

Newton Massachusetts
Community Preservation Funding Application

15 February 2006




Needs Assessment & Capital Improvement Plan
for
The Durant Kenrick Homestead

**A Joint Proposal
By**

The Newton Historical Society & The Newton History Museum
527 Washington Street
Newtonville Massachusetts 02460



NEWTON HISTORY MUSEUM AND NEWTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

 at The Jackson Homestead

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February 15, 2006

Jennifer Goldson
CPA Program Manager
Planning and Development Department
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459

Dear Ms. Goldson and the Community Preservation Committee,

The Newton Historical Society in conjunction with the Newton History Museum is pleased to submit this request for planning funds for the acquisition of the Durant Kenrick Homestead.

We appreciate the willingness of the Community Preservation Committee to consider this application, and look forward to providing any additional information needed.

Sincerely,

Peter Dimond
President, Newton Historical Society

Harry Lohr
Chair, Newton History Museum Trustees



David B. Cohen
Mayor

APPLICATION FOR COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUNDING

Form CPA-1

Submit to Jennifer Goldson, CPA Program Manager
Newton Planning and Development Department
1000 Commonwealth Avenue, Newton, MA 02459
jgoldson@newtonma.gov
617-796-1131

Name of Applicant³ Newton Historical Society

Name of Co-Applicant, if applicable Newton History Museum

Contact Name Peter Dimond, President, Newton Historical Society

Mailing Address 527 Washington St. City Newton State MA Zip 02458

Daytime Phone 617.332.4063 Email peterdimond@comcast.net

Name of Proposal Needs assessment and development of capital improvement plan for Durant-Kenrick Homestead

Address of Proposal (or assessor's parcel id) 286 Waverley Avenue, Newton Corner

CPA Category (circle all that apply): Open space Historic preservation Recreation Community housing

CPA Funding Requested \$77,500 Total Cost of Proposed Project \$77,500

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Attach answers to the following questions. Applications will be returned as incomplete if all requested information is not provided. Include supporting materials as necessary.

1. **Goals:** What are the goals of the proposed project?
2. **Community Need:** Why is this project needed? Does it address needs identified in existing City plans?
3. **Community Support:** What is the nature and level of support for this project? Include letters of support and any petitions.
4. **Timeline:** What is the schedule for project implementation, including a timeline for all critical milestones?
5. **Credentials:** How will the experience of the applicant contribute to the success of this project?
6. **Success Factors:** How will the success of this project will be measured? Be as specific as possible.
7. **Budget:** What is the total budget for the project and how will CPA funds be spent? All items of expenditure must be clearly identified. Distinguish between hard and soft costs and contingencies. (NOTE: CPA funds may NOT be used for maintenance.)
8. **Other Funding:** What additional funding sources are available, committed, or under consideration? Include commitment letters, if available, and describe any other attempts to secure funding for this project.
9. **Maintenance:** If ongoing maintenance is required for your project, how will it be funded?

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Provide the following additional information, as applicable.

10. Documentation that you have control over the site, such as Purchase and Sale Agreement, option, or deed.

³ If the proposal is on City-owned land, either the applicant or the co-applicant must be the City Board, Commission, or Department that has custody of the land.

Newton Historical Society, Inc./City of Newton through the Newton History Museum
Application for Community Preservation Funding
February 15, 2006

1. Project Goals

A. Historic Importance of Property

The Durant Kenrick Homestead, built in 1732, is one of only a few pre-Revolutionary houses remaining in Newton. The interior and exterior of the house are in near original condition. It has been maintained in the period, is fully furnished with period furniture and other collections, and is surrounded by specimen trees that were planted by one of the first horticulturists in the country. Protecting the Homestead provides a rare opportunity to preserve the past for the benefit of future generations.

The Durant Homestead Foundation, owners of the Durant Kenrick Homestead (at 286 Waverley Avenue), faced with a dwindling endowment, rising costs, and a severely constrained capacity to open the Homestead to visitors has approached the Newton Historical Society about taking over the Foundation's property, collection of furnishings, adjoining open lot, and endowment.

