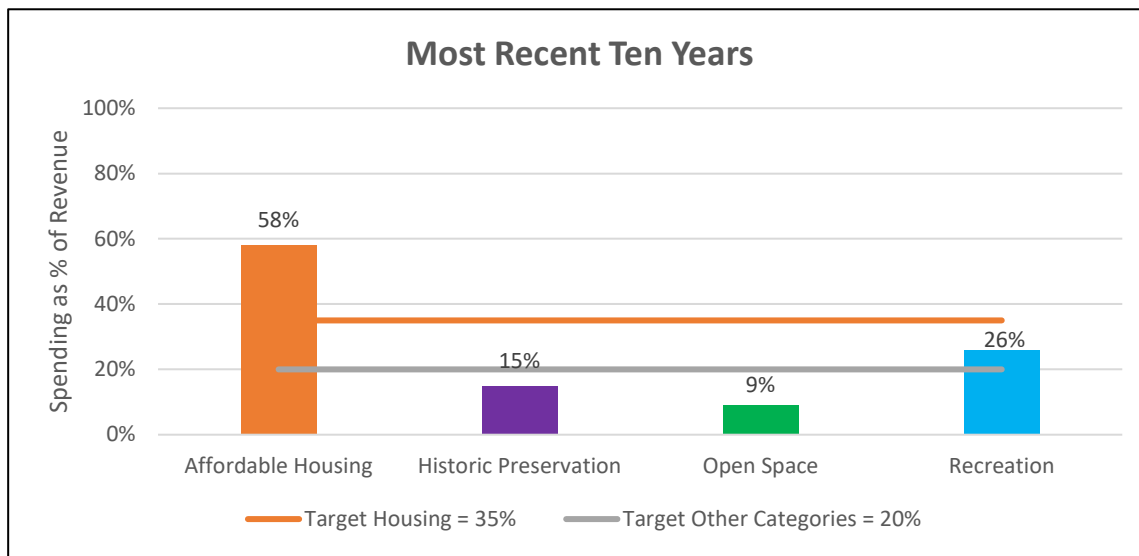
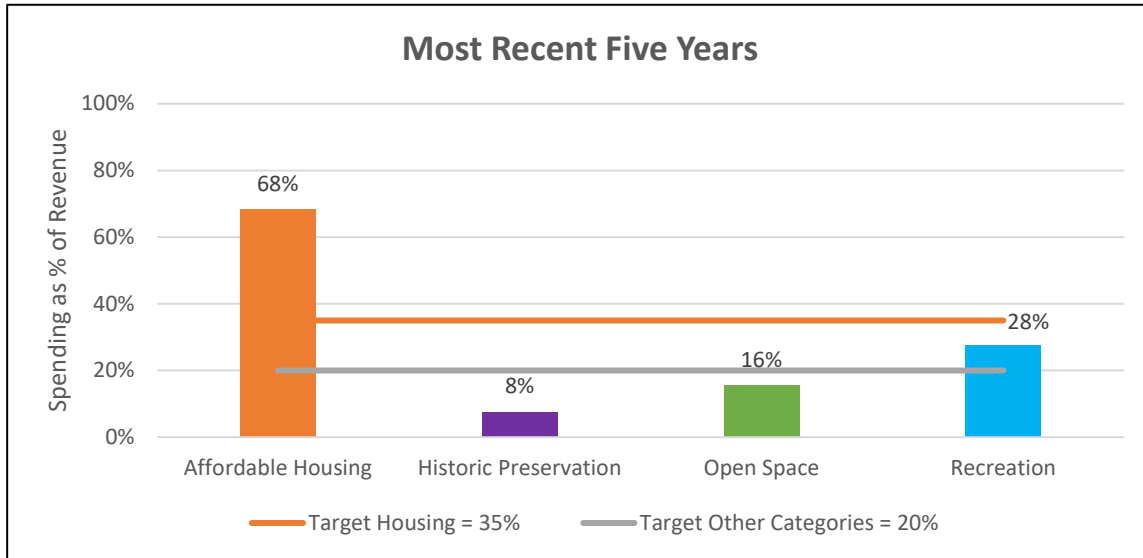
Comparisons Based on % of Current Revenue

