

Community Support

FRIENDS OF THE DURANT-KENRICK HOMESTEAD

September 29, 2006

Planning and Development Department

1000 Commonwealth Avenue

Newton, MA 02459

Dear Sir or Madam:

The Newton Historical Society is applying to the Community Preservation Act to receive funding for the preservation of the Durant-Kenrick Homestead. I am Co-Chair of The Durant-Kenrick Neighborhood Steering Committee and am writing in support of the aforementioned petition. I represent over 60 families that have officially joined our preservation efforts as Friends of the Durant-Kenrick Homestead. We are staunch supporters of this project and, along with the numerous new Friends that have been joining our ranks, are determined to assist the Newton Historical Society in this worthwhile and noble pursuit. It is my fervent hope that with CPA funds and additional financial support of neighbors and friends, we will preserve the home and surrounding property and ultimately, as a community, fund the creation of future programming.

The Durant-Kenrick Homestead is a tremendous asset to the City and resource for its schools. The plans drafted by the Newton Historical Society will increase the effectiveness of the Homestead as a pedagogical tool by augmenting the breadth and depth of programming for the benefit of the community, make its programs accessible to a wider audience by making the home fully handicapped accessible, and ensure the preservation of the Homestead for future generations.

The Durant-Kenrick home itself is a prime example of Georgian architecture, while the grounds were the workshop of one of early-America's most famous and successful horticulturalists. The collection of furnishings and decorative pieces reflects the lives and times of almost three centuries of residents. There is a palpable warmth in the home as one can appreciate the legacy and heritage of the Durant and Kenrick families through the artifacts collected and cared for by the generations who lived there.

The timing of the preservation project being contemplated is incredibly fortuitous as an effort is underway to increase the focus on local history in the Newton public school curriculum. The Homestead itself and those who lived there are important to many disciplines taught at the elementary, middle and high school level. History and social sciences, English and literature, and science and horticulture are all subjects that can be brought to life and made salient by a trip to the Homestead. Experiencing American history firsthand from

September 29, 2006

pre-Revolutionary days to the early 20th century is an invaluable opportunity for our children. It would be our shortcoming as a community not to support this project and preserve in perpetuity this window into our past.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dena Rashes", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dena Rashes
Co-Chairman - Durant-Kenrick Neighborhood
Steering Committee

Friends of Durant Kenrick

Lillian Sober Ain
Michael Ambrosino
Ande Anderten
Maria Antoniadis
Jeanne & Charlie Aucoin
Penelope Benjamin
Brian & Susan Clancy
Penny Caponigro
Kathleen Carey & Steven Ferrey
Joan & Dick Cleary
Suzanne & Carl Cohen
Dawn & Victor Colantonio
Susan Conant & Carter Umbarger
Mary & Joe Cosgrove
State Senator Cynthia Creem & Harvey Creem
Peter Dimond
Jay Duker & Julie Starr-Duker
Lina & John K. Farese
Francine Ferris
Nina & Sam Frankenheim
Laurie & Paul Gershkowitz
Ellen Glazer & Don Manning
Barbara & Steve Grossman
Barbara & James Head
Linda Heffner
Alice & Bruce Holstein
Eliot & Gay Jacobson
Constance & William G. Kantar
Susan Kaplan
State Representative Kay Khan
Stephanie & Rakesh Khurana
Sybil & Mort Kliman
Christine & Ralph Kodis
Michael & Blair Krepplein
Anne Lamer
Cheryl & Peter Lloyd
Kelly Lowery & Adam Wolfberg
Laura Lubetsky & Carl Sussman
Mary Beth Maisel & Charles Valentine
Marietta Marchitelli
Rebecca Matthews
Berneda & Louis Meeks
Jennifer & Mac Mendelsohn
Jessica Mosher
Carmen Necheles & Albert Belton
Katherine Nimkin & Khether Raby
Alex Notopoulos & Alexis Anderson
Deborah Perugi
Tania Phillips & Jeffrey Dover
Dena Rashes
Dorothy & John Reichard
Marsha Rheubottom & Seth Parker
Sarine & Steve Rodman
Kathy Rothman
Emily & Alfred Scott
Fran & Rob Silverman
Lisa Sinnigen
Janice & Steve Snider
Cindy Stone
Emily Sullivan
Maria Sullivan
Roanne & Michael Weisman
Fredia Woolf

CHESTNUT HILL ASSOCIATION

32 Suffolk Road
Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts 02467-1216
Tel. (617) 738-5311 Fax (617) 731-9556 E-Mail damc3@aol.com

September 28, 2006

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


To the members of the Committee on Community Preservation,

I understand that the Committee on Community Preservation will soon discuss the Durant-Kenrick Homestead at 286 Waverley Avenue.