The Foundation and the Historical Society share a goal to preserve and protect the Homestead and its adjoining property, create educational opportunities for the community, and provide a high level of stewardship that will enable the people of Newton to enjoy the Homestead for generations to come. The Durant Kenrick Homestead would become an extension of the same educational programming now provided by the Newton Historical Society at the Newton History Museum at the Jackson Homestead.

It is that shared vision that motivates the Newton Historical Society and Newton History Museum to seek the funding needed to move this important project forward.

B. Scope of Work

The Newton Historical Society, in conjunction with the Newton History Museum, has begun an eighteen-month effort to:

- Develop a master plan for the preservation of the house and property;
- Develop a plan for the use of the site for public and educational programs;
- Develop short and long range budgets for preserving the property, undertaking programs, and caring for the collection; and
- Raise funds for needed Capital Improvements and endowment to cover operating costs.

This is a request to conduct over the next six months a thorough needs assessment of the property and to identify and develop potential acquisition and funding strategies.

2. Community Need

The acquisition of the Durant Kenrick Homestead and its adjacent lot would preserve existing open space, and provide a setting for a museum that interprets 18th-century Newton through public tours, student educational programs, and public programs for families and adults. The Newton school system is in the midst of developing new curriculum focusing on the revolutionary period. The Durant Kenrick Homestead would be ideal for supporting these studies in the same way that the 1809 Jackson Homestead has supported study of the 19th century and abolition movement.

As a department of the City of Newton, The Newton History Museum has developed a strategic plan for community outreach and development. Future work on the Durant site is consistent with this plan.

3. Community Support

Support for this application is broad-based and documented in letters of support attached from the following groups and organizations:

- Farlow Hill Neighborhood Association
- Durant Kenrick Foundation
- Newton Conservators
- League of Women Voters
- Local aldermen
- Newton School Committee
- Newton Historical Commission

4. Timeline

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>
• Complete pre-selection of consultant team to be in place should funding be approved	April 28, 2006
• Completion of outline for anticipated educational and program plans for facility	April 28, 2006
• Funding approved (tentative)	April 28, 2006
• Complete negotiation (if required) and sign contract with consultants	May 10, 2006
• Complete property survey with topography	June 15, 2006

- Complete as-built drawings of existing structure with engineering assessments for structural stability and HVAC needs June 15, 2006
- Complete schematic landscape plan for automobile parking, bus parking, and museum approach July 15, 2006
- Complete schematic plans for structural stabilization and exterior restoration July 31, 2006
- Complete schematic plans for handicap access and renovated rear ell (non-original) July 31, 2006
- Complete Collection Needs Assessment July 31, 2006
- Complete budget development for work described in schematic plans August 31, 2006
- Complete negotiations with Durant-Kenrick trustees on deal structure August 31, 2006
- Final package of schematic plans and budgets complete and ready for solicitation of full project funding September 15, 2006

5. Credentials

The Newton Historical Society, Inc. and the City of Newton have worked together for decades in the operation, maintenance, and promotion of the Newton History Museum at the Jackson Homestead. The Newton History Museum is a joint effort of the City of Newton and the Newton Historical Society, a private, non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization that is made up of a very active 27-Member Board of Directors and nearly 400 members. The City maintains the Museum building and provides support for the director, curatorial, and education staff, while the Historical Society provides the funding for the Museum's programs---including ongoing exhibits, nearly 140 presentations each year to area school children, programs for adults, the Newton House Tour, an historic marker program, neighborhood walking tours, and more. The CPC has previously agreed to funding which is currently supporting the Newton History Museum, in conjunction with the Newton Historical Society, overseeing the restoration of Newton's three historic burial grounds, the final resting places of many of Newton's earliest residents

6. Success Factors

Project success will be measured by the ability of the Newton Historical Society, Inc., with support from the City of Newton, to submit a complete bid package and cost estimate in its Application for Funding to the CPC in October 2006.

Work on fundraising has already begun. The completion of the needs assessment will prepare us to undertake the necessary preservation, restoration and support work that will be identified by the assessment.

7. Budget

This request seeks Community Preservation Funds in the amount of \$77,500. It is anticipated that the funds will be appropriated to the Jackson Homestead, a department of the City of Newton. The Director of the Newton History Museum at the Jackson Homestead will enter into a grant agreement with the Newton Historical Society, Inc. who will oversee the work.

The following budget has been prepared with the input of, and considerable in-kind effort from local architects.

