

October 30, 2001

**The Brigham House / Teen Center  
20 Hartford Street  
Newton Highland, MA 02461**

**To whom it may concern,**

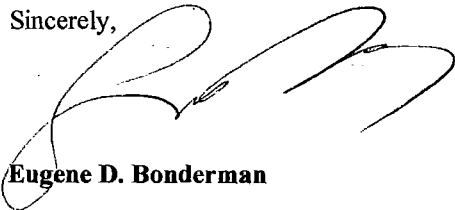
**Dear Sir/Madam,**

My daughter Tania has been coming to The Brigham House for nearly 6 month. Every week she's looking forward to go to see her friends at Teen Center. She tremendously enjoys the activities and the interaction that she has with kids and supervisors. Most importantly it is good to know that kids of her age have a certain place to "hang around" supervised by adults.

I strongly endorse the Teen Center and only wish that more of the centers like this one will be available to kids in my daughter's age group.

If you have any questions pleas call me at 617-512-5668.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eugene D. Bonderman', written over a large, stylized flourish.

**Eugene D. Bonderman**



David B. Cohen  
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts  
Office of the Mayor

Telephone  
(617) 552-7100  
Telefax  
(617) 965-6885  
E-mail

Dcohen@ci.newton.ma.us

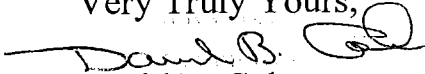
October 31, 2003

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to voice my support for the renovations at the Brigham Community House. The BCH is unique. It is available due to the hard work of many local citizens who recognized the historic value and beauty of this stately old house and wanted to retain it to benefit the community. As a result of their hard work and vision, this beautiful and historically significant property is available for our residents. It has been used for craft and chess classes; it houses the city counseling services and it also serves one of the most underserved age groups in our city, youth between the ages of 12- 19 years.

Our city has very few places for our teens to congregate and just hang out and the BCH provides a safe and supportive environment where they can get together to relax and enjoy themselves. I hope that you will continue to support the hard work of the community activists who had the vision to understand the importance of the BCH to our city and fund the renovations to the building so that we can continue to have use of this wonderful and unique facility.

Very Truly Yours,

  
David B. Cohen  
Mayor

1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

[www.ci.newton.ma.us](http://www.ci.newton.ma.us)

Board of Aldermen

2002-2003

November 3, 2003

City of Newton

1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459



Tel (617) 796-1210  
FAX (617) 796-1214

Brooke K. Lipsitt  
President

George E. Mansfield  
Vice President

Community Preservation Committee  
Via Jennifer Goldson  
Planning & Development Department  
City of Newton  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton Centre MA 02459

Re: Application for Brigham House

Aldermen at Large  
Ward

- 1 Robert E. Gerst
- 1 Carleton P. Merrill
- 2 Allan L. Ciccone
- 2 Marcia T. Johnson
- 3 Richard J. Bullwinkle
- 3 Leonard J. Gentile
- 4 Amy Mah Sangiolo
- 4 John F. Stewart
- 5 Paul E. Coletti
- 5 Brian E. Yates
- 6 Susan M. Basham
- 6 Kenneth R. L. Parker
- 7 Brooke K. Lipsitt
- 7 Sydra Schnipper
- 8 Richard A. Lipof
- 8 Mitchell L. Fischman

Ward Aldermen  
Ward

- 1 Scott Lennon
- 2 Stephen M. Linsky
- 3 Anthony J. Salvucci
- 4 D. Pauline Bryson
- 5 Christine S. Samuelson
- 6 George E. Mansfield
- 7 R. Lisle Baker
- 8 Cheryl Lappin

City Clerk/Clerk of the Board  
Edward English

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Members of the Board of Brigham House have brought to my attention their application for CPA funds to protect and restore their historic building. As you are certainly aware, this house has had an important place in the Newton Highlands village center for more than a century.

After its discontinuation of use as a public library branch, the building fell into disrepair, and the Brigham House Board has worked closely with the community to stabilize the structure. The Board has now turned its primary attention to the provision of community programming, a valuable contribution to the City.

To the extent that the funds are for historic preservation of this significant structure, I would ask the Community Preservation Committee to recommend approval of this request.