As of January 9, 2024

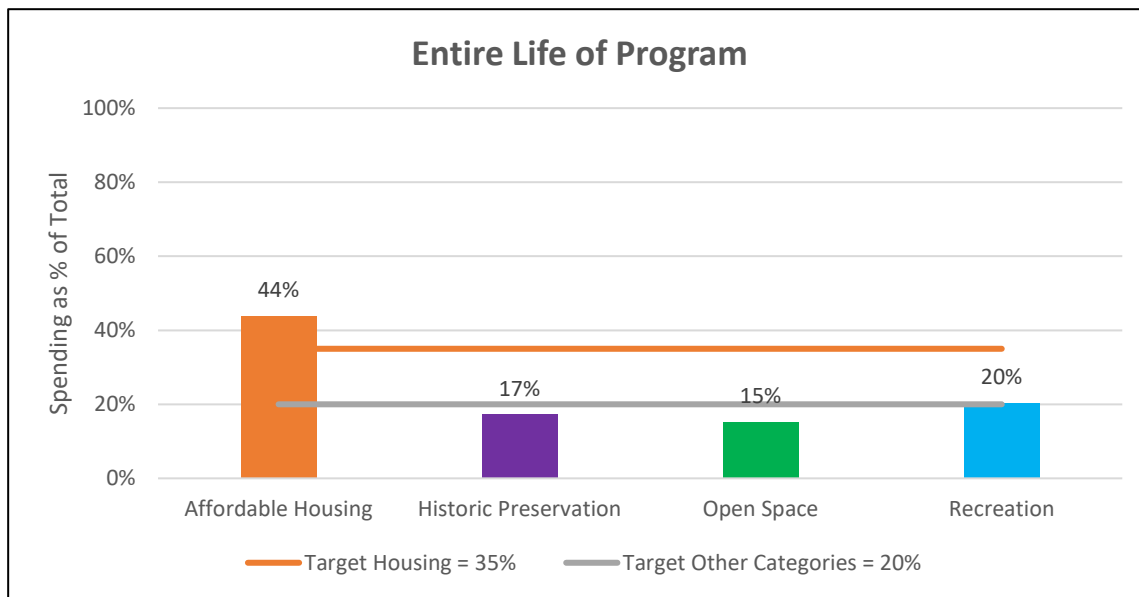
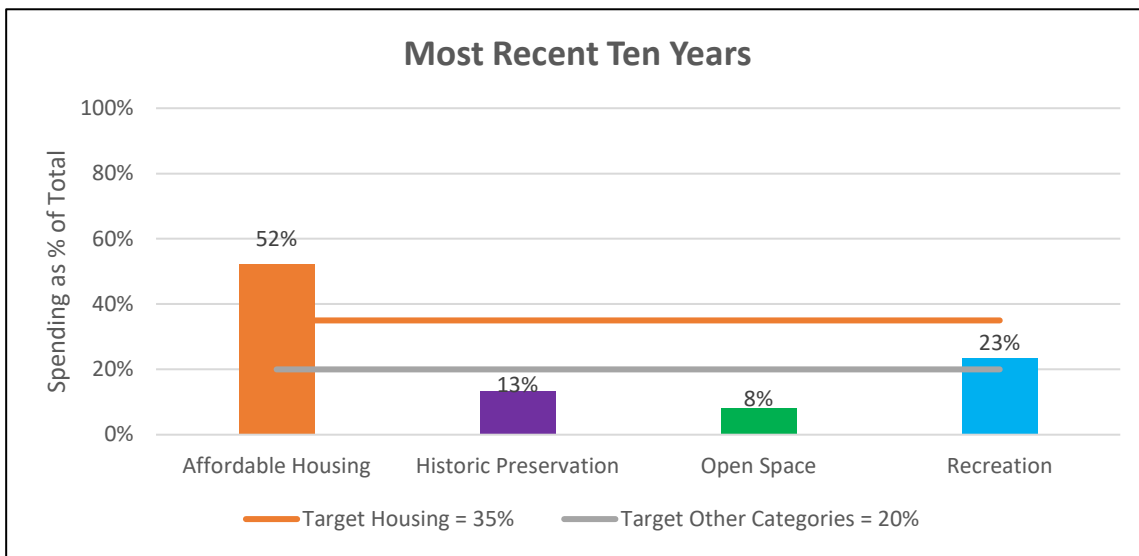
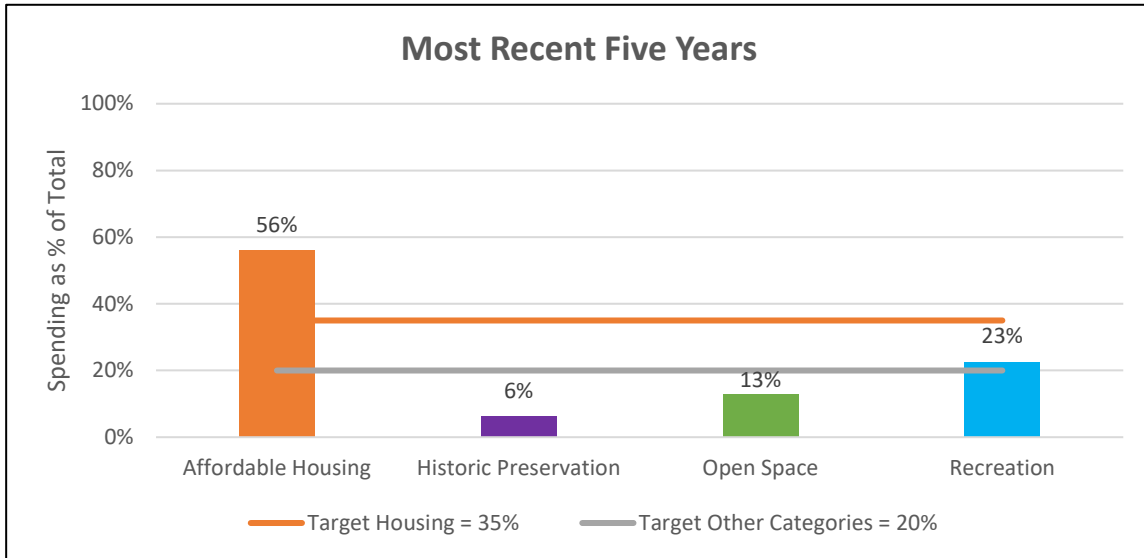
Note: spending on projects funded through bond issues is recorded as a series of annual debt service payments