The Chestnut Hill Association enthusiastically endorses the funding request for this project.

The Durant-Kenrick Homestead is an appropriate use of Community Preservation funds which, in part, are designated for preserving, rehabilitating, and restoring historic resources. The Durant-Kenrick Homestead, a pre-revolutionary home built in 1732, is one of the few extant homes from that period in the city. Thanks to special care over the centuries, the interior remains in near-original condition and the furnishings and decorative arts collection are from this original period as well as subsequent ones. Moreover, the Homestead also meets the Community Preservation goals for open space. Surrounded by specimen trees near the homestead and on the lovely empty lot next to it, the Durant-Kenrick Homestead gives this residential neighborhood a bit of open space. In addition, this historic Homestead contributes to the preservation of Newton's unique and historic character. The Durant-Kenrick Homestead proposal also includes the leveraging of private funds. The foundation that currently owns the property will be donating the house, furnishings, endowment funds, and adjacent land. Neighbors and community groups are also raising funds to support the Homestead. The Durant-Kenrick Homestead will also be handicapped accessible once a small elevator and lift are installed. As you can see from this extensive list, the Durant-Kenrick Homestead will meet many of the Community Preservation Plan's overarching goals as well as its historic preservation goals.

Sincerely,



Ruthanne Fuller
President, Chestnut Hill Association

100 Waverley Avenue
Newton Massachusetts 02458

September 14, 2006

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

To the Members of the Committee on Community Preservation,

This letter is a request that the committee consider funding for the preservation of the Durant-Kenrick Homestead and its adjoining lot at 286 Waverley Avenue. This is a wonderful opportunity to insure that the location of one of Newton's earliest settlements will be preserved not only for the present time but also for future generations.

As a board member of the Newton Historical Society, I am aware that a number of members, both Trustees and Directors, have spent innumerable hours exploring the various aspects of this landmark in preparation of this application. They are to be commended for steadily and earnestly working toward this goal.

Through the years, there have been many changes made in the Newton Corner village area. So, I am heartened to hear the neighborhood voice an interest in the preservation of this property. The Durant-Kenrick Homestead and its adjoining lot are very important historically. It should remain intact and preserved.

As a Newton resident for over fifty-five years and having a life long interest in historic preservation, I have made a pledge to the Newton Historical Society of ten thousand dollars toward the preservation of the Durant-Kenrick Homestead and its adjoining lot. I believe that this exceptional property is important to the City and the Newton Historical Society. Also, the potential stewardship of the property will be important to the expansion of the Newton History Museum. My hope is that the Committee will look with approval upon this application.

Sincerely,



Marietta Marchitelli



NEWTON CORNER NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Dear Community Preservation Committee of the City of Newton:

We are writing you this letter to express our enthusiastic support for the effort by the Newton History Museum/Newton Historical Society to secure the Durant-Kendrick Homestead and make it part of the Newton History Museum. We were among the first to publicly state this support in our letter to mayor Cohen dated 1/26/06, and are pleased that you have progressed as you have.

Please call on us to help in any way you think useful. When your fund raising begins we will be glad to contribute as best we can. Yours is a wonderful project that will benefit our neighborhood greatly for many years to come, preserving some precious open space and a historically significant property at the same time.

yours,
Richard Belkin
Tom Coan
for the NCNA
617-2445759
617-332-7572

474 Centre Street Newton Massachusetts 02458

617-2445759 or 332-1839





CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Department of Planning and Development

Michael J. Kruse, Director

David B. Cohen
Mayor

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

September 7, 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

*Carl M. Cohen
Suzanne L. Cohen
15 Magnolia Avenue
Newton, MA 02458*

August 28, 2006

Community Preservation Committee
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton Centre, MA 02459

Dear Committee Chairperson:

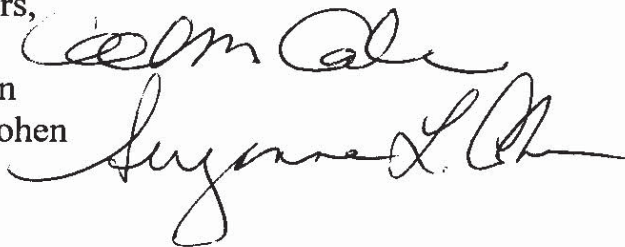
We have lived directly behind the Durant-Kenrick Homestead since 1978. We have directly benefited from the preservation of this historic site during the years we have lived here. We enthusiastically support the Newton Historical Commission in its plans to take over the Durant-Kenrick Homestead and to preserve the site in its entirety, including the acreage that lines Waverly Avenue and wraps around the corner of Kenrick Street.

