

Harvey Epstein
Cell: 617.894.1565
Fax: 617.552-5507
hepstein@newtonhousing.org

Date: January 30, 2009
To: Katherine Roth
Subject: Robert Kuehn Community Preservation Award Submission
CPC Project: 76 Webster Park – Newton, MA - Open Space, Community Housing, and Historic Preservation

Dear Katherine,

The Newton Housing Authority and the Newton Conservators have collaborated on the submission of Newton's "76 Webster Park" CPA Project for the Robert Kuehn Community Preservation Award. This project was considered one of the most successful projects since the inception of the CPA in Newton. The project involved the acquisition of the 1.15 acre property at 76 Webster Park, West Newton, MA 02465 from the estate of Irene Forte', a beloved former violin teacher in Newton who passed away in 2003 at the age of 104. Irene had lived in the house on the property, a Craftsman / Colonial Revival since it was built by her father in 1925. She was very much an advocate of open space and housing issues in directing her nephew to first offer the property to the Newton Conservators at a price lower than some of the valuations and despite developer interest. A map link to the property is at:

http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&source=s_q&hl=en&geocode=&q=76+Webster+Park,+Newton,+MA+02465&sl=37.0625,-95.677068&sspn=42.766543,67.236328&ie=UTF8&z=16&iwloc=addr.

This hybrid project primarily served the elements of Community Housing and Open Space Preservation. However, there was also an element of historic preservation in that the 1925 house was restored under the guidance of the Historic Commission, utilizing leveraged funds. (10% Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance funds). If not for the CPA funding, this parcel would have been lost to the private development of perhaps eight market-rate condominiums with the demolition of the existing house and loss of important open space habitat. The acquired parcel was divided as follows: Approximately 2/3 open space/conservation land, approximately 1/6 utilization by the Newton Housing Authority for affordable family rental housing under the Section 8 program in the existing house on the property which was fully restored, and approximately 1/6 of the property utilized by Habitat for Humanity - Greater Boston to construct a new, duplex home to house two families (first-time homebuyers).


The Newton Housing Authority's (NHA's) portion of this project addressed the Community Housing Component of the Community Preservation Act. Currently, the City of Newton falls far short under the state mandate MGL Chapter 40B to achieve 10% affordable housing stock in Newton. As Newton is considered an affluent community, it is a continuous challenge to acquire additional housing units due to the high market prices of real estate in Newton, even in this economy. The NHA's current wait list has over 200 families on it and is growing. The parcel was further bifurcated and granted by the Newton Housing Authority to Habitat for Humanity - Greater Boston so that they could construct a new duplex home for two income eligible families. This was the first Habitat project in Newton and would assist Habitat in opening up the Metro West area of Boston to their program for first time, income eligible homebuyers.

This parcel of land directly abuts the Dolan Pond Conservation Area (www.newtonconservators.org/4dolan.htm) and is located next to its main entrance. Dolan Pond is considered one of the jewels of open space in Newton and is home to certain plant varieties found nowhere else in the city as well as providing habitat to many species of birds and wildlife. Any private development would have had great impact on Dolan Pond. The 76 Webster Park open space acquisition added 10% land area to the conservation area and is also a favorite local birding destination with over 130 species reported and even nesting wood ducks in its four vernal pools. The Newton Conservators have offered bird walks on the site over the years.

This project, although incredibly complex, was in its finality, an extraordinarily beneficial project to the City of Newton in the creation and preservation of open space in perpetuity, and to the three, income eligible families who found new homes here, and to the memory of Irene Forte' who envisioned this use of her property after she was gone. The project has been embraced by the neighbors and is a great example of community preservation. This project was the culmination of nearly three years of combined effort of the Newton Housing Authority (www.newtonhousingauthority.org), Habitat for Humanity – Greater Boston (www.habitatboston.org), the Newton Conservators (www.newtonconservators.org), and the Newton Conservation Commission (www.ci.newton.ma.us/Planning/cityplcc.htm). We are extremely proud of this project and feel this is a story which should be told.

Respectfully submitted .

