

From: Carol Halberstadt [mailto:carol@migrations.com]  
Sent: Wednesday, February 03, 2016 5:07 PM  
To: Alice Ingerson  
Cc: Carol Halberstadt  
Subject: Re: [NewtonCPA] Newton CPC February 11th Agenda: \$6.3 million in pre-proposals for housing & park, West Newton/Auburndale

Hi Alice Ingerson,

These sound like two very good proposals—the first with housing for homeless families. The second, however, if I read it correctly, will only have 4 low-income affordable 2BR units, while citing all the income discrepancies and acute needs for more affordable senior housing in Newton (where I first started living in 1970).

Can you please elaborate a bit — how much would those Crescent St. units cost in rent(or to buy?) and why only four? That's hardly a dent in the need. The increase in park space looks very good and also much needed.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Many thanks,

Carol

Carol S. Halbertstadt  
9 Whittemore Rd.  
Newton Corner 02458-2105

Tel: 617-332-0290

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From: Alice Ingerson  
Sent: Wednesday, February 03, 2016 5:52 PM  
To: 'Carol Halberstadt'  
Subject: your questions about Crescent St. pre-proposal on Newton CPC's February 11th agenda

Dear Ms. Halberstadt,

I'm afraid I'll have to refer you to the proposal sponsors for the Crescent Street project, since my knowledge is limited to the information they submitted to the CPC (which you have read carefully and thoughtfully). The pre-proposal does state that the housing units planned for this site are rentals. It also shows some projected rents on pp. 20-21, though it does not list the household income limits on which these projections are based (I also see that it suggests a slightly different mix of unit sizes than the pre-proposal form itself).

You could use the contact information in the pre-proposal to write to the sponsors directly, but I hope you will also consider attending the CPC's meeting on February 11th, when they will discuss this pre-proposal with the CPC. Though pre-proposal discussions are not public hearings, the CPC chair may at his discretion take public questions or comments, if time permits.

remainder of Ingerson response omitted in Jan 2017 CPC packet

TO: Community Preservation Committee  
FR: Kathleen Kouril Grieser, Mill St, Newtonville  
DT: February 11, 2016 (To be read aloud by Julia Malakie)

RE: Crescent Street Proposal

I support this proposal which represents an attempt to meet both the needs of the neighborhood - which overwhelmingly supported a park on the entirety of the publicly owned Parks & Recreation land at Crescent Street - and the interests of the volunteer and professional proponents of increasing housing density and urbanization in Newton. What's good about this proposal is that the land can remain in public use and ownership, that the playground will be expanded into a small pocket park, and that Newton will be able to provide 4 units of subsidized housing to those in the greater Boston region who qualify for it and would prefer to live in Newton. It's good to see well-qualified and talented City Hall staff running a housing project, rather than some politically connected, for-profit developer.

What concerns me about this proposal is the amount of money requested for consultants. City Hall is currently spending an alarming amount of money on consultants. In addition, terms should be imposed to ensure the housing footprint and massing are as small as possible, and that as much land as possible be devoted to expansion of the public park space. Another concern is the likely competing needs for CPA funding - to acquire a conservation easement for Webster Woods, to acquire the substation land adjacent to this Crescent St. site so as to make a better-sized park in the future, and the competing housing proposal at Cherry Street - and there are other projects in Newton that could require CPA funding.

Finally, because the City is legally obliged, under the terms of the HUD-Engine 6 Conciliation Agreement to identify 5 sites (by May 2016) and to house 9 chronically homeless individuals (within five years of the agreement date), should this project go ahead as a housing and park project, instead of a park-only project, *it would be fiscally and legally irresponsible* to do anything other than to specify that Crescent Street will be one of those 5 sites, and to make that and the housing of 2 chronically homeless individuals in units in this project, conditions of funding it. Thank you for considering my views.



