



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF AMERICA**

John M. Barry Boys & Girls Club of Newton

675 Watertown Street

Newton, Massachusetts 02460-1355

Phone: (617) 630-2066 Fax: (617) 630-8999



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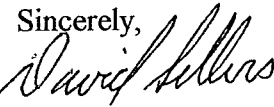
Ms. Margaret Doris, President
The Playground Project at Albemarle, Inc.
119 Fair Oaks Ave
Newtonville, MA 0260-1154

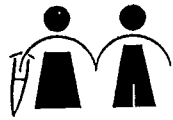
Dear Ms. Doris:

The John M. Barry Boys & Girls Club is pleased to write this letter of support for the proposed "Community Classroom" submitted to the Community Preservation Committee. If approved the proposed plan would be of tremendous benefit to our members and the Community as a whole.

Our membership of nearly 800 boys and girls often travel between the Park and our facility. The improvements as outlined, especially the gazebo and tables with benches would provide them with a place to gather and relax. The tables could be used to do homework or play a game. In addition, I have spoken with a few of the seniors who live in the Albemarle Gardens project and they would welcome such a sighting for relaxation and possible interaction with the children playing in the adjacent tot lot.

We trust the Committee will consider this proposal a legitimate and viable improvement that will benefit the Community and increase the use of it's open spaces.

Sincerely,

David Sellers



Understanding Our Differences, Inc.

The Newton Disability Awareness Organization

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Executive Director

Beth Mendel

Beth_Mendel@

newton.mec.edu

Administrative Assistant

Karen Rubin

Kit Coordinator

Janet Porter

Attorney

Lynn Goldsmith

October 29, 2002

Dear Members of the Community Preservation Act Committee,

Understanding Our Differences is a disability awareness education program that has fostered understanding and acceptance of people with disabilities in Newton since 1979. One of the program goals is to raise awareness of the significance of architectural barriers and to empower people to advocate for access for all members of our community. It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of support for the grant application to create an outdoor community classroom to be located at the Russell J. Halloran Sports and Recreation Complex in Newtonville, Massachusetts.

The fully accessible outdoor community classroom will enhance the sports complex by providing a space that allows for passive activities such as learning, talking, listening, sitting, relaxing and observing. It adds an additional component that can be used by community members of all ages, spanning from children to the elderly.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I encourage you to support this effort which demonstrates that Newton is a city that strives to provide spaces that meet different needs and promotes the inclusion of all community members.

Sincerely,

Beth Mendel

Executive Director

F. A. DAY MIDDLE SCHOOL
21 MINOT PLACE
NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02460
617-552-7379

October 31, 2002

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to enthusiastically endorse the proposal to fund a community classroom adjacent to Albemarle Playground. The project, in conjunction with the improvements planned for the playground, will first have a very positive impact on the students at Horace Mann Elementary School. I want to point out that it also holds great potential for the students at Day Middle School.

An outdoor classroom will become a welcome resource for our faculty. It will enable them to plan lessons enhanced by the exploration of the outdoors. Our Grade 8 earth science curriculum comes to mind right away, given the obvious connection to studying the weather. This resource also lends itself to our study of plant life. Beyond science classes, it would be wonderful for teachers to be able to take a class outside occasionally – especially when the lesson calls for a contemplative moment to which only the outdoors lends itself. I can also imagine activities during which Day and Horace Mann students join together for special programs.

Albemarle Field is a great community resource. It is constantly used for many formal and informal sports programs. Having this kind of space added to the fields will give families throughout the community a place to go, relax, and learn. It beautifully compliments the educational and sports activities already in place. On behalf of the Day school community, I want to add our voice of support!

Sincerely,

Paul Stein
Principal

RECEIVED VIA E-MAIL

Newton Public Schools
HORACE MANN SCHOOL

687 Watertown Street
Newtonville, MA 02460
Area Code 617-559-9510
Fax 617-559-2004

Joseph_Russo@newton.mec.edu

Joseph Russo, Principal

October 25, 2002

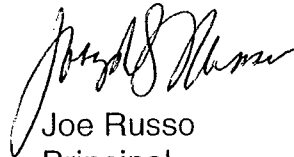
Dear Commissioner,

I am writing in support for the Community Classroom initiative for the Albemarle Playground, located at the Russell J. Halloran Sports and Recreation Complex in Newtonville. As principal of the Horace Mann School, we would have direct access to this open space facility for education and recreation purposes. I strongly encourage your approval of this worthy project.

There are many valuable activities that students, teachers, and parents at our school could initiate in this environment including the kindergarten study of leaves in the fall, science presentations in third grade connected to their study of trees and tadpoles. Fifth graders could share their original poetry in an inviting natural setting or complete independent reading with their teachers. Parents could hold mid-morning meetings while monitoring their toddlers in the adjacent tot lot. Our school already boasts a beautiful butterfly garden, developed and maintained by second graders and their parents. As a school we have established this as a place to observe the natural growing process of plants and insect life throughout the year. Creating a Community Classroom could allow us to relocate this natural environment to a larger, more visible location that would be beneficial to the entire community. Without these funds we could not undertake this type of project.