The Newton Housing Authority



Irene Forte' appreciated the home that her father had built in 1925 on the wonderful tree covered 1.15 acre parcel at 76 Webster Park in West Newton near what was then Dolan Farm. The beloved violin teacher and former head of the All Newton Music School lived there until she passed away at the age of 104 in 2003. Some years before, the springtime call of a Scarlet Tanager had led a birder (who was also member of the local open space organization – the Newton Conservators) to knock on her door to ask permission to observe the bird in her big backyard. Thus began a friendship that led eventually to her asking if the City might be interested in her property and helping to preserve its natural state that she so much enjoyed from her back porch. Without Community Preservation funding, the property, which had been listed as a potential acquisition on the City's Open Space Plan, would likely have been acquired by a developer, the house demolished, the woods destroyed, and perhaps eight condo units built. While housing and open space interests are often at odds, in this case, it led to a CPA proposal from the Newton Conservators (with the Newton Conservation Commission), and the Newton Housing Authority (NHA) to acquire the property from the Forte' estate with CPA funds (\$1.1M), with the cooperation of her heirs who agreed to keep the property off the market despite a number of higher valuations (as high as \$1.5M), as long as the process was expedient. The proposal was the first in Newton to encompass open space, community housing, and historic preservation within a single project. The project was found by the Community Preservation Committee to be consistent with many of the Community Preservation Plan's "Overarching Goals" as well as the majority of its open space and community housing goals. The proposal was submitted in May 2003, a few months after Irene's passing, was approved over the summer and the property purchased in the fall of that year. Subsequent to purchase, the property was subdivided via special permit into three portions – open space, NHA family rental housing, and land for a Habitat for Humanity duplex.

Open Space: Two-thirds of the parcel was designated to remain open space, increasing by 10% the land area of the directly adjacent Dolan Pond Conservation Area, a small jewel of biodiversity with its red maple swamp, vegetated wetlands and four vernal pools, originally acquired by the city in 1979. The open space portion of the property included an extensive amount of forested uplands, greatly expanded animal habitat, linked Dolan Pond with the cul-de-sac called Webster Park green space, and contained scenic views into the rest of the conservation area, adding to its open space value. Just prior to the CPA proposal, a CDBG grant (\$200,000) added accessible pathways, a boardwalk, benches, kiosks, and overlooks to Dolan Pond Conservation Area, a popular birding area in Newton (with over 130 species reported) - the Forte' addition remains a prime area for warblers. A conservation restriction on the new parcel, which abuts the Conservation Area's main entrance and handicapped parking, was approved by the state and is held by the Newton Conservators. A new trail with natural benches has been proposed for the newly acquired area as a scout service project. The new area lends itself to passive recreation such as walking or nature observation.

Community Housing: The remaining one-third of the property was designated for three units of community housing, one lot containing the original Forte' homestead, as rental family housing administered by the NHA, and a second lot containing a two unit duplex being built by Habitat for Humanity - Greater Boston. All three units were restricted to households with incomes at 80% or less of the area median and are bound by a permanent deed restriction. Irene Forte's house was fully restored to its former glory using \$185,000 from the 10% Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance Funds and has been rented to a deserving family over the past several years. With over 200 families on the waiting list, the CPA has helped tremendously in working toward the City's goal of 10% affordable housing stock under MGL Chapter 40B. Habitat for Humanity - Greater Boston was grateful to be included in the housing portion of the project and their participation has been a wonderful boon to the project's success, with some of the neighbors even volunteering in the build process. Habitat is constructing a LEED certified duplex (two units), each unit approximately 1250 sq. ft. with three bedrooms, stylistically very similar to the original Forte' house in siding, rooflines, porch, and window style. The volunteer architect designed home is serving as a model for other Habitat projects. The two new Habitat families each put in over 300 hours of work themselves. To date, since the official groundbreaking in September, 2007, there have been over 1500 volunteers (from over 100 schools, churches, businesses, and civic groups) participating in build days, with over \$400,000 being raised in monetary or in-kind donations of material and labor toward expected completion and dedication of the project in Spring 2009.