Very truly yours,

Brooke K. Lipsitt  
President

**Kenneth R. L. Parker**  
**Alderman-At-Large, Ward 6**  
**Newton Highlands, MA 02461**  
**(617) 965-3723 • [ken@kenparker.org](mailto:ken@kenparker.org)**

November 2, 2003

Community Preservation Committee  
c/o Jennifer Goldson  
Planning and Development Department  
Newton City Hall  
1000 Commonwealth Ave.  
Newton, MA 02459

Dear Committee Members:

It has come to my attention that the Board of Directors of Brigham Community House is preparing an application to request community preservation funds for the purpose of restoring their historic structure. Of course, you will need to review the Brigham House application in the context of all of the competing proposals before you and in accordance with the criteria you have adopted. The purpose of this letter is to bring to your attention several factors that you may wish to consider in your deliberations:

- 1) **Historic Significance**— While there are many historic structures throughout Newton, there are few that have played the central role in the development of a village center that Brigham House has played for Newton Highlands. Its historic significance is evidenced by the extensive work done by the Joint Advisory Planning Group that examined its possible re-use in the 1990's. Great effort was made to maintain parts of the building as a community gathering place, one of the roles it had served during its time as the Newton Highlands branch of the Newton Free Library.
- 2) **Community Value**— Newton has long had a need for youth services and the Brigham House has filled an important role during its latest incarnation as the home to a number of youth outreach programs, including those targeted at some of the most vulnerable young people in our community. The proposed renovations would serve not only to preserve the historic value of the structure, but to enhance its value to the community, continuing its historic mission as a gathering place.
- 3) **CPA Goal Balance**— While the Community Preservation Act does not require that each of the prescribed uses for CPA funds be allocated equal shares of funds,

the law does stress the importance of allocating funds to each of its purposes. In Newton, we have recently approved significant funds for open space acquisition, recreational field construction, and affordable housing, but it is my impression that we have had fewer opportunities for supporting historic preservation. I believe that the Brigham House project may represent a unique opportunity to provide some balance to our CPA expenditures among the prescribed categories.

Thank you very much for considering my input in your deliberations. Please call or email me if you would like further information on any of the points I have raised or if you have other questions.

Regards,

Ken Parker

1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459



October 31, 2003

To Whom it may concern,

My sisters and I and my son grew up in Newton Highlands and attended the Hyde School and visited the Highlands branch library. These two community buildings were important aspects of the neighborhood. These buildings were closed when my son was in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

These experiences made me very aware of the loss a community feels when an historic structure or public building is taken away. When the neighborhood was going to lose its second public building after the closing of the Hyde School, the Brigham Community House Board formed to save this historic structure to keep it as a public resource. The community wanted neighborhood services as well.

This public private partnership has served the community by restoring an historically important monument and providing access to the public. Our particular focus is on youth programming, but all age groups are welcome.

As an Alderman, I believe that this building has historical importance as well as serving vital community needs. Our city has a rich heritage of beautiful architecture that needs preserving. I am in full support of the Community Preservation Act funding this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine Snow Samuelson".

Christine Snow Samuelson  
Alderman

Board of Aldermen

2002-2003

City of Newton

1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459



November 2, 2003

Re: Brigham Community House

Dear Community Preservation Committee,

As an Alderman in the City of Newton and member of the Brigham Community House Board of Directors, I would like to express my support for the Brigham Community House' (BCH) application for Community Preservation Act funding.

The City of Newton came very close to selling this building to the private sector. It was a grass-roots effort by the BCH Board that saved the building for public use by restoring it to meet occupancy code. Today the BCH is host to a number of community programs and activities and plays a vital role in the village of Newton Highlands and in the city as a whole.

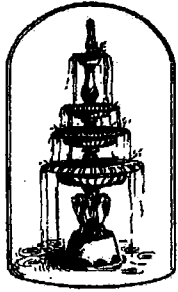
Most critically BCH provides sorely needed services to teen-agers, the most under-served constituency in the City. Its after school and evening teen program is a model for the rest of the City, as it has been a grass-roots program similar to that which saved the building from private purchase.

The Community Preservation Committee is authorized by the CPA to make recommendations for the acquisition and preservation of historic resources. By approving the BCH request for funding, you have an opportunity for the City to support the preservation or restoration of historic municipally owned resources and enable access to these resources by the public.

I can think of no building that is more deserving of CPA support ,or better fits the mission of the CPA than the Brigham Community House.