○ Assess Existing Conditions:	
▪ Building survey and structural assessment	\$8,000
▪ Topographical survey	2,000
▪ Collections survey	7,000
▪ Real estate appraisal/with and without conservation easement	3,500
○ Develop Capital Improvements Plan:	
▪ Building design schematics	25,000
▪ HVAC, Structure, Fire Suppression	7,000
▪ Landscape, parking, accessibility	5,000
○ Develop Acquisition Strategy:	
▪ Legal/Development advice for funding to preserve open lot and fund endowment	10,000
• Contingency	10,000
Total Needs Assessment Funds Requested	\$77,500

8. Other Funding

In addition to the in-kind effort referenced above, the Durant-Kenrick Foundation is prepared to donate land, buildings, period furnishings, and collections with estimated value of approximately \$3 million. Additionally, they are also prepared to donate approximately \$300,000 toward an endowment to meet ongoing operating costs. We believe that the potential of this substantial private sector donation should be an important consideration in deciding the value CPC funds would bring to the City as a return on investment.

9. Maintenance

For this portion of the project, maintenance is not applicable. It is worth noting, however, that CPC funds will not be used for maintenance. The Historical Society is in the process of raising funds to create an endowment for the properties long-term care.

10. Documentation of Control Over Site

See letters to and from the Durant Kenrick Foundation attached.

11. Through 14

To be answered in the course of the study.

15. Appropriate Professional Standards

The RFP will be written so that only consultants with appropriate and extensive experience will be qualified to submit proposals. Experience and recommendations will be carefully checked before a consultant team is chosen.

16. Additional Community Benefits

The Newton Historical Society and the City of Newton believe that the restoration and effective operation of the Durant Kenrick Homestead will raise the visibility of the asset to the community, and draw more members and visitors to the Jackson Homestead. The preservation of the open space in the adjacent lot will be a valuable community asset for all.



Photo A – Front Elevation of Durant Kenrick Homestead from Waverly Avenue



Photo B – View of Homestead Through Mature Specimen Trees on Corner Lot



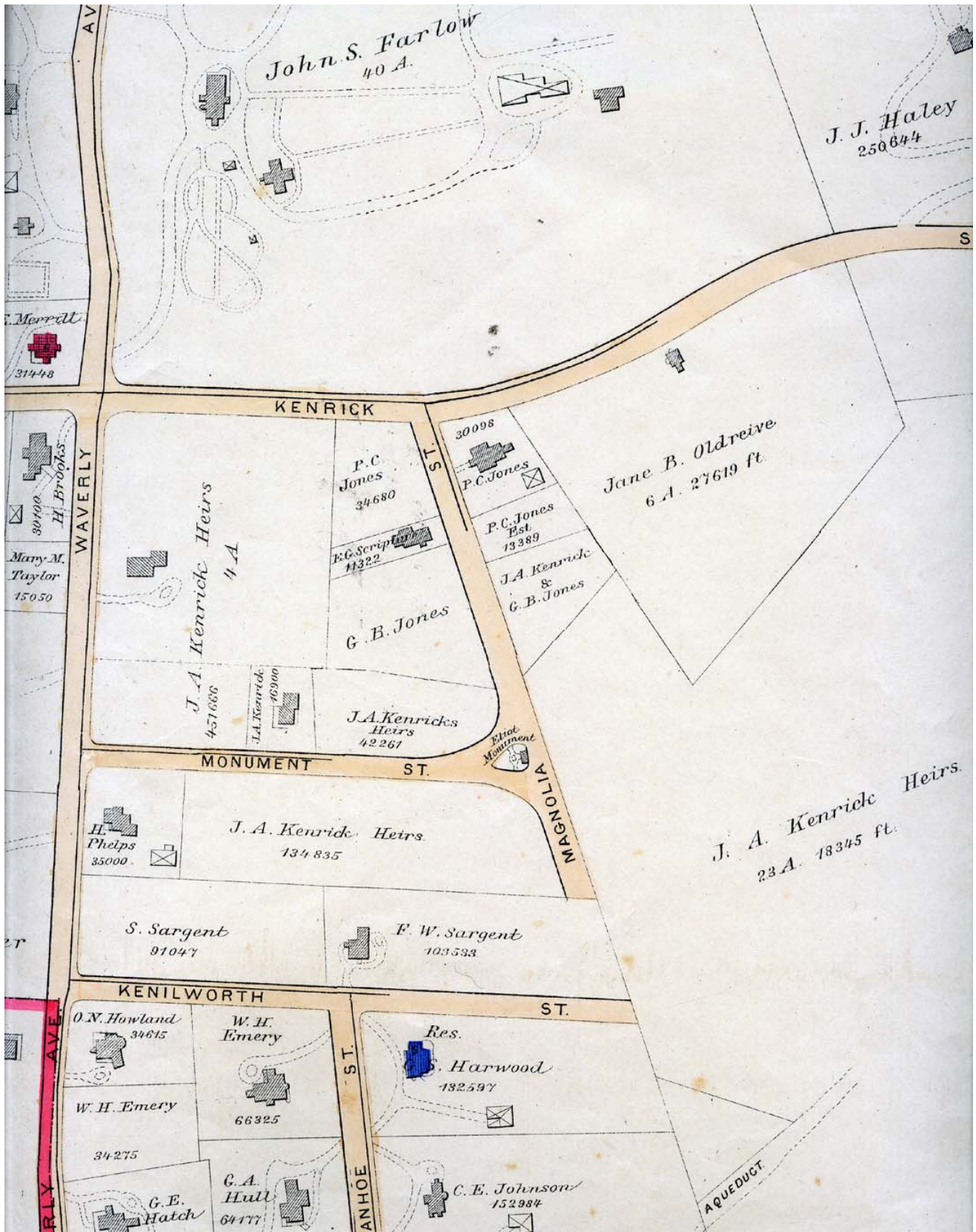
Photo C – Interior View of Great Room With Period Furniture & Furnishings