Historic Preservation: Although the CPA funds only funded the housing and open space components of the project, the project had the collateral benefit of preservation of the existing house on the property, a Craftsman / Colonial Revival style house which was constructed in 1925. It sits on the largest lot within the Webster Park National Register Historic District, one of the earliest residential subdivisions in Newton, noted particularly for a nearby collection of 1844 Gothic Revival cottages with distinctive dual gables and a circa 1870 French Empire Victorian next door. The project was approved by the Newton Historical Commission and strongly endorsed by the Newton Historical Society for its preservation of a house which fits in well in scale with the historic nature of the district.

The CPA project was strongly supported by the City of Newton, its Board of Aldermen (who passed it unanimously), and its citizens who originally voted for the CPA, recognizing that this opportunity would have most likely been lost had CPA funding not been available. By way of introducing the CPA concept to other states, 76 Webster Park was the highlight of a bus tour of a number of Newton CPA projects taken by a group of state legislators convening at a national conference in Boston in 2007. The project has become a source of great pride in the community. This spring, the local Webster Park neighbors are planning a block party at the 76 Webster Park site to welcome their new neighbors and just maybe a Scarlet Tanager will be providing some of the music once again.

76 Webster Park

Newton, MA

CPA Project



76 Webster Park

Newton, MA

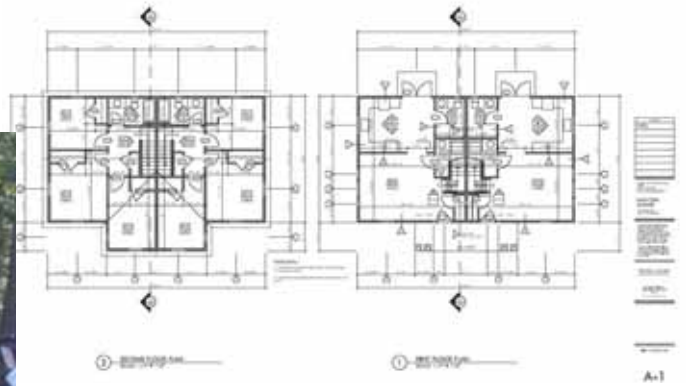
CPA Project



76 Webster Park

Newton, MA

CPA Project



76 Webster Park

Newton, MA
CPA Project



76 Webster Park

Newton, MA
CPA Project



Cost Breakdown

Community Preservation Act Funds:		\$1,110,000
Property Transaction	\$1,100,000	
Housing	\$ 991,010	
Open Space	\$ 118,990	
Appraisal Costs	\$ 10,000	
Newton Housing Authority Funds:		\$ 181,322
Habitat for Humanity - Greater Boston Funds:		\$ 400,000
<hr/>		
TOTAL	\$1,691,322	

The cost breakdown of the project is fairly simple. The CPA funds (\$1.11M) were used to acquire the property from the estate of Irene Forte'. Of this \$1.1M was for the property itself and there was another \$10,000 allocated to appraisal fees. The property was actually transferred to from the estate temporarily to the Newton Conservators who held it until the property could be subdivided into three lots (1 open space, 1 NHA rental housing unit, 1 Habitat 2 unit duplex) via special permit approved by the Newton Board of Aldermen.

The Newton Housing Authority spent \$181,322 in funds derived from the 10% Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance Funds for the restoration of the original Forte' house, an approximately 1700 sq. ft. Craftsman / Colonial dwelling built in 1925.

Habitat for Humanity received the land on their lot for \$10 and has since received approximately \$400,000 in contributions of both money, in-kind material donations, and specialized labor (plumbing, electrical) toward the completion of the house. This does not count the free labor of the over 1500 volunteers who have worked on the project.

The NHA, Newton Conservators, and Habitat for Humanity all had pro-bono attorneys who spent many hours on the complex legal agreements that conveyed the land with the appropriate covenants to insure that the open space was protected by a conservation restriction and that the community housing would be affordable in perpetuity.

Testimonials

for

76 Webster Park

CPA Project

Newton, MA



January 30, 2009

Harvey Epstein, Special Projects Coordinator
Newton Housing Authority
82 Lincoln Street
Newton Highlands, MA 02461

Re: Testimonial In Support of Nomination of 76 Webster Park CPA Project
For Robert Kuehn Community Preservation Award

Dear Mr. Epstein:

I am pleased to submit this testimonial in support of the nomination of the 76 Webster Park CPA Project for the Robert Kuehn Community Preservation Award, sponsored by the Community Preservation Coalition.