	Program Area					Total Spending	Total Current Revenue
	Affordable Housing	Historic Preservation	Open Space	Recreation	Administration		
Most Recent Five Years							
Spending	16,802,948	1,868,132	3,823,075	6,790,564	765,085	30,049,805	24,569,359
% of Total Current Revenue	68%	8%	16%	28%	3%		122%
Target %	35%	20%	20%	20%	5%		100%
Percentage Point Difference Between Actual and Target	33%	-12%	-4%	8%	-2%		
Most Recent Ten Years							
Spending	25,191,172	6,403,171	3,930,575	11,309,311	1,386,427	48,220,657	43,511,337
% of Total Current Revenue	58%	15%	9%	26%	3%		111%
Target %	35%	20%	20%	20%	5%		100%
Percentage Point Difference Between Actual and Target	23%	-5%	-11%	6%	-2%		
Entire Life of Program							
Spending	37,647,002	14,872,585	13,042,453	17,476,806	2,659,425	85,698,272	87,667,824
% of Total Current Revenue	43%	17%	15%	20%	3%		98%
Target %	35%	20%	20%	20%	5%		100%
Percentage Point Difference Between Actual and Target	8%	-3%	-5%	0%	-2%		

Spending as % of Program Revenue, Compared to Guidelines



Spending as % of Annual Spending, Compared to Guidelines





COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
Minutes
November 14, 2024 at 7:00 P.M.