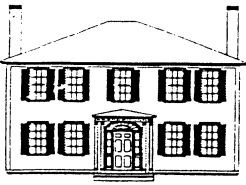
Photo D – Interior View of Parlor with Period Furniture and Furnishings




Photo E - Interior of Kitchen



1886 Map of Durant Kenrick Homestead and Surrounding Properties



NEWTON HISTORY MUSEUM

 at The Jackson Homestead

David B. Cohen, Mayor
David A. Olson, Director



Durant Homestead Foundation
Roger Avery, President
55 Woodbridge Drive
East Greenwich, RI 02818

September 14, 2005

Dear Members of the Board of the Durant Homestead Foundation,

The Newton History Museum and the Newton Historical Society are excited about exploring the options for the transfer of stewardship of the Durant Kenrick Homestead at 286 Waverley Avenue and the adjoining open lot, to either the museum or the historical society. The house and lot are significant historic resources that would allow us to provide educational experiences on many aspects of 18th-century life for the people of Newton and surrounding communities. As you suggested, we are writing this letter to you to outline our vision, goals, concerns, and thoughts on the various options we might be able to pursue to permit the transfer of this important example of Newton's early history.

THE NEWTON HISTORY MUSEUM - WHO ARE WE?

The Newton History Museum is a joint effort of the City of Newton and the Newton Historical Society, a private, non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization that is made up of a very active 27-Member Board of Directors and nearly 400 members. The museum is led by Director David Olson who is a City of Newton employee. The City maintains the Museum building and provides support for the director and for curatorial and education staff, while the Historical Society provides the funding for the Museum's programs---including ongoing exhibits, nearly 140 presentations each year to area school children, programs for adults, the Newton House Tour, an historic marker program, neighborhood walking tours, and more. The Newton History Museum is also undertaking the restoration of Newton's three historic burial grounds, the final resting places of many of Newton's earliest residents.

The Newton History Museum has a staff of 2 full-time and 8 part-time employees whose work in the museum field totals over 100 years of experience. Staff members include:

David A. Olson	Director
Susan Abele	Curator of Photographs and Manuscripts
Eleanor Mish	Curator of Objects
Sheila Sibley	Education Manager
Alice Ingerson	Public Programs Consultant
David Oliver	Development Manager
Lynette Aznavourian	Public Relations Manager
Fae Morrissey	Museum Assistant
Karen Rubin	Program Assistant
Kathryn Bresee	Museum Assistant

*Headquarters of
the Newton
Historical Society*

As a point of interest, you may want to know that five years ago we organized and ran a reunion for well over 100 members of the Jackson Family, the family who donated our current headquarters and Museum building to the City in 1950. And, two years ago, our annual House Tour (now in its 23rd year) included the Durant Kenrick Homestead as one of the stops our 1,000-plus visitors made on the ten-house tour.

