

## Mayor's Update



We're working hard to find the right location for the Newton Center for Active Living, or NewCal, the all age friendly community center that will meet the unique interests and needs of seniors while also opening its doors to multigenerational programs.

The process won't be easy. The NewCAL project team examined an original list of 145 City-owned and private properties. They found that most were too small or had a building or circumstance that make them unsuitable. They whittled the list to 24 possible locations that meet the 2.5-acre requirement for NewCAL. Many of the sites are Park and Recreation fields, parks and walking trails.

To narrow the list further will involve an in-depth process with a lot of input and possibly some controversy. I've already heard from people opposed to using a part of Cold Spring Park for NewCAL, and residents who use other parks on the list are likely to have concerns.

We're listening. Right now, we're starting to look at the 24 sites thoroughly and thoughtfully, considering not just a viable location for NewCAL, but also the impacts of NewCAL on current important uses, open space and the neighborhood around the 24 sites.

The NewCal project team, Building Commissioner Josh Morse, Director of Senior Services Jayne Colino and Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Culture Bob DeRubeis are working together with the City Council, the Council on Aging, the Parks and Recreation Commission and residents to find a location that will best fit plans for NewCAL and the needs of the City as a whole. NewCAL will ultimately be a spacious, well-equipped (kitchen, gymnasium) and inviting community center for seniors and others that has outdoor programs and green space.

The NewCAL Building Committee held one of their regular community information meetings last Thursday night to give an update on the site selection process as well as to introduce the NewCAL architect and design team, Bargmann Hendrie + Archetype (BH+A). The Boston-based architectural and interiors firm designed senior centers in Needham, Scituate and Cohasset, and an intergenerational center in Randolph, among other projects.

Join us for the next meeting on Thursday, Sept. 19 at 7:00 p.m. at the Newton Education Center (100 Walnut St.), Room 111.

Want more info? Find updates [here](#), and the evaluation criteria [here](#).



Newton in Motion, or NewMo, completed its first week of rides on Monday, 317 to be exact.

The first week of our ride share service for residents 60 years old and older went well, albeit with a few hiccups. Via, our partner, increased the number of staff answering phones at the call center to reduce wait times. Drivers received more

training on Newton's streets and about which door to go to at frequent drop-off and pick-up sites.

Here are a few tips:

- Please be on time at the pick-up location. Since these are shared trips, NewMo can't wait long since we'll then be late for other passengers.
- Please note, riders can schedule a ride for themselves and one more passenger (2 total riders).
- Please use your smartphone to make the reservation if possible. That way Via will have a telephone number and will text you when the van is arriving.
- Make sure to let Via know of any special pick-up instructions, such as what door you're at, when you make your reservation.

Questions? The NewMo customer service number is 617-655-8019.

### **Snow on Council's Agenda**

It's still summer, and yet the City Council is thinking about snow. Tomorrow night, the City Council's Finance Committee is likely to vote on a proposal to issue warnings and then fines to residents who ignore the City's snow shoveling ordinance. The ordinance requires homeowners to clear snow and ice from the sidewalk in front of their property. The meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. in Room 211 at City Hall, 1000 Commonwealth Ave.

The proposal calls for homeowners to clear their sidewalk within 24 hours of a storm's end (as determined by the Newton Department of Public Works) or face a written warning for the first offense, and a \$50 fine for second and subsequent offenses. Exemptions would be granted for residents who "demonstrate hardship due to a combination of health and financial duress."

If the measure is passed by the Finance Committee, the full City Council is scheduled to vote on the measure at its meeting on Monday, July 8.

### **Uber, Lyft Bring Newton \$129,250 for Infrastructure**

Newton residents took 1,292,503 Lyft or Uber rides in 2018, a 23 percent jump from 2017. That means a Lyft or Uber ride originated in Newton on average 3,541 times a

day last year, according to figures from the state Department of Public Utilities.(That's approximately 4 percent of the vehicle trips in Newton per day.)

That also means Newton is receiving \$129,250.30 from the 20 cent per ride assessment charged by the State to the Transportation Network Companies (Lyft and Uber). The assessment is split with 10 cents going to municipalities where the rides originated, and 10 cents to the State. The funds can be used to repair and maintain streets and infrastructure.

Newton is fifth in the state, with Boston topping the list of most Lyft and Uber trips followed by Cambridge, Somerville and Brookline.