In my view, this project best exemplifies the purposes for which the Community Preservation Act was enacted, by combining the protection of open space adjacent to the environmentally sensitive Dolan Pond Conservation Area, preservation of a historic resource that includes the Forte homestead, which is part of the Webster Park National Historic Register District, and the creation of three units of community housing that include a family rental unit administered by the Newton Housing authority and two additional family housing units being constructed by Habitat for Humanity of Greater Boston. In approving this project, which was the first CPA project in Newton to embrace all three purposes of the Act, the Community Preservation Committee found that it was consistent with its overarching goals as well as the City's open space and community housing goals. In addition, this project enjoyed strong and broad support from the Board of Aldermen, which approved the project funding as well as a necessary special permit, the Newton Conservators, the Newton Conservation Commission, the Newton Housing Authority, the neighborhood, the Forte family, and Newton's citizens, who adopted the CPA in 2002. Finally, this project leveraged the use of CPA funds very effectively with funds collected under Newton's inclusionary zoning ordinance, donations raised by local organizations and communities of faith, and the "sweat equity" of its future inhabitants.

I am particularly pleased and proud that this project is located in my ward, where it will provide affordable housing to three families, preserve a house that has both history and charm, and will forever protect and preserve a home for the flora and fauna that depend upon the Dolan Pond Conservation Area. Moreover, the 76 Webster Park CPA Project is the realization of the dream of Irene Forte, who lived much of her life in the house her father built in 1925, until she passed away in 2003 at the age of 104. Ms. Forte, a longtime Newton resident, beloved violin teacher, and former head of the All Newton Music School, wanted to protect and preserve the property in its natural state so that future generations could enjoy it as much as she had done for so many years. Were it not for this CPA project, this unique property likely would have been sold to developers who would have demolished the house and erected townhouses that would have been well beyond the means of moderate income families.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Ted Hess-Mahan
Alderman-at-Large, Ward 3

January 30, 2009

Dear Community Preservation Alliance,

This letter is in support of The Newton Housing Authority's nomination of the 76 Webster Park CPA Project for the annual Robert Kuehn Community Preservation Award sponsored by the Community Preservation Coalition.

The 76 Webster Park CPA Project is a prime example of how our communities can transform and yet preserve a historical home and its land into a positive establishment to serve the entire community. The project embodies the characteristics that the Community Preservation Commission recognizes as fundamental goals of their vision. The City of Newton's Open Space Plan, the Newton Conservation Commission, and the Newton Housing Authority all played major roles in this project. These outlets have allowed for the open land to be conserved and utilized for various purposes that contribute to the well-being of Newton and its inhabitants.

They also advocated for the historical preservation of the 1925 home of Irene Forte, which was approved by the Newton Historic Commission and strongly endorsed by the Newton Historical Society. The Newton Housing Authority oversaw the renovation of the original Forte homestead and expedited the construction of a second two unit duplex which generated affordable housing for many waitlisted families. This project utilized grants, coordinated with non-profit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, which utilized monetary/ in-kind donations and various funds. The strong unanimous support of the Newton Board of Alderman and the citizens who voted in the CPA helped bring all of these pieces together to create a sanctuary that the City of Newton can take great pride in.

Sincerely,

Kay Khan
State Representative
11th Middlesex District

Ruth Balsler
State Representative
11th Middlesex District



*Building
houses,
building
hope*

January 30, 2009

To the Community Preservation Coalition:

I am writing in support of the Newton Public Housing Authority's submission of the project known as "76 Webster Park" for the Robert Kuehn Community Preservation Award. As one of the partners in that project, we feel it is a perfect project to exemplify the spirit of Bob Kuehn's legacy.

The Newton Conservators conveyed a portion of Irene Forte's property to Humanity Greater Boston for the construction of two Habitat homes in the fall of 2007. Habitat selected two families with incomes below 60 % of area median income (as established by HUD) to work side-by-side with volunteers to construct the homes. It is a rare opportunity indeed for a family making less than 60% of AMI to have a chance to purchase a home, particularly one adjacent to a nature preserve in one of Boston's most affluent suburbs with a superb public school system. Habitat's model of providing financing at 0% interest allows us to do this, lifting two families out of generational cycles of poverty.