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) will hold this meeting as a virtual meeting. No in-person meeting will take place at City Hall.

Members of the Community Preservation Committee welcomed Mollie Hutchings, the new program manager for the CPC program. Ms. Datta introduced Ms. Hutchings, who has experience in preservation and project management. Ms. Hutchings expressed her excitement to be part of the program.

Attendance

Eliza Datta, Chair
Susan Lunin, Vice Chair
Mark Armstrong, Member
Dan Brody, Member
Buzz Dunker, Member
Bob Maloney, Member
Jen Molinsky, Member
Antonio Smargiassi, Member
Judy Weber, Member
Mollie Hutchings, Staff

Golda Meir Final Report

Amy Schectman thanked everyone for making the affordable housing project in Newton a reality. She highlighted the success of the project, which includes a 68-apartment expansion and a new grand lobby. Ms. Schectman explained the distribution of the apartments based on income, with 45 units having project-based vouchers and 9 set aside for chronically homeless individuals. She also mentioned a scholar in residence program, where individuals reside in exchange for sharing their knowledge with the residents. Ms. Schectman closed by discussing the construction process, the interior of the apartments, and the supportive services available to residents. The project was successful in connecting all floors and providing accessibility at every level, as Mr. Armstrong pointed out. Ms. Weber highlighted the project's budgetary success and asked if there were any takeaways for future projects. Ms. Schectman emphasized the importance of project management, a committed team, and long-standing relationships with contractors. The project was also lauded for its contribution to addressing the housing crisis, with 700 households on the waiting list for 160 apartments turned over each year. The CPC approved the final report unanimously and released the held-back funds, marking the end of the project's discussion in this meeting.

Haywood House

Hannah Cross provided an update on the Haywood House senior housing project, which consists of 55 one-bedroom apartments for seniors, with varying restrictions on income. The building includes community spaces, a fitness center, and laundry facilities. Construction was completed in May and the property is almost fully leased. The project is now in the process of closing out and converting to a permanent mortgage. Ms. Cross also presented the progress of the Jackson Gardens project, highlighting the new landscaping, outdoor seating areas, and residential lounge areas. She expressed her gratitude to all the partners, including the CPC and the City of Newton, for their support. Ms. Molinsky complimented the appearance of the property, especially the community room.

Ms. Cross reported that out of 55 units, only 3 were left available. Mr. Maloney inquired about the slow leasing process, and Ms. Cross explained that there's a high demand for lower income units, but the higher income units have been harder to fill as some potential residents could afford to rent market rate units. The remaining units are all within the 90% AMI. Ms. Weber mentioned the potential for the housing authority to utilize their land next to Jackson Garden. Ms. Datta praised the shared amenity spaces between the two developments. Ms. Cross confirmed that they had a lottery process for the units, which had a high initial response but was skewed towards lower income categories. The CPC approved the final report unanimously and released the held-back funds, marking the end of the project's discussion in this meeting.

Grace Church

Mr. Aquilina expressed his gratitude to the CPC and Lara Kritzer for their crucial role in the successful fundraising of their project. He highlighted that the grant provided by the CPC was instrumental in achieving their capital campaign goal. Mr. Aquilina also discussed the thorough repair and restoration of the tower structure, which included a collaboration with their team John Wathne of Structures North and Ricky Silva of Aniceto Restorations. The project's budget was managed effectively, despite some overruns, and the final cost was \$50,000 over the initially estimated budget. A community party at Grace Church was attended by over 300 people, and the church is now open to various music and social service groups. Ms. Datta and Mr. Aquilina discussed the necessary precautions and maintenance plans for a newly restored historic tower, emphasizing the importance of regular repointing to prevent future issues.