As part of the process of determining the best course of action we will consider which entity -- the City of Newton or the Newton Historical Society -- would be the most appropriate holder of the titles to the property.

OUR VISION

Our vision for the property is to maintain the Durant Kenrick Homestead as a museum that interprets 18th-century Newton through public tours, student educational programs, and public programs for families and adults. Through the site we would also like to tell the story of early preservation efforts in New England and highlight the work of Arthur and Frances Dewing in the preservation of the house.

Our vision for the process of transfer of the Durant Kenrick Homestead is that over the next eighteen months or so, the Newton History Museum will work with the Board of the Durant Homestead Foundation to:

- Develop a master plan for the preservation of the house and property;
- Develop a program plan for the use of the site for public and educational programs;
- Develop short and long range budgets that will provide guidance on the amount of money needed to preserve the property, undertake programs, and care for the collection;
- Engage the neighborhood, and the Newton community, in discussion of our plans for the transfer of responsibility in order to gain community input and facilitate a smooth transition; and
- Raise funds for the endowment.

OUR GOAL

As we discussed in our meeting on August 4th, our goals for the House will be to preserve the building and grounds as an historic house museum, while developing programming that will bring the 18th century to life for visitors young and old. We have an excellent professional staff at the Newton History Museum that is intrigued by the possibility of developing programs that relate the Durant Kenrick Homestead to life in the Revolutionary War period. The Durant Kenrick Homestead would fill a gap in our educational programming and provide an experience about a time in Newton's history about which many know very little.

Context – the Newton History Museum Strategic Plan

In 2004 the Newton History Museum developed a strategic plan to guide the museum for the next five years. Our vision, as articulated in that plan, is:

The Newton History Museum is a visible and accessible cultural center that is the hub of a broad network of resources including streetscapes, buildings, burying grounds, collections, archives, organizations, and people. By anchoring, cultivating, and leading this network, the museum serves to preserve, document, exhibit, and explain Newton's history to people of all ages—and make that history a vibrant and living part of the present. Education and collections preservation are important tasks in this process. By

providing leadership in these efforts and by keeping our past alive in our present, we are able to foster a richer sense of community in Newton based on the shared experiences and common ground among all Newton's residents.

Our strategic plan also outlines four goals for the museum:

Goal 1 – To have the highest quality array of programs and collections, which stimulate, educate, and enrich.

Goal 2 – Have high quality facilities consistent with our vision that showcase our offerings, support our staff, and preserve our collections.

Goal 3 - To be recognized by people within the Newton area as a highly visible, accessible, magnetic, cultural/community center

Goal 4 – Have sufficient resources to meet our goals.

The addition of the Durant Kenrick Homestead would fit very well into the Newton History Museum's current vision and strategic plan.

OUR CONCERNS

While we are very excited about our potential ownership of the Durant Kenrick House, we are also mindful of the need to have fully-funded endowments in place to properly maintain the property as well as to develop and run engaging educational programs. At this time, the Society does not have sufficient funds in the bank to take on a major new financial responsibility such as the Durant Kenrick Homestead. We recognize that we will have to raise a significant amount of money to cover direct expenses and to fund an adequate endowment. In determining the size of this endowment, we must undertake a number of tasks, including:

1. To determine the current and prospective physical needs of the House, and identify the amount of money needed to undertake necessary repairs and restoration.
2. To determine the requirements for preserving the Home and in telling its story, including the costs of upgrades to the electrical, heating, and cooling systems.
3. To determine the amount of money required to develop the first stages of educational programming and to put that programming into action
4. To determine the number of visitors we are likely to have at any given time and the ability of the property to accommodate those visitors, particularly as it relates to access, parking, and rest rooms.
5. To identify the total dollars necessary to properly maintain and operate the House as a vibrant house museum, and to identify potential sources that will fund those costs.