The Newton community rallied around the project, and their investment in the project has meant the world to the two homebuyer families. Since commencing construction in September 2007, more than 1,500 people have volunteered at the site and over \$400,000 in funds and in-kind donations have been raised in the community. Build groups came together from local churches, synagogues, and businesses to help us at every stage of construction. Local contractors showed their support in kind: two Newton contractors, M. DeRubeis Electric Inc. and the Maguire Company, Inc. (plumbing) donated all of the labor for installation of the wiring and plumbing, and Harvey Industries donated half of the windows.

Perhaps the most ringing endorsement of the project can come from one of the people who will benefit the most directly from it. "Most of all, we're looking forward to a place we can call our own." Scott says. Scott spends a few Saturdays a month building the house to complete his sweat equity requirement, which Habitat will accept as his down payment on the house. "I love the build days. Starting out, I had no handyman sense at all. Now I can really say I built my family a house."

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lark Jurev Palermo".

Lark Jurev Palermo
President & CEO

January 30, 2009

To The Community Preservation Coalition

Re: Nomination of 76 Webster Park CPA Project, Newton MA
For the Robert Kuehn Community Preservation Award

As a citizen of Newton, an avid birder who values preservation of open space, and a community volunteer committed to expanding affordable housing opportunities in our City, I strongly support the nomination of the 76 Webster Park CPA Project for the Robert Kuehn Community Preservation Award.

This project meets virtually all of the criteria set out for award recipients, but there are two that stand out in my mind. The first is that this project serves two CPA purposes: it protects open space and increases the size of the Dolan Pond conservation area, and it expands the stock of affordable housing in our community through the addition of 3 units. In addition, it helps to preserve the historic character of one of Newton's earliest residential subdivisions.

The second criteria is that this project targets an underserved segment of the population by providing safe, affordable housing to families who would otherwise struggle to afford to live in Newton. In addition, by involving Habitat for Humanity in this project, two of these families will now achieve the status of home ownership, which has numerous benefits not just for themselves and their six children, but for our community. Research conducted by the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University has shown that when families become homeowners, their children enjoy the following advantages:

- 23% improvement in cognitive stimulation
- 17% improvement in reading scores
- 9% improvement in math scores
- Lower dropout rates in school
- Less change of having a baby before age 18
- Lower incidence of respiratory problems
- More likely to become homeowners themselves.

Just as this project has strengthened the capacity of these two families, so too has it strengthened our community as a whole. Thus, the 76 Webster Park CPA project has created a win-win situation for our City and for the specific beneficiaries of this project.

I am proud to live in a City that can leverage such broad community support to bring a project such as 76 Webster Park to fruition.

Sincerely,



Margaret A. Sagan
116 Devonshire Road
Waban, MA 02468

January 30, 2009

In our many years in Newton we have gone from the youngest couple in the neighborhood to the oldest. As frequent visitors to Dolan Pond, we enjoy the experience there as do other adult visitors and school groups observing the wetland and its inhabitants. Habitat for Humanities has had our support of affordable housing elsewhere. It is a pleasure to witness all of the support in Newton. More diversity in Newton means increasing community strength.

Frank & Deb Howard
34 Fairfax Street
West Newton, MA 02465-2607
Telephone 617 7995 1504
Fax 617 527 1032
dandfhoward@rcn.com

January 30, 2009

I must admit that I was not intimately involved with the project when it was happening. However, I know that the Dolan Pond project has been cited repeatedly as the poster child for a successful CPC project, having all the elements that the CPA was intending to promote - Open Space, Community Housing and Historic preservation -- as well as the strong community support, dedication and benefit. It is a model for what community preservation is all about. I don't know enough about the program to know whether it produces the best cost/benefit value or whether other public and private funds have been leveraged, but the community has clearly demonstrated its support for this project, and in following the city's Open Space plan, this project has saved a valuable natural resource, provided for an underserved population (with housing) and shown itself to fit with the city's plans for community preservation.

I don't know if there is anything that I've said that could be helpful in this bid for this award, but from what I read about this award, this project certainly seems well deserving.