Ms. Hutchings explained that the preservation restriction from MHC was a condition of the grant had not been met yet. A previous conversation between Chair, Vice-Chair and Staff suggested that the committee should keep a certain amount of the remaining funds (possibly 10%) until a preservation restriction comes through. Mr. Aquilina added that Grace Church and the city of Newton have agreed to the draft and are working with their lawyer. Ms. Hutchings also noted that the preservation restriction would be administered by NHC for design review of any changes made to the building. After discussions, the committee agreed to accept the report and release 90% of the funds, with the remaining 10% to be held until the receipt of the preservation restriction.

Second Church in Newton Proposal

Laura Foote presented for Second Church in Newton for a masonry and roof restoration. The project has already been awarded funding by Massachusetts Historical Commission, which granted \$50,000. The total project cost is estimated at around \$260,100, and they are currently in the bidding process. Ms. Foote gave a presentation about the Church, which is used for musical performances, including the

Newton Piano Summit. The building needs restoration work. Lisa Harrington, a senior architectural conservator, highlighted deteriorative issues with the building's exterior affecting the interior and prioritized different areas for restoration, mainly roofing and masonry work. Ms. Foote showed photos of the building, revealing the failing copper roofing and stonework. The team discussed the importance of restoration work to preserve the building's historic fabric.

The committee discussed the historical significance of a building, the legality of using CPC funds for repairs, and whether it qualified for CPC funds. The group also discussed the accessibility component of the work and considered whether Grace Church, a religious building, could be considered a community building. The city's help was deemed crucial for the church to serve its broader purpose in the community. Mr. Smargiassi, the mayor's appointee for historic resources, clarified his role and raised concerns about legalities. The group concluded that replacing the copper roof and dealing with spalling would be capital improvements,

Ms. Foote clarified the difference between restoration and maintenance work, and mentioned that their restoration work is detailed in the specifications. Ms. Datta inquired about the status of bidding for the presented budget, to which Ms. Foote replied that they have received four bids within their presented numbers. They are currently reviewing bids to finalize a contract under a tight timetable to use an MHC Grant. The team discussed the percentage of total project cost that the CPC would cover, estimated by Ms. Foote to be around 40-45%. After further discussion, Mr. Maloney expressed his comfort with the decision. The team agreed that the project is a significant historic resource and not just a maintenance project. They also acknowledged the community's support for the project and the amount of match and leverage that the team had brought forward for the project. The team voted 8 to 1 to recommend the project for funding. Ms. Foote expressed interest in potential future projects related to accessibility improvements in historic buildings.

Administrative

The meeting also addressed outstanding business items, including minutes from July and August, which were not reviewed due to lack of time. The team discussed the schedule for reviewing and approving meeting minutes, with Ms. Molinsky, Mr. Maloney, and Ms. Datta taking responsibility for different months.



COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Minutes

January 09, 2024 at 7:00 P.M.

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) held this meeting as a virtual meeting. No in-person meeting will take place at City Hall.

Attendance:

Eliza Datta, Chair
Susan Lunin, Vice-Chair
Jen Molinsky, Member
Judy Weber, Member
Buzz Dunker, Member
Mollie Hutchings, Staff

Second Church in Newton Docketing Update

Ms. Hutchings provided an update on Second Church in Newton's expected timeline in appearing before the Zoning & Planning and Finance Committees. Ms. Hutchings also explained the process of docketing items and the selection of subcommittees, with items usually going to either ZAP or Land Use, depending on the nature of the project. She also mentioned that in some cases, projects might go to both subcommittees simultaneously. Ms. Datta and Ms. Hutchings discussed the possibility of influencing which subcommittee an item goes to, depending on the project.

Current Projects Status Update

Ms. Hutchings provided updates and responded to Mr. Dunker's query about the balance on the athletic field improvement fund. The team, including Ms. Datta, Ms. Molinsky, Ms. Weber, and Ms. Lunin, discussed the upcoming bond payments, and brought up concerns about about future funding and the need to determine when the bonds would be sold. Ms. Hutchings agreed to seek further information from the Comptroller's Office.