February 21, 2016

Newton Community Preservation Committee  
Newton Planning and Development Department  
City Hall, 1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459

Re: 70 Crescent Street Project

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Dear Community Preservation Committee,

I write on behalf of the members of the Board of Directors of the Newton Conservators, the nonprofit organization whose mission is to advocate for open space in the City of Newton, to notify you that we support the joint proposal by the Parks and Recreation Department, the Planning Department, and the Building Department for a revitalized park at 70 Crescent Street (with a minimum of 20,000 square feet added to the park) and four units of compact, modest-sized affordable housing (out of a total of eight units). We urge you to support the project, too.

We believe this project presents the best chance for maximizing open space on the property and creating parkland on what now is primarily a paved and developed site. Additionally, this project would provide a win-win for both open space and affordable housing efforts, creating benefits to our community similar to what occurred at Dolan Pod from 2004-2007. Reclaiming developed land for open space purposes at 70 Crescent Street would set an important precedent for future similar uses throughout Newton.

The current pocket park on the site contains only one play structure for young children. The larger size would allow for more opportunities for active or passive recreation for the neighborhood. The existing access to the current park is difficult and requires crossing private property; that problem also would be solved with the additional square feet.

We applaud your two-step approach, which puts the environmental study first in order to determine whether there are any hazardous substances on the property that would make it unsuitable for either parkland or housing--before any work proceeds.

We also strongly support Item 6 in the "Further Resolutions" section, which calls for the exploration of the "acquisition of the adjacent Eversource property for further expansion or access to the playground/open space area."

Thank you for your consideration. We would be happy to discuss our concerns with you.

With hopes for your support,

Beth Wilkinson ,  
for the Board of the Newton Conservators



## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS NEWTON

PO Box 610207 Newton, MA 02461 [www.lwvnewton.org](http://www.lwvnewton.org)  
617-383-4598 Email: [info@lwvnewton.org](mailto:info@lwvnewton.org)

Alice Ingerson  
Community Preservation Committee Program Manager  
Newton City Hall  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459

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Dear Alice:

Below are our comments on the two proposals before the Community Preservation Committee. Thank you so much for your efforts and for the opportunity to comment.

### **Project: Nathaniel Allen Homestead—Phase II (also known as the Allen House)**

The League of Women Voters of Newton (LWVN) has reviewed this proposal and makes the following observations:

- This application is complete, thorough, and provides good support for the project.
- It appears to fit well within the CPA law, and also fulfills the basic goals set forth by the Newton CPA.
- Allen House and the described use are specifically noted in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan. It aligns well, establishing a cultural/performance space in a Village Center and supporting City economic development goals.
- NCA and NAH have secured additional help from the Junior League, which wants to use the house as a show house for its 2016 fundraiser.
- A full business plan is presented, created by working with SOAR55.
- Significant outside funding has been secured, and NCA has a plan for the remainder.
- NCA is planning to hire a private project manager for this phase of the work.
- The LWVN concerns in 2013 were the allocation of funds for an essentially private building. NCA is addressing this by applying for an historic restriction and with plans for extensive public access via performances and rentals.

LWVN reviewers did express the following concerns.

- The total CPA request (\$2 m) is large and may place limits upon other City opportunities.
- The strong team of partner organizations no longer includes the commitment of a tenant who will cover some portion of the ongoing expenses in the form of rent.



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- Given the size of the city's contribution to this project, LWVN would like the proponents to consider making space available for the community. For example, a future Area Council will need a place to meet, and this location would be ideal. Rental fees would need to be waived for such a purpose, however.
- In 2013, our reviewers worried about the adequacy of 26 parking spaces, given that the Allen House plan is for performances and other events, and suggested that NCA look into sharing spaces in nearby lots. This continues to be a concern today.

In evaluating all these points, LWVN recommends support of this application.

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### **Project: Crescent Street—Affordable Housing and Community Park (Site Assessment):**

This proposal falls within two categories of eligibility for use of CPA monies: Recreation Land and Community Housing. It also fits well into the City's Recreation and Open Place Plan Update--2013-2019. Sec. 1, Plan Summary. Additionally it is consistent with the Newton Comprehensive Plan, Sec. 7: Open Space and Recreation, Sec. 3: Land Use, and Sec. 5: Housing.