Good luck!
Greer Tan Swiston
Alderman-at-Large, Ward 3
gswiston@comcast.net

Testimonials from Original CPA Proposal

MAY 12, 2003

PLEASE ADD MY NAME IN SUPPORT OF USING FORTE ESTATE FOR HOUSING. AS A QUADRAPLEGIC THERE IS A GREAT SHORTAGE OF LOW-INCOME HOUSING. NEWTON MUST INCLUDE THESE PEOPLE IN ITS HOUSING PLANS. ROSEMARY LARKING, 31 EDWARD RD. NEWTON, MA 2465

15 Bullough Park
Newton, MA 02460
(617 969-7764)

May 12, 2003

Open Space Committee
Newton Conservators
c/o Ted Kuklinski
24 Henshaw Terrace
West Newton, MA 02465

Dear Ted Kuklinski:

I'd like to record my vote for allowing the Newton Conservators to acquire the property which belonged to Irene Forte at 76 Webster Park. As a member both of the Conservators and of the NCDF (Adv. Bd.) I know how desperately Newton needs more housing which is affordable. The Conservators' proposal to add part of Irene Forte's property to the Dolan Park Conservation Area and to use the house with an addition for affordable housing seems to me a very workable and fruitful one.

Best wishes,

Fiora Houghteling

May 14, 2003

Thank you so much for your efforts to acquire the Forte property for open space and for housing. It is a perfect project for the Community Preservation Committee and I am completely in support of your efforts.

Ms. Elizabeth B. Gerlach
101 Manchester Rd.
Newton Highlands 02461
Tel: 617-969-6384

May 13, 2003

I wish to support the plan to subdivide Irene Forte's property at 76 Webster Park into two parts--an open space and a housing portion. I especially approve making 70 % of this lot an adjunct to the existing Dolan Pond Conservation area.

Sincerely,
Judith B. Schaefer
155 Webster Street

Judy Mannix, M.D.
430 Winchester St
Newton, MA 02461
e-mail: jkoot@rcn.com

5/13/03
Open Space Committee
Newton Conservators
c/o Ted Kuklinski
24 Henshaw Terrace
West Newton, MA 02465

To the members of the Open Space Committee:

I am writing to support the acquisition of the Forte Estate. The benefits of adding to the very well cared for Dolan Pond Conservation area when we have the rare opportunity of an available adjacent land parcel are obvious.

The need for more affordable housing should be obvious as well. When Avalon Bay was proposed the very large apartment complex on Needham Street, many residents and even professionals in the Newton Planning Department felt that no one would want to live there. It is rapidly filling. Its affordable housing units have had over 2000 applications. There is a clear, persistent need and the 3 units proposed on the non-open space area of the Forte estate would be of great benefit to Newton.

Thank you for considering this acquisition.

Sincerely,

Judy Mannix

May 13, 2003

To whom it may concern:

Having been made aware of the proposal worked out by the Newton Conservators, I would like to express my strong support for it. It seems to me that this is a project that would benefit all three categories, open space, historic preservation, and affordable housing, of community betterment that the CPA law was meant to encourage. I urge the committee to approve this proposal.

Françoise LaMonica

944 Centre Street
Newton, MA 02459
617-964-1375

To whom it may concern:

I write in strong support of the proposal by the Newton Conservators, the Newton Conservation Commission, and the Newton Housing Authority to purchase 76 Webster Park through the auspices of the Community Preservation Committee. Their proposal serves the dual purpose of increasing critical habitat resources at Dolan Pond and providing affordable housing at a neighborhood scale. It is a sensible response to the remarkable opportunity offered by the Forte estate and an appropriate use of CPA funds for the good of our whole community.

Specifically, the proposal:

- recognizes the importance of this habitat corridor and that adding any amount of acreage adjacent to it further contributes to the ecological health of city and region;
- provides affordable housing that encourages a diversity of residents which in turn keeps Newton vibrant;
- keeps that housing at the texture and scale of the surrounding neighborhood, a welcome relief from the monster developments and housing that have destroyed the visual character and undermined the community spirit in far too much of our city; and
- makes excellent use of CPA funds and is exactly the kind of community initiative that led me to vote positively for the CPA.

