

## Mayor's Update



### Thanks Sen. Creem and Reps. Khan & Balser

Thank you to our state legislators, Senator Cindy Creem, and Representatives Kay Khan and Ruth Balser, who successfully advocated for Newton projects in the proposed \$43.1 billion FY20 State budget now awaiting Gov. Charlie Baker's signature.

The local projects include: \$50,000 to make Lyons Field in Auburndale accessible; \$50,000 for Crystal Lake improvements; \$20,000 for Historic Newton; \$250,000 to the Carroll Center for technology and independent living skills for newly blind adults; \$25,000 for the Silent Spring Institute headquartered in Newton to study environmental hazards in water supplies; \$15,000 for Newton at Home to assist seniors; and \$50,000 toward design funding to create new linear pedestrian and bike paths in Auburndale. This project will redirect through traffic from the Carriageway to Commonwealth Avenue by the Charles River near the Marriott and Lyons Field. As part of the rebuild of the Route 30 bridge over the Charles River in 2022, the state will include the new path in this bridge project at no cost to the City.

(Photo: We're seeking to purchase the decommissioned Armory on Washington Street from the state for \$1 and partner with a non-profit to provide 100 percent affordable housing.)

### Poor Grades on a Housing Report Card

The Boston Foundation recently released its Greater Boston Housing Report Card 2019 looking at housing affordability and housing production in the 147 cities and towns in the five counties surrounding Boston.

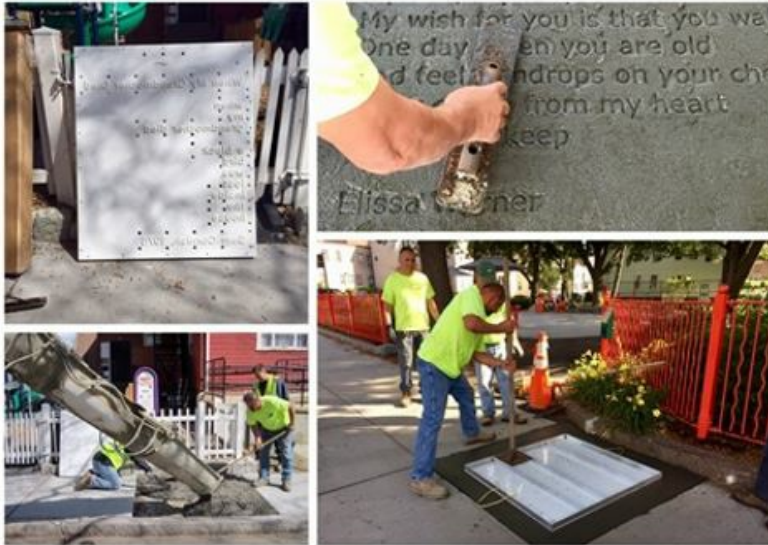


We're expensive. More specifically, the Report found that metro-Boston, which includes Newton, is one of the nation's most expensive places to buy (4<sup>th</sup> in the U.S.) or rent (3<sup>rd</sup> in the U.S.). The authors highlighted that the limited supply of housing stock and high cost contributes to persistent racial segregation.

The Report evaluated each city and town. Newton had low scores except for housing best practices, e.g., accessory dwelling and inclusionary zoning ordinances. The scale goes from 0.0 to the best grade of 1.0.

- 0.83 Incorporating housing best practices
- 0.38 Percent of multi-family rental housing
- 0.35 Affordability of current housing stock
- 0.30 Community's racial composition
- 0.09 Production of multi-family housing

Read the full Report [here](#).



Photos from City of Cambridge, MA

## Poems Will Soon Appear Underfoot

The 10 poems for the Make Poetry Concrete project are selected, and the first three will be stamped into new Newton sidewalks soon.

The first installation will be at the intersection of Oak and Christina Streets on Needham Street, just before the Charles River. Then poems will appear at Minot Place at Walnut Street and at

the new Horace Mann Elementary School (formerly Carr).

One hundred and forty Newton residents submitted poems for the contest. Six judges selected 10 that will be used to bring poems off the pages of books and into our everyday lives.

Congratulations to the winning poets who include two Newton students, published poets and a number of new ones. You will soon be able to read *Trace* by Shelby Allen, *An Ordinary Day* by Jane Attanucci, *Presence* by Sabrina Elyse Bauer, *This Quiet Way* by Ben Berman, *Young Heart* by Meaghan Cocuzzo, *Every Day Is a Poem* by Susan Eyre Coppack, *Spring* by Nancy Genevieve, *Community Conversation* by Cynthia Greene, *Sidewalk* by Mark Hemment, and *The Way They Grew* by Jonas Pena.