LWVN reviewers note the following:

- A strength of this proposal is that this is a joint, interdepartmental effort between three city departments: Planning, Public Buildings, and Parks and Recreation.
- Alex Varcarce and Josh Morse are to manage the project. Their competency is reassuring.
- Thinking forward to get site and environmental information before construction is the best professional process.
- There are three community contacts listed, two of them local residents who were very involved with the Robinhood Park proposal, and Beth Wilkinson of the Newton Conservators. There are no optional letters of support, but the three community contacts are likely representative of neighborhood and community interests.
- While the application is complete, thorough, well written and clear, LWVN readers were confused by p. 3, as it seems only to mention the market-rate housing, not the four units of affordable housing. Is this an oversight?

### **LWVN strongly recommends support of this proposal.**

Many thanks, again, for your time and effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Flicop".

Susan Flicop  
President, LWVN

From: Luigi Sepe [mailto:lsepe@comcast.net]  
Sent: Wednesday, November 02, 2016 7:46 PM  
To: Alice Ingerson  
Cc: rusharruda@verizon.net; aksansul@hotmail.com  
Subject: Crescent St. Housing and Park Expansion/New Playground

Hello Alice,

My name is Luigi Sepe and I live at 100 Crescent Street in Newton. I am not able to make the community meeting Thursday night, so, I wanted to show my support for the size of the project as now proposed, 8 units, and also for the idea of community access to the existing/new playground, from both Crescent Street and Auburn St.

Thanks to Shule and Elaine for being a part of the Working Group process and keeping us informed!

Thanks,  
Luigi Sepe

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject: Fw: Please attend upcoming meeting for funding of the Crescent St. Housing and Park Expansion/New Playground

Date: Tue, 1 Nov 2016 13:26:04 +0000

From: Shule A. Kapanci <aksansul@hotmail.com>

To: lsepe@comcast.net <lsepe@comcast.net>

Hi there,

This is Shule - your neighbor at 98 Crescent St. I wanted to pass along the below info from Elaine. This is the 70 Crescent project we've been working on for the past ~4 years now. As you would recall, the City was planning to build 20+ houses at the Parks & Rec lot and we managed to keep it at 8 units and have them do a park extension. We are at a stage where we are asking for funds from CPC (Community Preservation Committee). The first meeting is this Thursday at City Hall Rm 204. We are told that the committee approves more easily if they see neighborhood support. I'm wondering if one of you can spare a half an hour to show up. The meeting starts at 7pm, but most likely they won't get to us until 7:30. You don't have to do a thing other than show up and it would make a big difference. Let me know if you can make it.

Thanks!

Shule

p.s. Elaine sends out emails like this to those in the neighborhood list. If you want your name added, please let me know.

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From: Elaine Rush Arruda <rusharruda@verizon.net>

Sent: Monday, October 24, 2016 5:37 PM

From: David Grosser [mailto:david\_grosser@yahoo.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, December 20, 2016 10:17 PM  
To: Alice Ingerson  
Subject: Community Preservation Act Funds for the Expanded Auburndale Playground

Ms. Ingerson ,

I'm a long time Auburndale resident and I support the use of CPA funds for the proposed expanded playground. Auburndale needs this open space. Please do what you can to see that funding is allocated for this worthy project.

David Grosser  
12 Normandy Road  
Auburndale

From: David Grosser [mailto:david\_grosser@yahoo.com]  
Sent: Thursday, November 03, 2016 2:51 PM  
To: Alice Ingerson  
Subject: Community Preservation Funding for 70 Crescent Street

Ms. Ingerson,

I'm writing to encourage you to support Community Preservation Funding for the playground at 70 Crescent Street. This is the former Parks and Recreation site. My wife and I have lived in Auburndale for 25 years and we've raised two children here. We know the old play ground well. Expanding and reworking the playground will greatly enhance the community and provide some much needed open space.