The Albemarle Playground is used by various groups from many different areas of the city. The Boys' and Girls' Club use this facility regularly as do families attending baseball games at Halloran Field and swimmers from Gath Pool. Funding this project would complete the work of the Playground Project at Albemarle and the Horace Mann PTO. I strongly endorse this initiative and look forward to favorable decision to fund this deserving project.

Sincerely,



Joe Russo
Principal
Horace Mann School

Mary Fitzgerald
Lynne LeBlanc
Betsy Spensieri
Co-Presidents
Horace Mann PTO
687 Watertown St.
Newton, MA 02460

Community Preservation Committee
City of Newton
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459

October 27, 2002

Dear Sir or Madam,

This letter urges you to support the Community Classroom project at the Russell J. Halloran Sports and Recreation Complex in conjunction with the Albemarle Playground Renovation Project. The Community Classroom project looks to the whole community as potential benefactors to its space. The project, as presented by Playground Project Committee, specifically includes seniors and toddlers in its broad spectrum of participants who will benefit from the project.

Horace Mann in particular would benefit from this project. Educational needs and foci have very much changed from a generation ago. The experiential learning model is in place throughout the Newton school system and throughout many communities in the United States. The Community Classroom project adheres to the hands on learning model and would provide a consistent and concrete forum for this type of learning.

In addition, Horace Mann seeks to embrace its own community. Events such as the Potluck Dinners, Back-to-School BBQ's, and Color Day often bring extended family and friends to our school. At such times, when outdoor use is at a maximum, members of the community may become acquainted with the Horace Mann playground for the first time. These events provide an opportunity for the extended community to understand that there is, indeed, space that is common and public, yet also intimate and welcoming.

Please consider supporting the request from the Playground Project at Albemarle. It is truly a space that would benefit the entire community.

Sincerely,



Margaret Fitzgerald
Horace Mann Co-Presidents



Lynne LeBlanc



Betsy Spensieri

Day-After-Day Inc.
687 Watertown Street
Newtonville, MA 02460
October 28, 2002

Attention Community Presentation Committee:

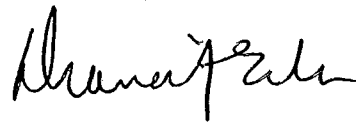
I am the director of Day-After-Day, a school-aged childcare program located at the Horace Mann school. D.A.D. has 126 students enrolled, grades kindergarten-Sixth grade. I am writing in regard to the "Community Classroom" proposal.

I have been director of D.A.D. since 1979. Through my twenty-four year tenure, I have seen numerous configurations of the playground outside of the Horace Mann school. The idea of an "Outside Classroom"- and the potential that this concept will hold for all the children will prove to be beneficial. D.A.D. is a major use of the Horace Mann playground. Our students use the playground at least once each day. The children particularly love the playground structure-as it allows them to gross motor movement, to imaginative play.

The proposal for an outdoor classroom will surely facilitate a child's imagination, and serve to unfold wonderful mysteries conducive to children.

On behalf of the D.A.D. program, teachers, family and children- I highly recommend this proposal, and it is my hope that this "dream" becomes a reality!

Thank you,



Diana A. Erba
Director of D.A.D.



David B. Cohen
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Office of the Mayor

Telephone
(617) 796-1100
Telefax
(617) 796-1113
E-mail
Dcohen@ci.newton.ma.us

December 4, 2002

Ms. Lara Kritzer
Planning & Development Dept.
Newton City Hall

Dear Ms. Kritzer:

I would like to offer my support for the playground project at Albemarle and their grant application for an outdoor Community Classroom/Meeting Space. This proposal to re-utilize the space of the former Albemarle Playground "tot lot" as a passive outdoor meeting space for anyone in the community will enhance and balance the many sports and recreation activities that already take place in that area.

The proposal envisions an outdoors Community Classroom, which would provide a permanent yet flexible space for a variety of activities, enjoyed by persons of all ages. This Community Classroom would be available for use during school hours by students at nearby Horace Mann Elementary School and Day Middle School. It would also be available to senior citizens groups, book clubs, nature groups and others for whom the natural setting is an enhancement of their activity.

I enthusiastically support this project, which will preserve and enhance Newton's open spaces, and hope that you will strongly consider their grant application.

Very truly yours,

David B. Cohen
Mayor

1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

www.ci.newton.ma.us



DEDICATED TO COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE

Girl Scout Troop 3451
Troop Leaders: Stephanie Elliott & Patti DiDino
Horace Mann School Meeting Place
Newtonville, MA 02460

Dear Ms. Doris,

I'm pleased to write this letter of support for the proposed "Community Classroom" submitted to the Community Preservation Committee. If approved, the proposed plan would be of tremendous benefit to our troop and the community as a whole.

Our girls often travel between the Park and school for many reasons. The improvements as outlined, would provide them with a place to gather and relax. Having a place for the girls to work and have fun would be wonderful. And the tables would be great to do their crafts, Community Service projects, and any other things associated with Girl Scouts.

Also as a Horace Mann parent I would love to know that the kids have a place to go and work with their classroom on research and other many things that the "Community Classroom" would benefit.

I trust the committee will consider this proposal a legitimate and viable improvement that will benefit the Community in many different ways and increase the use of its open space.

Thank you for your time and hopefully your consideration in this matter.

Horace Mann Parent & Girl Scout Leader

(VIA EMAIL)

Stephanie Elliott