TIME FRAME

Following a determination by our respective organizations that we share the same goals and vision for the Durant Kenrick Homestead, we will move forward as quickly as possible to identify all anticipated costs and develop a schedule of the total amount of money-needed to endow both the building and educational programming. To aid in this effort, we will need full access to the property. At the same time, we will continue our work to identify potential funding sources and undertake a fundraising effort. Our goal would be to be in a position to accept the title and responsibility of the House by early 2007.

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING

Our most immediate need is to identify possible sources for the funding we need to conduct a study of the physical and programming needs of the House. We are determining estimated costs and will discuss funding with our board and trustees.

Other preliminary ideas we have considered, and which deserve further exploration include:

1. Selling conservation easements for the street-side parcel.
2. Building upon the donor network your foundation has already cultivated.
3. Requesting grants from various conservation-oriented organizations to pay for conservation easements.
4. Requesting funding from the City of Newton's Community Preservation Act for a conservation easement and for restoration and preservation improvements to the House
5. Soliciting donations from Newton residents and others who may be interested in historic houses in general and this House in particular
6. Seeking any available Federal and State funds
7. Seeking business and foundation support and relationships, possibly including public television's This Old House.

We also expect that the Durant Homestead Foundation will work with us to help raise funds for the endowment by providing names of participants, contacts to solicit, and assistance in fundraising events.

INTERIM RESPONSIBILITY

As we work to make this transfer a reality, we must make it clear that the Newton History Museum does not currently have the means to pay for any aspect of the operation of the Durant Kenrick Homestead. Thus the Durant Homestead Foundation must continue to maintain, operate, and protect its property.

NEXT STEPS

Assuming approval of this outline by our respective organizations, we believe we should develop a formal document that acknowledges our joint commitment and gives potential donors the comfort they need to contribute to our good cause.

To proceed in a timely fashion and meet the timeline that is outlined in this letter, we would appreciate a written response from the Board of the Durant Homestead Foundation by October 1, 2005.

THANK YOU

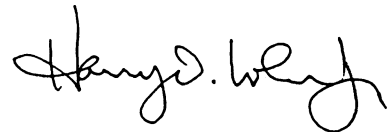
We appreciate the potential opportunity to take on the stewardship of the Durant Kenrick Homestead and are optimistic, excited and at the same time respectful of the challenges of taking on this responsibility. Thank you for offering to work with us to preserve and maintain an important community resource. Please contact David Olson, Executive Director of the Newton History Museum at (617) 796-1450 or Peter Dimond, President of the Newton Historical Society, at (617) 332-4063 with any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,



David A. Olson
 Director
 Newton History Museum

Peter Dimond
 President
 Newton Historical Society



Harry O. Lohr, Jr.
 Chair
 Jackson Homestead Trustees

THE DURANT HOMESTEAD FOUNDATION
P. O. BOX 3328
South Attleboro, MA 02703-3328
(Tel:401-885-1556—Fax:401-886-0812)

OFFICERS:

Roger C. Avery: President
Ruth D. Ewing: Vice President
Margaret A. Avery: Vice President
Rosemary S. Avery: Secretary

TREASURER:

Roger C. Avery

CARETAKER:

Jane Zanichkowsky
286 Waverley Ave.
Newton MA 02458

David A. Olson, Director Newton History Museum
Peter Dimond, President Newton Historical Society
Harry O. Lohr, Jr Chair, Jackson Homestead Trustees


October 10, 2005

Dear Sirs,

The officers of the Durant Homestead Foundation have met and considered your letter of September 14th. We are in agreement with the plan of action and hope that the Newton History Museum and Newton Historical Society will proceed with the proposed plan. In view of this support the Durant Homestead Foundation agrees to the following:

- (1) To postpone consideration of the sale of the corner lot.
- (2) To cooperate with the Newton History Museum and Newton Historical Society in preparing the detailed plans and goals for the Durant-Kendrick House specified in your letter. This cooperation would include reasonable access to the house.
- (3) Once the goals and financial plan have been prepared, the Durant Homestead Foundation will negotiate a document assuring transfer of the Durant Kendrick House and corner lot to the New Historical Society subject to the successful completion of the fund raising required for the implementation of the plan and the creation of a reasonable endowment to allow the continued preservation of the homestead.
- (4) In the interim the Durant Homestead Foundation agrees to consult with the you before taking any major action concerning the Durant Kendrick House.