Finances at a Glance and State Matching Concerns

Ms. Weber raised a concern about the discrepancy between the budget numbers and the percentage of state matching funds. Ms. Hutchings clarified the fundraising and matching process, stating that the City collected a certain amount, which the state matched. The state's financial situation was discussed, with Ms. Datta and Mr. Dunker noting potential issues with the expected surplus due to recent tax cuts. The distribution of funds among different communities was also discussed, with Ms. Datta asking Ms. Hutchings if she

knew what differentiated those groups. Ms. Hutchings suggested consulting Stuart Saginor from the Coalition for an answer.

Ms. Hutchings raised concerns about the impact of lower funding on the committee's priorities, to which Ms. Molinsky responded that a decision would require a broad discussion with the Council and the public, suggesting maintaining the same targets with increased thoughtfulness and potential trade-offs. This transitioned into a discussion of the application criteria and form.

Ms. Lunin expressed optimism about reaching the "safe harbor" status, emphasizing the importance of asking applicants about their other sources of support. Ms. Weber suggested telling applicants not to ask for more than half of the requested funding to manage expectations, while Ms. Datta emphasized the need for realistic and reliable budgets from applicants, and suggested the focus should be on understanding available funding and comparable projects.

Ms. Molinsky stressed the need for projects to align with the city's climate goal, and suggested applicants research sources of funding related to sustainability. Ms. Hutchings agreed with this, and noted that there were probably similar goals and funding related to accessibility.

Application Process and Advising Applicants

The team discussed the funding application process, with Ms. Hutchings clarifying what type of references are sought by the committee. Ms. Datta and Ms. Weber added that the committee looks for references from community groups, supporters, and other funding sources, with Ms. Weber emphasizing the importance of demonstrating the project's impact. The team also discussed the implications of the affordable housing aspect being removed from their responsibilities, with Mr. Dunker and Ms. Lunin highlighting the importance of councilors' endorsements and the need to explore other funding sources. The team agreed to investigate different funding sources and be ready to meet with potential applicants.

Future Meetings and Minutes

The team discussed and unanimously voted to approve the minutes from July, August, and September 2023. They also touched upon the need to approve the November 2023 minutes in the upcoming meeting. Ms. Datta confirmed that the next meeting, which will include a discussion on the West Newton Cinema Proposal, would be in February. At the end of the meeting, they voted to adjourn.



COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Minutes

February 13, 2024 at 7:00 P.M.

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) held this meeting as a virtual meeting. No in-person meeting will take place at City Hall.

Attendance:

Eliza Datta, Chair
Susan Lunin, Vice-Chair
Mark Armstrong, Member
Judy Weber, Member
Buzz Dunker, Member
Antonio Smargiassi, Member
Mollie Hutchings, Staff

Coleman House Affordable Housing Final Report

The presentation of the Coleman House completion report was led by Elise Selinger and Lizbeth Heyer from 2 Life. Coleman House provides affordable housing for low-income seniors, has received \$4,214,622 from the CPC in two rounds of funding. The renovation has resulted in all apartments being adaptable and meeting design standards.

Ms. Selinger discussed the challenges encountered during the renovation of the Coleman House project, including the discovery of asbestos, the need to replace plumbing due to code requirements, and the contractor difficulties which led to escalating costs. She also mentioned the refusal of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board to grant a waiver for the existing drains. Ms. Selinger emphasized the importance of continuous fresh air and the installation of smart thermostats. She also discussed plans to transition the property to all-electric and the steps taken to make the apartments fully accessible or adaptable. Questions were raised about the decision to retain gas and the ease of adaptation for residents, as well as the potential impact of power outages. Ms. Selinger confirmed the importance of a generator and the consideration of Passive House due to resiliency concerns. The team discussed the Coleman House project and expressed their appreciation for the project. A vote was held to approve the final report and release remaining funds, which passed unanimously.