Sincerely,

Marcia T. Johnson  
Alderman-at-Large, Ward 2



# Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council

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20 Hartford Street, Newton, Massachusetts 02461

Dr. Robert Staulo  
Newton Highlands Chiropractic  
1157 Walnut Street  
Newton Highlands, MA  
02461

October 31, 2003

Dear Dr. Staulo,

We are very grateful to the Brigham Community House Board for the rehabilitation of your building for community use and helping us reestablish our permanent meeting place there. The variety of uses the building now houses is a real asset to Newton Highlands.

The Teen Program is also an extremely valuable asset to our community and has our full support. Services for teens are badly needed in our community and we are proud to be associated with your fine program.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janice Bourque". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a long, sweeping underline.

Janice Bourque  
President  
NNHAC



To whom it may concern:


The Brigham Community House is a vital and wonderful part of Newton Highlands. From its historical charm to the many programs they run, it is a center of our community and an important source of guidance and growth for the teens and elders in the Highlands (and beyond.)

The adult volunteers and "graduate" young adults are a model for engaging teens constructively and with fun! The Newton Highlands Community Development Corporation (NHCDC), which oversees the use of the Hyde community center, supports their programs with volunteers, donations of gym time and cooperation on many activities. In turn many of our programs are aided by teen volunteers from the Brigham House.

The Newton Highlands community has worked extremely hard for several years to bring this type of activity for young people to this part of Newton, and is very pleased with the programs and commitment of the center and its users.

The NHCDC wholeheartedly supports the Brigham community house.

Kevin Osborn

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kevin Osborn".

2nd Vice President  
NHCDC Board of Directors.

October 29, 2003

Dear Ms. Goldson,

As a career guidance counselor at Newton South High School, I am writing this letter in support of the Brigham Community House. This program is exactly what young people today need. A number of my students have benefited from the program.

Teenagers need a place to go where they can relax and where communication with adults is easy. So many of our teenagers today have no adults in their life to listen to their problems. The Brigham House helps fill this need and I support it wholeheartedly.

Sincerely,



Vaunita Schnell  
Newton South High School

# NEWTON GIRL SCOUT TROOP 3000

October 30, 2003

Dr. Robert Staulo  
Newton Highlands Chiropractic  
1157 Walnut St.  
Newton Highlands, MA 02461

Dear Dr. Staulo,

Newton Girl Scout Troop 3000 would like to thank you and the other members of your committee again for allowing us to use Brigham Community House as our regular meeting place.

Brigham House is the ideal location for us for several reasons. First, it's centrally located and easily accessible by public and private transportation from anywhere in Newton—an important consideration, since our troop includes girls from all over the city. Second, it's a neutral setting that clearly welcomes teens, which makes a difference to our girls, who range in age from 12 to 15. And finally, it's a good physical setup, because we can all meet in the main lounge and then can break up into separate groups to work on projects in different rooms. Having a choice of several work spaces will be especially helpful to us next year, when we will be merging with another, younger troop and some of our current members will be moving up to the Senior Scout level. (The girls would add that being located next door to an ice cream parlor is a nice bonus, too!)

Troop 3000 has come to think of Brigham House as "our place." The girls were excited to see other people using the floor pillows they made for the community center in a recent newspaper photo, and we have a collection of pre-teen and teen paperback books ready to donate for the Brigham House bookshelf.

We look forward to our fourth year of meeting at Brigham House.

Sincerely,



Toby B. Gooley  
Co-leader  
Newton Girl Scout Troop 3000

53 Philbrick Rd.  
Newton, MA  
Nov. 1, 2003

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of the Teen Center at Brigham House in Newton Highlands.

My daughter Sarah and a number of my daughter's friends go there on Friday and Saturday nights. Fortunately, my daughter has found this place on her own, without my help, and it is her place of choice.

The Teen Center is a valuable asset to the community. It is wonderful that teenagers have somewhere to go. If they weren't in this place, there is a good chance that they would be hanging out somewhere on the street. There are many dangerous places in Newton for teens to hang out --- T Stops come to mind. I say dangerous in that there are places where alcohol and marijuana and bad attitudes are too easily available.

It is good for parents to know where their children are on Friday and Saturday nights. The Teen Center is a positive place for a group of them to go if a friend's house is not available.

Amy Hulberg takes a caring interest in the teens there. She has been a good friend to my daughter.

The value of this place is immeasurable. I hope it will continue to be available for the teens who need it.