Sincerely


Roger C. Avery

President, Durant Homestead Foundation
55 Woodbridge Dr.
East Greenwich RI. 02818

1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459



February 4, 2006

Committee on Community Preservation
c/o Jennifer Goldson
Newton Planning Department
Newton City Hall, Newton, MA 02459

Re: Durant Kenrick Homestead Study Application

Dear members of the Committee on Community Preservation:

The undersigned Ward Seven Aldermen are writing to indicate their support for the request for funding a study needed to realize the opportunity to secure the future of Waverley Avenue's Durant Kenrick Homestead—one of the oldest houses in Newton and a nearly perfectly preserved example of an 18th century home.

We have all passed by and perhaps even visited the historic red house at 286 Waverley Avenue, but have often taken it for granted. Built in 1732, the year George Washington was born, the house is not only furnished inside with museum-quality furnishings, but its grounds also include trees planted by one of the first arborists in the Boston area.

We have been aware of efforts by representatives of the Durant Homestead Foundation, the Newton Historical Society and the Newton History Museum to see if some sort of arrangement could be worked out that would allow this historic structure and its grounds to be maintained while providing assurance of its future as a valuable educational resource for visitors of all ages.

The funds being requested for the study represent the next stage in this important process, and we hope you will give them your support.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

R. Lisle Baker
Ward Alderman
Ward Seven

Verne W. Vance
Aderman-at-Large
Ward Seven

Sydra Schipper
Alderman-at-Large
Ward Seven

**Farlow Hill Neighborhood Association
P.O.Box 391, New Town Branch
Newton, MA 02456-0391**

February 15, 2006

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

The Durant-Kenrick Homestead and its magnificent adjacent lot are an integral part of the Farlow Hill Neighborhood and its surrounding neighborhoods. Located at the foot of Farlow Hill, at the intersection of Waverley Avenue and Kenrick Street, the Homestead and its accompanying lot, graced by an ancient beech tree as well as several other trees, is an important and constant reminder of the historic nature of our neighborhood.

This area of Newton was one of the earliest settlements in the area, and boasted the first ornamental and fruit tree nurseries. Many of the beech trees (now seen throughout Newton) were brought over from England by Mr. Durant and Mr. Kenrick. The size of the beech tree on the empty lot, adjacent to the Durant-Kenrick Homestead, indicates that it is fully grown, and therefore, in the vicinity of 250 years.

We, in the Farlow Hill neighborhood, treasure this site – both the Homestead, with its early 18th century exterior and interior architecture, and the open lot, with its towering beech. And we are not the only ones - thousands who drive across the city, and stop for the light at our intersection each day, pause to reflect on the history and grandeur in their midst. As we walk or drive past this historic marker, we experience the passage of seasons through the year, as we watch this tree, and the others in its company, leaf out in the spring, provide a dappled shade canopy through the summer, then turn to copper bronze in the fall, before unveiling its magnificent structure throughout the winter months. The Homestead and this beech tree have witnessed the history of our Greater Boston area over almost three centuries.

This site is a major historic, educational, and environmental asset that, under the guidance of the Newton Historical Society, could be made available for public enjoyment and education. Preservation of the adjacent lot with its awesome beech tree would be a meaningful spiritual addition in our daily lives.

The Farlow Hill Neighborhood Association and citizens of the surrounding neighborhood – indeed, throughout Newton – are deeply hopeful that the Community Preservation Committee will have a positive response to the request for initial planning funds.

Sincerely,



Constance G. Kantar
Kenrick Street Abutter



Susan S. Kaplan
Chair, Farlow Hill Neighborhood Association



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Department of Planning and Development
Michael J. Kruse, Director

Telephone
(617)-796-1120
Telefax
(617) 796-1086
TDD/TTY
(617) 796-1089

David B. Cohen
Mayor

February 9, 2006

Community Preservation Committee
c/o Planning and Development Department
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459

RE: Durant Kenrick Homestead, 286 Waverley Avenue, Newton Corner

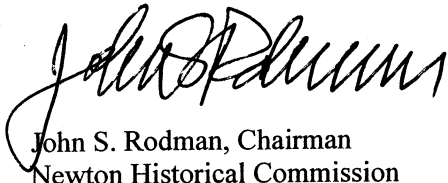
Dear Community Preservation Committee Members:

The Newton Historical Commission is very pleased to recommend the proposal for the Durant Kenrick Homestead and its adjoining lot for funding under the Community Preservation Act. This joint application between the Newton History Museum and Newton Historical Society is a unique opportunity for the City to insure the future preservation of one of its most important and earliest structures. The ca. 1732 Georgian style house has been maintained in excellent condition and is one of only a few surviving houses in Newton which predate the Revolutionary War. The property has retained its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, and was individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. Its architectural and historical significance was also locally recognized by the Newton Historical Commission in 1993, when they designated the property as one of the City's first Local Landmarks.

While legally a separate lot, the open space provided by the lot adjacent to the Homestead is an important element of the setting of the historic structure and contributes to the feeling of a rural farmhouse which the site embodies. Both parcels represent the last surviving elements of the 91-acre farm first owned by Edward Durant in the 1700s and later operated by the Kenrick family as one of New England's first nurseries. It is believed that many of the trees in the neighborhood are a legacy of this nursery, in particular the magnificent English Beech tree which is centered on the open lot. Together, the two properties provide a sense of the former openness of the area in what is today a well-established suburban neighborhood.

The Newton Historical Commission enthusiastically supports the application for the Durant Kenrick Homestead and its adjacent lot for Community Preservation Act grant funds. Preservation of this exceptional Newton landmark is important to the City and the Commission hopes that you will look favorably upon this grant application.

Sincerely,



John S. Rodman, Chairman
Newton Historical Commission

Newton Historical Commission
1000 Commonwealth Avenue, Newton, Massachusetts 02459
Email: lkritzer@newtonma.gov

February 7, 2006

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

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of the Newton School Committee to endorse the plans of the Newton Historical Society for the Durant Kenrick Homestead at 286 Waverley Avenue. The Historical Society has put together a thoughtful approach to a needs assessment for the house and lot in the interests of planning a restoration of the property for the purposes of establishing a museum devoted to 18th century life in Newton.

One of the major thrusts of the state frameworks in social studies and history for school children in Massachusetts is the study of American history. Having a restored home with 18th century furnishings and a museum devoted to tours, educational programs for students, and public programs for the citizens of Newton would be a major resource for our public school curriculum. Students would have the opportunity to tour the museum and to visualize 18th century life. Owners Arthur and Frances Dewing engaged in preservation of this property years ago, and students would also have a chance to research early preservation activities in New England through this community resource.

We strongly support the Society's application for Community Preservation Act funding for the needs assessment and for partial funding of the project from this source as the project proceeds. This planned museum could serve as both a school and community resource in the understanding of the history of our city.

Sincerely,



Dori Zaleznik
Chair, Newton School Committee



Newton Conservators, Inc.

PO Box 590011, Newton Centre, MA 02459
www.newtonconservators.org

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

February 9, 2006

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Dear Members of the CPA Committee

The Newton Conservators support the Newton Historical Society in exploring options for the transfer of stewardship of the Durant Kenrick Homestead at 286 Waverley Avenue, and the adjoining open lot, as a general museum for the people of Newton. This house dates back to the 18th century and would be used to provide educational experiences to students and residents of Newton.

Until recently, this house was occupied by only two families and their descendants for the past two hundred years. The house is one of the oldest houses in Newton and has been home for many generations of the Durant and Kenrick families. The house and lot are tremendous resources for the City of Newton: It would serve as an educational site to provide descriptions and experiences on many aspects of 18th-century life for the people of Newton and surrounding communities.

In addition, the Newton Conservators are very interested in preserving the tree filled, open space adjacent to the house. This adjacent tree filled area better sets the house in Colonial Times, and also provides onlookers with old forest specimen trees including a huge beech tree. The lot is around twenty thousand square feet, and has trees planted by one of the first arborist in the Boston area. The following embedded picture shows the front of the house and the tree filled adjacent lot.



It is very important to preserve open space areas in Newton for the benefit of its residents. It is especially beneficial when the open space is part of the preservation of a historical landmark such as the Durant Kenrick Homestead. We look forward to your assistance with this project.

Sincerely yours,

William Hagar
President