We will need to weave the impact of ride sharing services into our transportation strategies and future regulations.

Cars aren't all Newton residents are sharing. Last week, even with the rainy weather, Newton riders averaged 114 Lime Bike trips a day (136-159 when the sun was shining).

Since the bike share program started last August, 3,125 riders have taken 10,679 trips and gone 8,595 miles on Lime Bikes for a median distance of .4 miles and 8 minutes per ride.

(Photo: With Newton Police Officers Justin Lau and Brett Ferolito filling bags for the summer food program.)

### **Summer Food for Families**

Summer means no classes, but for the more than 1,500 Newton students who receive free or reduced cost meals the lack of reliable school supplied breakfast and lunch can be a significant hardship.



The City of Newton's Health & Human Services Department in partnership with the Newton Food Pantry provides bags filled with a few meals worth of nonperishable items to help ensure all Newton families have adequate food on the table this summer.

Families can pick up a bag at locations across the City including at the Health & Human Services Department at City Hall (1000 Commonwealth Ave.), the Newton Free Library (330 Homer Street), Fire Station 10 (755 Dedham St.), Fire Station 4 (Crafts Street), the Boys & Girls Club (675 Watertown St.), the West Suburban YMCA (276 Church St.), Gath Pool (256 Albemarle Road), and Crystal Lake (20 Rogers St.). Bags are also supplied to program partners NCDF – Houghton Village, some Newton Parks and Recreation Department camps and Creative Start. Adults or children can request a bag from the front desk at each location.

(Photo: Last year's Teddy Bear Parade during Kids Morning.)



## Full Day of July 4 Fun

Fourth of July is next week, and Newton Community Pride has a full day of fun planned for the whole family.

Bring the kids to Kids Morning at Newton Centre Playground from 10:00 a.m. to noon, then head over to Albemarle Field for the afternoon open air market, amusement rides and food trucks. The Bo & Bill Winiker Band begins playing at 6:00 p.m. and the fireworks display caps off the celebrations at 9:00 p.m.

All these events are coordinated by Newton Community Pride and paid for through generous donations. Want to help? Newton Community Pride is offering 2019 Pride tee-shirts to the first 100 people who donate \$25 or more to help pay for the July 4 fireworks. More information is available at [here](#).



(Photo: Debbie Eappen cutting the ribbon at the official opening last Friday of the renovated Matty Eappen Play Area at the Hyde Playground with Councilor John Rice, Commissioner of Parks, Recreation & Culture Bob DeRubeis, Bette Roth, Stephanie Lapham of the Parks & Rec Department and Kevin Kelly of the Carpenters Union. The play area was recently renovated and is now completely accessible. Thanks to the Ruderman Family Foundation, so many other generous donations and the help of countless volunteers and City staff who worked so hard to see this project completed.)

## Calling All Small Business Owners

Are you a small business owner? How is business here in Newton? What are your challenges? How can City Hall help?

Join me in my office at City Hall, 1000 Commonwealth Ave., for a roundtable discussion on Wednesday, July 17 from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m.

R.S.V.P to Linda Walden at [lwalden@newtonma.gov](mailto:lwalden@newtonma.gov) or 617-796-1122.

## New to Newton? Welcome!

If you're new, or newish, to Newton, come on over to the Mayor's office at City Hall, ask questions, give me your suggestions and have a Fig Newton!

I'll be joined by Newton residents Martha Heinemann Bixby and Caitlin Cusick of "Welcoming Newton" a grassroots group created to support newcomers to Newton and help them get involved in what's happening around the City.

The first Newcomers Meet Up is on Wednesday, July 17 from 9:30 to 10:30 in my office on the second floor at City Hall, 1000 Commonwealth Ave.

If you can't make it in July, join me on Tuesday, Aug. 27 from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. in my

office.

Warmly,

Ruthanne

P.S. It's summer, and that means free concerts in parks across the City. Sunday concerts in Newton Centre Green (corner of Centre and Beacon Streets) start with East Coast Soul on July 7 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Wednesday night concerts are held in Nonantum, Auburndale, West Newton and Newtonville through July, starting with the Hal McIntyre Orchestra on July 10 at Coletti-Magni Park (386 Watertown St.) from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. There are also children's concerts scheduled in July and August. The full schedule is [here](#).