Sincerely,

Anne Simunovic

310 Lowell Avenue
Newtonville, MA 02460
(617) 527-7993

May 13, 2003

Open Space Committee
Newton Conservators
c/o Ted Kuklinski
24 Henshaw Terrace
West Newton, MA 02465

Dear Mr. Kuklinski,

We fully support the proposal of the Newton Conservators for the use of the Forte land. It's multiple use at its best.

Sincerely,

Richard and Marjory Blacher
50 Plainfield Street
Waban, MA 02468

May 13, 2003

Open Space Committee
Newton Conservators
c/o Ted Kuklinski
24 Henshaw Terrace
West Newton, MA 02465

Dear Sirs,

I have just learned of the possibility that the property of the Forte Estate in Newton may be made available as open space together with a portion dedicated to affordable housing. In view of the great need in Newton both for open space preservation and for community housing at reasonable cost, I would like to register my support for the proposal being put forth by the Newton Conservators and others for the acquisition of this property.

As a Trustee Emeritus and former President of the Board of the All Newton Music School, I am very much aware of Ms. Forte's generosity to our school and her interest in the betterment of the City of Newton. It appears that the community is presented with the means of carrying out her desire to preserve her lot as open space for the benefit of all, and I urge the members of the Community Preservation Committee to look favorably on this proposal.

Sincerely yours,

Modestino G. Criscitiello, M.D.
2 Raeburn Terrace
Newton Highlands 02461

May 13, 2003

Open Space Committee
Newton Conservators
c/o Ted Kuklinski
24 Henshaw Terrace
West Newton, MA 02465

Dear Mr. Kuklinski,

I want to express my support for your proposal to the CPC regarding the Forte property on Webster Park. I am a frequent walker through Dolan Pond, and I think the opportunity to add to this precious and fascinating wetland park is one that the city must not miss. Also, preserving the existing Forte house and adding just two units for affordable housing is certainly more in keeping with the feel of Webster Park and the other streets surrounding Dolan Pond than the larger unit that a commercial developer will certainly construct. What Dolan Pond does NOT need is a large set of townhouses right on its edge.

Thank you for all your work preserving and improving this little treasure we have tucked away in West Newton.


Sincerely yours,

Carolyn Haynes

21 King St.
Auburndale MA 02466
617-527-0170



NEWTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

 at The Jackson Homestead

*Headquartered at
The Newton
History Museum*

Newton Conservators, Inc.
Ted Kuklinski
P.O. Box 590011
Newton Centre, MA 02459

May 14, 2003

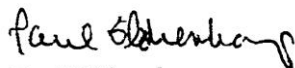
Community Preservation Committee,

The Newton Historical Society and the Trustees of The Jackson Homestead support historic preservation efforts in the City of Newton and provide this letter in support of the application of the Newton Conservators, the Newton Housing Authority, and the Newton Conservation Committee to preserve the historic property at 76 Webster Park in West Newton and to create open space and affordable housing at the site. The proposal, as stated in their application of May 14, maintains the historic character of the property by fully refurbishing and improving the existing single family house and building two smaller additional attached units, with minimal footprint, that are compatible in style with the existing house.

Newton's historic properties are an asset to our community and the house at 76 Webster Park, currently known as the estate of Irene Forte, is a property worthy of preservation. Built in 1925, the house is part of the Webster Park National Register Historic District and is a piece of the neighborhood's historic character. Its preservation is very important. National Register designation was bestowed on the neighborhood because it is one of the most intact examples of an early residential subdivision built after the opening of the Boston & Worcester Railroad in 1834.

The Newton Historical Society and the Trustees of the Jackson Homestead encourage the Community Preservation Committee to fund this worthwhile project.

For the Board of Directors of the Newton Historical Society and the Trustees of the Jackson Homestead,



Paul Eldrenkamp
President, The Newton Historical Society



David B. Cohen
Mayor

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Department of Planning and Development
Michael J. Kruse, Director

Telephone
(617)-796-1120
Telefax
(617) 796-1140

May 7, 2003

Ted Kuklinski
Newton Conservators
24 Henshaw Terrace
West Newton, MA 02465

RE: 76 Webster Park – Property Owned by Heirs of Miss Irene Forte

Dear Mr. Kuklinski:

At their April 24, 2003, meeting the members of the Newton Conservation Commission voted to participate with the Newton Conservators in seeking funding for the acquisition of the open space portion of the referenced property.