Thanks for your consideration,

David Grosser  
12 Normandy Road  
Auburndale

-----Original Message-----

From: jordanquern@gmail.com [mailto:jordanquern@gmail.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, December 27, 2016 3:54 PM  
To: Alice Ingerson  
Subject: Re: Playground by curve st Louis ford park

-----Original Message-----

From: jordanquern@gmail.com [mailto:jordanquern@gmail.com]  
Sent: Wednesday, December 21, 2016 10:01 PM  
To: Alice Ingerson  
Subject: Playground by curve st Louis ford park

Hi I have attended a lot of the meeting at the city about the playground and land I want to make sure that the park stays simple and more land to move around and grounds stay flat no more tire track marks on the grass I have children ages 3 and under. I want the swings to stay the same and play area the same because I don't want it to high for safety reasons and lit up during evening time clean ground and green grass also fix the wall to the st by prospect and curve we are suppose to be in a garden city not a wall city you would never thing you were in the city of Newton if you drive down the street by prospect and curve st please let me know this is address for the meeting I will be attending the meeting jan 12 at the open meeting thank you

Kathy Jordan  
617-571-5443  
Sent from my iPhone



From: Leanne Torgersen [mailto:lhitzl@msn.com]  
Sent: Wednesday, December 21, 2016 8:07 PM  
To: Alice Ingerson  
Subject: Expanded playground on Crescent Street

Dear Ms. Ingerson,

As a resident of Crescent Street and mother of two young children, I am writing in support of the project to expand the playground on Crescent Street (along with the 8 townhome housig project). Since living in this area for almost 2 years, I see how pertinent it is for the local children to have an adequate playground that is easily accessible. With the further developing in the area, this playground becomes of even more importance for children to play, families to meet and for those in the area to come together and be a community. It is the combination of the easily accessible parks, open space and schools that attracts people to Newton and if this core foundation is not nurtured, developed or maintained, it just becomes another overcrowded area with no community feeling. This causes Newton to lose its charm and what this beautiful town represents.

Please help support us in creating a magnificent playground for the children in the area to utilize.

I thank you for your time and support.

Sincerely,  
Leanne Torgersen  
Crescent Street Resident

*CPC staff note: this email was sent in 36-pt type,  
but has been resized in 24-pt type here.*

**From:** Renate Yasigian [mailto:ryasigian@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 22, 2016 10:29 AM  
**To:** Alice Ingerson  
**Subject:** dear Mrs. Ingerson

My name is Renate Yasigian and I would be so happy if we get the funding for the housing, where we could get an apartment for low cost housing! I am 83 years old, have lived in Newton since 1973, but can not afford my house, where i astill live ,anymore. I need help! i have applied for low cost housing in newton, but it will take a long time, and i hope to be still alive when it comes through. my adress is 2 Thaxter rd. in newtonville and my tel: 617 620 3690 I would be so greatfull to hear from you Thank you for any help you can give me kind regards Renate Yasigian

TO: CPC  
From: Kathy Laufer, 26 Mosman Street  
RE: Crescent Street  
Date: 12/22/16

As I will be unable to attend your meeting on 1/12/17, I would like to submit a few comments concerning the “off-cycle proposal requesting \$316,555 in CPA funds for the feasibility and design phases of the Crescent Street affordable housing & community park project (West Newton/Auburndale).”

I am struck by your committee’s memo [*CPC staff correction: minutes*] of 3/17/16 where you raised the issue of CPA funds being used for market rate housing. As I read the City’s proposal and believe that the market rate units would help subsidize the affordable ones. Any request for funds should take into consideration that there would be no clear way to distinguish costs for the affordable units vs. the market rate one for the feasibility and design phase. A private developer would have to absorb these costs and I question why the city can’t be held to the same expectation. The city did receive other proposals to develop this property for totally affordable housing yet chose to develop with city funds which now turn out to be CPA funds primarily.

I believe that the committee needs to see how well the city complied with the 4 “recommendations” made in the March memo [*minutes*] before considering any further request.

I am a strong supporter of CPA funds being used for affordable housing and if Crescent Street was to be 100% affordable I would not be writing this memo.

Please be careful with our tax payer’s funds when assessing this request.

Thank you.