Sincerely,

  
Ann Bond

**MARINA X. VROUVLIANIS 48 CLARK STREET, NEWTON CENTRE, MA 02459**  
**(617) 964-4423, (617) 244-7403 (FAX)**

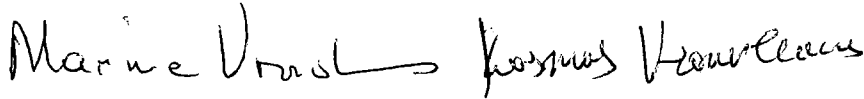
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November 1, 2003

To Whom It May Concern:

Our son Alexi has been going to the Brigham House practically every week for almost two years now. We find it a very safe and pleasant place for him to meet up with his friends and just hang around instead of being in the streets or in unchaperoned homes. We both hope that the funding continues and grows so all teens who need a place to "hang" will be able to go there.

Sincerely,



Marina and Kosmas Vrouvlianis

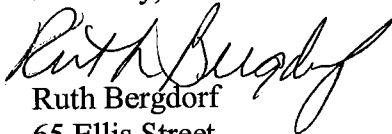
October 29, 2003

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Ruth Bergdorf, and my son James has benefited Greatly from participation in the Brigham House. It is a safe place for my son to go to, and there is no where else like it. I am truly thankful for having such a safe place for my son and his friends. James has had problems thru the years dealing with "regular kids", who find him not perfect. He is a normal teenager who has trouble in school, and needs extra help. He has ADD and he has had problems since he was a child. He has been abused by teachers and students alike, but here, at the Brigham House he has found acceptance and joy. As a Mom I have to tell you that nothing is worth more than that.

Please, if I can be of any assistance in helping this place stay open and stay a safe and wonderful place for the kids in Newton, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ruth Bergdorf". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Ruth Bergdorf  
65 Ellis Street  
Newton, MA 02464

91 Allerton Road  
Newton, MA 02459  
November 29, 2003

Brigham House  
Newton Highlands, MA

Attention: Amy and Jude

Dear Amy and Jude:

Thank you so much for your part in making the Brigham House such a fun, safe place for my daughter, Rachel, to come to.

As you know, Rachel has been having a very difficult year both at home and in school. She is certainly an "at risk" child, with major depression and self-injurious behaviors. She is on the road to recovery, and I know that the Brigham House has played a major roll.

It means so much to her that she has a place to go where she feels safe, and she can count on you to talk to her and offer her your friendship, support and caring. She has a lot of fun there, and a chance to get together with other kids in an environment that is supportive.

The Brigham House has helped Rachel tremendously. It is a major part of her life, and keeps her going. She has something to look forward to now that she has been spending time there with the kids she has gotten to know and especially with both of you. She wishes the Brigham House was open every day. (I think she would move in, if she could!)

You're providing a very important, wonderful service for the kids, and I really can't thank you enough.

Very truly yours,

  
(Mrs.) Edith Kagan

15 Amherst Road  
Waban, MA 02468  
27 October 2003

RE: Brigham Community House

To whom it may concern:

The purpose of this letter is to let you know how important the Brigham Community House is to people like me who are parents of teenagers. My son, Daniel, has enjoyed using the computer room at the Community Center. While he is there he has the opportunity to socialize with other youth in his age group in a safe and supportive environment. There are very few safe places for the youth of our community to relax and enjoy themselves. If it weren't for the Center, he would stay at home and not have any opportunity to socialize.

I urge you to fund the renovations to the building so that our children can continue to have use of this wonderful and unique facility.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tanya Chapsky".

Tatiana Chapsky

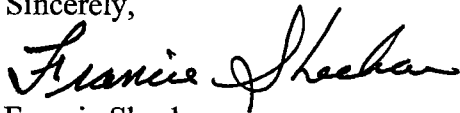


To Whom it May Concern:

Brigham House is a very valuable asset to our community. As a parent of a teenage son I am thrilled to finally have a place for our him to hang out, to meet friends, watch movies, and play games in a safe environment. My son has made many friends while spending time at the Brigham House. He goes there at least 1 night a weekend, sometimes for an hour, sometimes for the evening.

Newton has long been lacking a place for teenagers to go to meet and be with friends and Brigham House has filled that slot.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Francie Sheehan". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Francie Sheehan  
73 Carver Rd  
Newton, MA 02461

# Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council

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20 Hartford Street, Newton, Massachusetts 02461

November 21, 2003

Jennifer Goldson  
Community Preservation Planner  
Planning & Development Department  
1000 Commonwealth Ave  
Newton, MA 02459

Dear Ms. Goldson:

The Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council wishes to voice our strong support for Brigham Community House for consideration for the Newton Community Preservation Act funding.