As you know Dolan Pond Conservation Area is immediately adjacent to Miss Forte's property and the trees along the top of the slope on her lot act as a visual buffer, both from her property into Dolan and from the conservation area to screen her home. In addition, the trees serve as valuable habitat for a diverse wildlife population, especially birds.

The Commission is interested in acquiring control of the top of the slope and the hillside to ensure that the Dolan Pond Conservation Area and the trees are protected in perpetuity. The members support your efforts to acquire the property from the heirs and protect it as she suggested prior to her death.

Sincerely,

Martha J. Aherin Horn
Sr. Environmental Planner

cc: M. Kruse, Director of Planning
conserva\corres\76websterkksupport

Conservation Commission
1000 Commonwealth Avenue, Newton, Massachusetts 02459
Email: mhorn@ci.newton.ma.us

City of Newton



David B. Cohen
Mayor

Fire Department Headquarters
1164 Centre Street, Newton Center, MA 02459-1584

Chief: (617) 552-7272 Fire Prevention: (617) 552-7275
FAX: (617) 552-7305 EMERGENCY: 911



Edward J. Murphy
Chief

May 7, 2003

Jonathan L Hacker, Executive Director
Newton Housing Authority
82 Lincoln Street
Newton Highlands, Ma 02461

Dear Jon,

I am writing this letter in support of your joint-proposal to the CPC with the Newton Conservators for acquisition of Irene Forte's property at 76 Webster Park.

This property would be a terrific opportunity for open space conservation, as it abuts the existing Dolan Pond Conservation area. Dolan Pond has been really preserved and beautified for enjoyment by all residents of the City.

Additionally, the Newton Housing Authority would have the opportunity to restore Irene's home to its former grand stature. This would allow a fortunate family of low-income to reside in this home, which is a desire indicated by the Forte Estate.

My wife was related to Irene Forte and we feel that this co-sponsored proposal would serve many valuable needs of the community as well as a testimony to Irene.

Over the years, the Newton Housing Authority and the Newton Fire Department have worked closely in maintaining excellent safety standards throughout your many developments. Enhancing and protecting the quality of life for our city residents has always been our mutual goal.

I am strongly in favor of your proposal and hope that this acquisition may be achieved.

Sincerely,

Joseph E La Croix
Assistant Chief of Operations
Newton Fire Department



June 19, 2003

To the Board of Aldermen:

Since I can not be present at your June 23 meeting, I write to tell you of the golden opportunity that lies ahead for the City of Newton with Newton Housing Authority's current proposal for the Dolan Pond area Fortes property including the 2 Habitat for Humanity units.

You are familiar with the extensive research and efforts that have gone into this revised proposal. Just the idea of Habitat for Humanity coming to Newton elicits excitement and goodwill. But there is also a unique opportunity here for a larger goodwill message - to make this housing unit a showcase by making it "environmentally friendly".

What does that mean? Simply to be conscious in the planning process to incorporate such measures as:

- ✓ Energy efficient windows and building materials;
- ✓ Energy Star appliances, an energy efficient furnace, compact fluorescent lighting -- all saving the homeowner utility bills and helping the environment at the same time;
- ✓ Organic fertilizers for the yards and landscaping to protect Dolan Pond (and neighbors & children) from pesticides and herbicides;
- ✓ Natural flooring and finishes that minimize indoor air pollution;
- ✓ Possible photovoltaic solar cells, if applicable.

The Green Decade Coalition/Newton, a large volunteer environmental non-profit, will work with Newton Housing Authority and Habitat for Humanity to provide resources about cost-effective measures that can be taken to make such housing units e-friendly, given the precious ecosphere in which it is to be built.

In addition, Newton's Office for Volunteer Services, which I direct, will pro-actively engage many volunteers to help with this overall housing effort.

Such a housing unit has the potential to become THE SHOWCASE of Newton and a model of what can be done in other communities.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Beverly Droz". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Beverly Droz
President, Green Decade Coalition

sustainable solutions for the 21st century

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