West Newton Cinema Pre-Proposal Discussion

The West Newton Cinema project was then discussed, with Elizabeth Heilig, the president of the West Newton Cinema Foundation (WCNF), presenting a pre-proposal. The cinema, built in 1937, is a significant part of the community and is threatened with demolition. The foundation aims to purchase the Cinema by August of this year, operating it as a nonprofit movie theater. Ms. Heilig presented the history and architecture of the theater, discussing its unique art deco design elements.

Ms. Heilig discussed the current state and future plans for a theater that serves approximately 50,000 people annually. She noted that the theater's condition is poor, leading to a decrease in attendance compared to other theaters in the area. However, the theater still attracts a significant regional audience. The WCNF aims to enhance programming through live events, panel discussions, spoken word, and small music performances, and could also serve as a prominent part of the proposed Washington Street Arts and Culture district. The proposed feasibility study would include a facility analysis and financial plan for the renovation. Ms. Heilig confirmed grants from the Mass Cultural Council totaling \$43,000 for a facility assessment and a building system assessment.

Mr. Armstrong questioned the assumptions made by the study, particularly regarding the potential for renovation versus new construction and the economic viability of operating multiple screens. Ms. Heilig clarified that the plan is to program the entire building with at least 3-4 screens for economic viability and special programming. She also mentioned the need for renovations to make the theaters accessible, comfortable, and safe, including the installation of a lift or elevator. Mr. Smargiassi raised the possibility of integrating the theater into the development proposal, which Ms. Heilig indicated was unlikely. Ms. Hutchings and Kelley Brown, also representing WCNF, discussed the importance of preservation in the feasibility study and potential future renovation project.

Mr. Brown and Ms. Heilig shared more about their organization, including their board composition, fundraising efforts, and plans for a business plan and facility assessment. A capital campaign is currently underway to raise \$5.6 million led by Ms. Heilig, who reported on the status of the quiet phase and promising leads secured. Ms. Hutchings noted a demolition delay on a property under review, which could lead to total demolition if the funds were not raised. The WCNF team acknowledged their current lease that expires in August, which is their deadline to acquire the building.

Ms. Datta and Ms. Lunin expressed concerns about site control and the project's feasibility. Ms. Heilig confirmed that they would consider returning to the committee for more funding if needed and were working hard to put all the necessary pieces in place. Mr. Smargiassi expressed support for the project but raised concerns about the effectiveness of past strategies due to the lack of site control. He suggested that the owner might need to obtain a special permit and proposed returning to the CPC after reaching an agreement. Mr. Brown clarified that they (WCNF) would be the owners should the project move forward, and the owner's plans for demolition would not proceed.

Ms. Heilig explained that the pre-proposal is meant to initiate the renovation process, understand the committee's stance on the project, and determine the cost of initial renovations for fundraising purposes. Ms. Weber added it seemed that the study is also about strategically applying for additional resources. Mr. Brody asked if there was a larger donor who could speed up the process. Ms. Datta and Ms. Hutchings both agreed that the funding process after receiving a CPC recommendation could take months and would be unlikely to help meet an August fundraising deadline. The WCNF team clarified that the feasibility study would help their team decide how to program the Cinema after acquisition and would not inform their capital campaign to purchase the building. Mr. Brown asked if CPC would be allowed to provide acquisition funds. Ms. Datta and Ms. Hutchings confirmed it was an allowable use of funds, but not what the current pre-proposal described.

The CPC concluded with a unanimous vote to invite the WCNF to submit a full proposal for the feasibility study once the site control issue was resolved.

Current Projects and Bonding Update

Ms. Hutchings updated the team on the current projects. Ms. Datta inquired about the city's plans to issue bonds for the two projects, and Ms. Hutchings confirms that they will be issued on March 13th. However, she does not have an updated estimate of the interest rate on the bonds. The current bond interest rates are between 3 and 3.6%, which is lower than the current 3.3% rate. Mr. Brody clarifies that the current rates are not unlimited, but they will still be fine.

The committee confirmed they will be meeting in March, and votes to adjourn.