**From:** Brian Mac Mahon [mailto:brieug1@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 22, 2016 8:24 AM  
**To:** Alice Ingerson  
**Subject:** Crescent St Playground

Hi, I'm Brian MacMahon and I live at 120 Crescent St in Auburndale. I believe an expanded playground and an overhaul of the existing property belonging to the Department of Recreation will be a huge improvement for our neighborhood. I have two sons, aged 5 and 2 that will get a lot of fun use out of a new park.

Regards,

Brian MacMahon  
617-378-1219

From: Jacquelyn Perna [mailto:jacquelynperna@hotmail.com]  
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2017 9:19 PM  
To: Alice Ingerson  
Subject: Support for Crescent St. Public Hearing Jan. 19

I am writing to support the Crescent St project. The park will be a great addition to Newton as well as the Auburndale community. The only green space within walking distance in the neighborhood- is small, not accessible and in need of repair. I fully support the plan to expand the Reverend Ford playground, adding at least 20,000 square feet of open space and more access points in order to open the entire site to the community. The CPC funding will complete the design phase of the project and make the project that much closer to becoming a resource for all Newton residents

Jacquelyn Perna  
18 Fessenden street  
Newton MA 02460



## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS NEWTON

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January 2, 2017

rec'd by CPC staff via email  
at 10 pm, 17 January 2017

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Alice Ingerson  
Community Preservation Committee Program Manager  
Newton City Hall  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459

RE: CPC Proposal on Crescent Street – Affordable Housing & Community Park:  
Final Design

Dear Alice:

The League of Women Voters of Newton (LWVN) has evaluated the proposal by the City of Newton for a master plan/feasibility study and design of the park and the housing on Crescent Street. We find it is well-written, clear, and complete, and the plan fits well into the City's Recreation and Open Space Plan Update (2013-2019).

Our questions about the proposal, and the project in general are as follows:

- The City has not undertaken a project of this type before. This raises several questions:
  - Has the city looked for outside sources of funding for the construction phase?
  - Should the City consider partnering with a non-profit developer for the project to add needed expertise?
  - Would a private non-profit developer be able to leverage outside funding for construction?
  - How will the city insulate itself from the risk of higher vacancy rates?
- Have the proponents considered studio apartments or micro-apartments in this location? This would mean smaller per-unit square footage and more units (perhaps 10 or 12) in the same footprint.
- Will the study include the feasibility of traffic-mitigating measures such as the off-road walking path to West Newton, car share, bike storage, and separate charges for parking and housing?



## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS NEWTON

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617-383-4598 Email: [info@lwvnewton.org](mailto:info@lwvnewton.org)

LWVN recognizes the strong need for alternative and affordable housing in Newton, and we truly want to support this proposal to add badly needed housing. Our concerns outlined above—in particular, the go-it-alone approach by the City—leads us to ask you to address these questions.

Thanks to members of the Community Preservation Committee and of the City's Building Department for their efforts on this project so far.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Flicop". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

Sue Flicop  
LWVN Vice-President

From: Christopher Ludwig [mailto:cludwigster@gmail.com]  
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 10:14 AM  
To: Alice Ingerson  
Cc: Iesa Figueroa; Elaine Rush Arruda  
Subject: Support for Crescent Street Proposal

To the Community Preservation Committee:

I am writing in full support of the Crescent Street Proposal that will be considered by the CPC Meeting tonight (Jan 19th) as I will not be able to attend the meeting in person.

As Auburndale is one of the most densely populated areas of Newton, I completely welcome the expanded/improved park with its open space available for recreation.

Additionally, the designated affordable housing units are also a response to the ever growing need for affordable housing in the Metro West suburban region.

For these two reasons, I recommend that the CPC approve the CPA funding for the Crescent Street Proposal.

All the best.

Chris Ludwig  
7 Weir Street  
Auburndale



Comments read at CPC public hearing, 19 January 2017

## Crescent Street Affordable Housing and Community Park CPA request - 1/1917 Public Hearing

To the Community Preservation Committee:

My hopes for this land were that it could all be turned into a public park, to offset the loss of open space which was occurring and which has continued to this day as houses are sold, torn down, and replaced by townhouses which maximize footprints and eliminate backyards.