(Photo: The Spray Park at the Burr Park in Newton Corner (142 Park Street, across from Bigelow Middle School) is open and ready for the next hot day!)

## Temps Up & Energy Demand Soars

We're in the midst of a heat wave this week, resulting in

high electricity use on the New England electric grid. We can all help reduce energy demand, costs, and the region's carbon footprint by reducing our energy use.

Here are some tips:

- Set air conditioners to as high a temperature as possible, and use ceiling fans if you have them.

- Shut off air conditioners when you are going to be away.
- Make sure windows and doors are closed when air conditioning is on.
- Close shades or drapes to block the sun.
- Shut off any lights and other appliances that are not essential.



On especially hot days like we expect this week, the electric grid experiences “peak” hours, usually from 3:00 to 9:00 p.m. Just 1 percent of the hours in the year account for 8 percent of the cost for New England utilities and 10 percent of the hours account for 40 percent of the cost. Because the utilities have to build capacity for these peak events, the costs skyrocket.

On particularly hot days, consider:

- Turning the air conditioner down or off.
- Avoid using large appliances until the evening (e.g., washing machines, dryers, dishwashers).
- Wait to charge portable devices until the evening.
- If you have an electric car, charge it before or after the peak.

### **What Do You Think of newtonma.gov?**

The City of Newton is starting the process of updating and improving our website.

We're currently looking at what works and how to improve it.

We want to hear from you. Take our short survey at [newtonma.gov/opinion](https://newtonma.gov/opinion).

(Photo: The Daybreakers)

**Last Adult Summer Concert on Wednesday**

Don't miss the Daybreakers concert tomorrow



night (Wednesday, July 31) at 6:30 p.m. at the Newton Senior Center, 345 Walnut Street in Newtonville. The Daybreakers blend folk-rock melodies with blues guitar in a blur of country and rock & roll. It's the last adult concert of this year's Newton Community Pride Summer Concert Series.

(The dunk tank will be back this year at the Newton Police Department's National Night Out event.)

### **Police and Music and Kids on Tuesday**

Join the Newton Police for National Night Out at Captain Ryan Park in West Newton Square on Tuesday night, July 31, 5:00 - 8:00 pm.

The Stacey Peasley Band will perform starting at 6:30 pm as part of the NPD celebration. Kids can enjoy games, refreshments and face painting.



### **Retirement News from Consumer Affairs**

Director of Senior Services Jayne Colino and I sent the following letter to the City Council a few days ago:

*We are writing to share the bittersweet news that Judy Zohn and Mim Cole, co-directors of the Newton Brookline Consumer Affairs Office for almost four decades, have decided to retire. While they have certainly more than earned some time away from their tireless advocacy for our residents here at City Hall, we honor their wonderful work-ethic, institutional memory for all things Newton, and natural inclinations to support others.*

*In their work in Consumer Affairs, Mim and Judy served thousands of residents of Brookline and Newton, recovering thousands of dollars for consumers, educating them to protect them from potential scams, and helping them to learn their rights on an ever-changing consumer landscape. Imagine the education required over the decades to help consumers navigate changes in telephone service alone!*

*The residents of the City of Newton and the Town of Brookline will continue to be served directly by calling the Attorney General's Office at 617-727-8400. We thank Judy and Mim for helping us to transition to this next phase.*

*Many of us are fortunate to have meaningful first and second acts in our professional lives. Certainly, Judy and Mim are part of this lucky group. Please join us in wishing Judy and Mim well as they begin their next act, wherever that leads them. We thank them for their dedicated service.*

The MetroWest Consumer Assistance Office will be helping Newton and Brookline consumers going forward.

Warmly (no pun intended),

Ruthanne

P.S. This week I signed two particularly interesting documents. I accepted \$4.5 million in financial assistance from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, of which \$3.4 is in the form of a grant and \$1.1 million is a Loan Agreement to help with sewer repairs. I also accepted \$3.5 million from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (\$1.9 million in Community Development Block Grant funds, \$1.4 million in HOME Investment Partnership funds and \$162,765 in Emergency Solutions Grant funds) to “reduce housing discrimination, affirmatively further fair housing and promote diverse, inclusive communities.”

P.P.S. Did you know Newton has installed more municipal solar panels than any other community in Massachusetts?

P.P.P.S. Have a Spare Back Pack? You can help the Second Step provide school supplies to students impacted by domestic abuse. Donate supplies (pens and pencils, notebooks, binders, thumb drives, etc.) at the donation drop-off box in the rotunda at City Hall, 1000 Commonwealth Ave.; sturdy backpacks are a critical need.