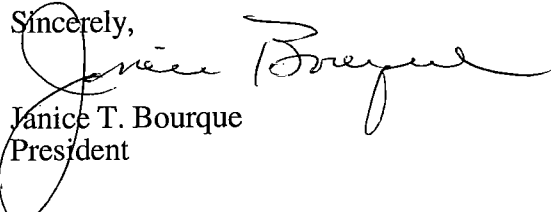
The Brigham Community House is historically important to not only for Newton Highlands but for the greater Newton community. The building's architecture has great historical merit for the Victorian period and is a jewel in the Victorian framework of homes that grace the Newton Highlands village. Additionally, the home originally belonged to the Brigham family who created the famous and first Brigham Ice Cream storefront in Newton Highlands.

More notable, is the current important role the Brigham Community House has in ensuring that adults, young and old, has a place to gather. The various programs at the Brigham Community House fill a need in Newton's ability to provide a place where community leaders, teenagers and senior citizens can interact.

Since the beginning, the supporters of the Brigham Community House have worked hard to ensure that the initial repairs and painting of the building were consistent and in collaboration with the historical agencies. However, the building needs further restoration necessary to preserve the building from damage.

We hope that your department will favorably consider the preservation and restoration proposal presented by the Brigham Community House representatives on Monday evening November 24<sup>th</sup>. We look forward to having this fine building and its great programs continue to be a focal point of activity for Newton.

Sincerely,

  
Janice T. Bourque  
President

Bob Staulo  
Chair, Brigham Community House  
1157 Walnut Street  
Newton Highlands, MA 02461

→ November 17, 2003 ←

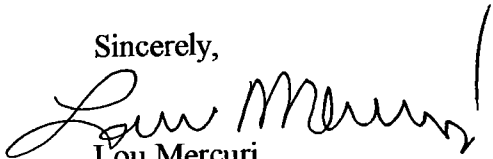
Dear Bob,

I have learned from Christine Samuelson that the Brigham House has applied for a CPA funding grant for the historic preservation renovation of the Brigham House in Newton Highlands. I would like to lend my strong support to this proposal and am hopeful that it can be fully funded.

As you know, in 2002, I started the Lou Mercuri Chess Training School designed to bring high quality chess instruction to talented young chess players between the ages of 8 and 15. It was necessary to find a site for our weeklong sessions that would offer recreational opportunities and provide a quiet and attractive setting for the students. Thanks to Christine's and your efforts, the Brigham House has been a wonderful location for the 12-15 kids who have participated in each of the 5 weeklong sessions offered to date. The fact that the site is handicap accessible and serves a true community purpose is of great benefit to the Newton community. We look forward to the Brigham House and its Board of Directors allowing us the continued use of the historic house for years to come. The proposed renovations to the Brigham House will enhance and restore the appearance of the House and reinforce its appeal as an active community center.

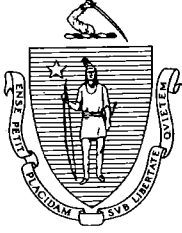
I wish you the best in the pursuit of this CPA funding opportunity. If I can provide any additional information or support for the application, please let me know. I can be contacted at (508) 653-1905 or at [loumercuri2@aol.com](mailto:loumercuri2@aol.com).

Sincerely,



Lou Mercuri  
Director, Lou Mercuri Chess Training School  
4 Waring Road  
Natick, MA 01760

✓ CC: Ald. Christine Samuelson



THE GENERAL COURT OF MASSACHUSETTS  
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

November 24, 2003

Jennifer Goldson  
Community Preservation Planner  
City of Newton Planning and Development Department  
Newton City Hall  
Newton, Massachusetts, 02459

Dear Ms. Goldson:

I am writing in strong support of the application of Brigham House to the Community Preservation Fund. The Brigham House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and has played an important role over many years in the growth of the Newton Highlands Historic District. A grant award for the Brigham House would contribute greatly to the preservation of this important historic structure in the City of Newton.