I had envisioned space to plant large maturing trees and create a path connecting Comm Ave and Robinhood Street to Church Street and Washington Street, that in 50 or 100 years would feel as established a green oasis (though on a smaller scale) as Farlow Park in Newton Corner, and be as well appreciated. I envisioned space for a small playing field for young kids, and a perhaps a community garden for the north side.

I was very distressed that a majority of the Real Property Reuse Committee, or as I think of them, the Real Property Development Committee, was hell-bent on building as many housing units as possible, perhaps more than 20.

Therefore I'm very grateful to Councilor Gentile for coming up with this alternative proposal. Without his presence on Real Property Reuse, this land might have become another example of public property sold for private profit. I'm also encouraged to hear that the Owner's Project Manager who was recently approved, I understand unanimously, by the Crescent Street Working Group, wants to maximize the size of the public park, while adding eight units of housing, at least half affordable. I hope this selection of OPM will be confirmed.

Maximizing the amount of *usable* public space is one of my two main concerns, because of the history of this process.

Despite airy proclamations at Real Property Reuse that 'we can double the size of the park and add affordable housing' there was reluctance initially to set aside any guaranteed amount of additional land for the park. The current size of the Reverend Ford Playground parcel is about 37,000 sq ft. It was only due to the efforts of the neighbors, and insistence of Councilor Gentile, that the board order says a minimum of 20,000 sq ft (of the 62,000 sq ft being surplussed) is guaranteed to be added to the park. I hope this is *only a minimum*, and that you will ensure not only that this minimum is met, but that it is actual passive or active recreational and green space, not paved parking areas. And that it feels like public space, i.e., that green space around the housing units that is effectively their yard, does not count toward the 20,000 minimum.

I also note that the trapezoidal area outlined in blue dashes on the site map in the attachments for the proposal, which is annotated as "approximate addition to park," is only about 9,700 sq ft, as best I can estimate from the marked dimensions. Thus, the additional park space should really be more than twice that size.

My second, longer term concern, is that the CPC have on its radar, the potential surplussing and sale by Eversource of its parcels at 59 Auburn Street, adjacent to Reverend Ford Playground. As noted in the attachment, when Councilor Cote approached Eversource in early 2015 to inquire about the possibility of a land swap (to put the substation closer to the Turnpike wall), the Eversource contact told him they expected to shut down that substation in about four years and offer the property to the city. In the meantime they were will willing to allow public access to the playground over their property if the city built a fenced path. This will, when it happens, provide another access to the playground, which is currently only accessible via the Myrtle Baptist Church driveway. I'm happy to hear that arrangements are finally underway to open this path this spring, 2017.

I understand it's now uncertain what Eversource's plans and timetable are for their property, but I hope that the city is making every effort to stay informed, and will make every effort to acquire this land for what could make a really wonderful expanded park. I hope the CPC will corresponding include this land, and best guess of acquisition cost, in your list of potential future acquisitions.

Thank you.

Julia Malakie  
50 Murray Road  
West Newton

### What will be future of Eversource property at 59 Auburn Street?



Recent townhouse developments on Auburn St (above), and construction in process January 2017 near intersection of Washington Street (below)



59 Auburn St entrance to Eversource substation (above). White top of current play structure visible to right of utility pole.





Assessors Database (FY17)

Lot	Sq Ft	Assessed Value
59 Auburn St	17,443	\$503,800
0 Pike St (left)	11,570	\$325,200
0 Pike St (center)	not listed	
0 Pike St (right)	11,045	\$294,200

Total: at least 40,058

In early 2015, Jim Cote asked Eversource about future plans for property, wondering if a land swap was possible. Eversource contact told him that Eversource expected to be decommissioning the substation in four years and planned to offer land for sale to city. In the meantime they were willing to let city create public access path to Rev. Ford Playground across their property. (Currently only access is via driveway of Myrtle Baptist Church.)

As of January 2017, I do not know Eversource plans and timing, but I am told arrangements for path access are being finalized with the city, and path will be available in Spring 2017.

Julia Malakie  
1/19/17