While the Brigham House is certainly a valuable historic building it has also become a vital community center serving our City's youth. Leaders at the Brigham House have done a wonderful job developing this community center into a resource that has benefited thousands of Newton residents. Brigham Community House has already raised a substantial amount of money and has secured a long-term lease from the City of Newton. These accomplishments have helped solidify the future of the Brigham Community House. A grant award from the Community Preservation Fund will enable the Directors to make needed repairs and improvements to the building that will preserve the historic quality of the structure and enable it to continue serving the community.

In particular, an award from the Community Preservation Fund would be utilized for improvements to the heating system, floors and ceilings and the wiring. Exterior improvements will include painting and wood replacement. These projects are important for maintaining safety and utility for the building's current uses.

The Brigham Community House is a structure of historic significance that continues to serve the City in many important ways. The City government, community agencies and many individual residents have embraced the current mission of the

Brigham Community House. This center has been transformed into a critical neighborhood focal point that deserves continued public financial support.

Again, I urge you to support the application of Brigham Community House for Community Preservation Fund. Thank you very much for considering my views.

Sincerely,



Kay Khan  
State Representative



Cynthia Creem  
State Senator



Ruth Balsler  
State Representative

# Globe West

BOSTON SUNDAY GLOBE JANUARY 13, 2002

NEWTON

## Youth center popular with teenagers

### Brigham House offers them safe place to hang out

By Gail Spector  
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Last year at this time, Bobby Huntley, a senior at Newton South High School, spent a good deal of his free time hanging out with his friends in the Store 24 parking lot.

Now, thanks to the good will of some community residents, politicians, and local businesses, Huntley has a much better place to meet his friends — the Brigham Community House.

The youth center opened last spring but really didn't take off until September. Located on Hartford Street in Newton Highlands, it is geared toward teenagers of all ages, but it attracts mostly high school students.

The center, which is open Wednesday through Saturday evenings, draws about 80 youths each week to play ping-pong, watch movies, cruise the Internet, and talk with friends.

The atmosphere is casual at the Brigham House, where teenagers come and go as they please, with many visiting the center frequently. Huntley, who lives in Waban, said that he visits

*I like the atmosphere. I can hang out with my friends and I don't have to worry about things.*

BOBBY HUNTLEY, a teenager who uses Brigham House

the center every day it's open.

"I like the atmosphere," Huntley said. "I can hang out with my friends and I don't have to worry about things."

Robert Stanilo, who chairs the

center's board of directors, said the Brigham House was opened after the Newton Youth Commission concluded that teenagers make up the least-served population in the city. With no such

facility on the south side of Newton, the hope was to get kids out of parking lots and into a supervised place.

"The basic idea is that they're too old

to stay home and not old enough to have a place to go," Stanilo said.

The center occupies a building that once housed the Newton Highlands branch library and was originally constructed in the late 19th century as a home for a member of the family that founded the Brigham's ice cream chain.

The city was about to sell the house to a law firm in 1997 when the Newton Youth Commission intervened and asked to use it as a youth center. The city still owns the building and leases it to the Brigham House for one dollar per year.

Stanilo said the center raised about \$100,000, most of which was used to prepare the building and bring it up to code. Tweeter donated a 72-inch television, MediaOne provided free Internet access, and Store 24 donated money to the cause that would help keep kids out of its parking lot. Many other local businesses have helped out, too, Stanilo said.

The center is staffed by three youth workers, who have developed trusting and affectionate relationships with the youths. Bissy

Gaudiano, a 22-year-old worker, said the teenagers love the warm greetings they get when they walk in the door. She and her colleagues have created nicknames for most

of the kids, and she lists "Rarefoot Frank," "Colonel," and "Lefty" as some of the frequent visitors to the center.

"It seems like we've drawn a crowd that's looking for something else to do," said Gaudiano. "This is a much safer place for kids. They're not out running around."

The center's \$600-a-week operating budget, which is dedicated to salaries alone, is funded through a federal grant. Stanilo said the board is looking at other grants and is planning future fund-raisers to keep the funding stream going. The teenagers say they'd like to see more money for additional operating hours and a pool table.

Parents love the place, too, said Newton Youth Commission chairman Peter Harrington. "There is tremendous pressure on these kids to succeed — on the playing fields and in school."

"What parents tell us is that having a place where the kids can go and hang out with their friends is very helpful."

Jannie Kasper, a junior at Newton South, raved about the center. "If I could, I'd put my whole allowance into hiring more people," she said. "And I guarantee you that my voice speaks for at least 10 people here tonight."