We look forward to seeing the Homestead used as a center for learning about the history of Newton. We also believe that the land itself carries much historical significance, as it was a horticultural center at the latter half of the 19th century, and beginning of the 20th century.

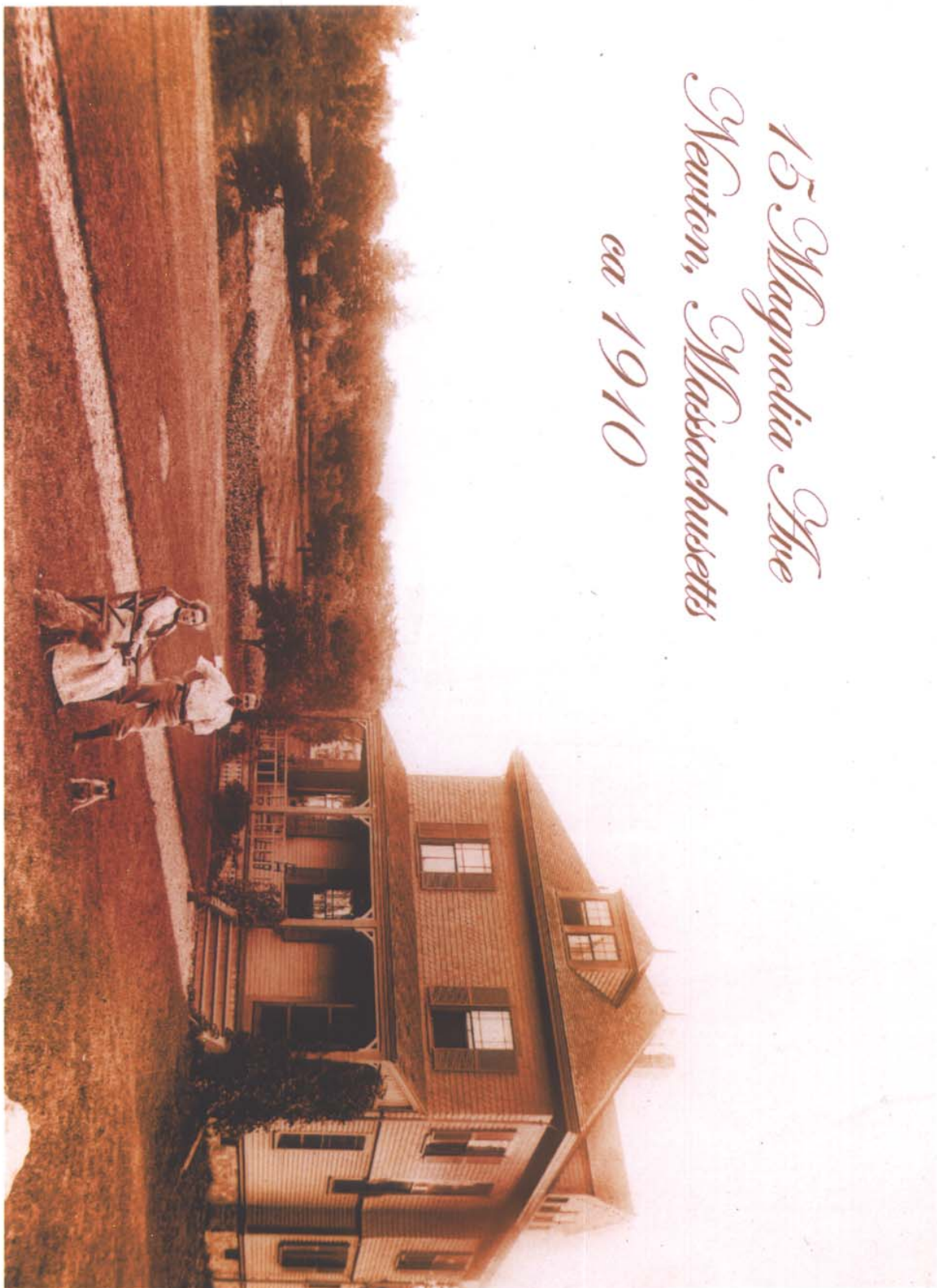
We have a photograph of our house, showing the house and the land surrounding it, probably taken at the end of the 1890's. The house stands among trees that appear to be the orchard that existed here. The photograph includes the original inhabitants of the house, Edgar Scripture, his wife, and their two dogs.

Sincerely yours,

Carl M. Cohen
Suzanne L. Cohen

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The top signature is for Carl M. Cohen, written in a cursive style. The bottom signature is for Suzanne L. Cohen, also in cursive. The signatures are positioned to the right of the typed names.

*15 Magnolia Lane
Newton, Massachusetts
ca 1910*



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

September 12, 2006

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

To Whom It May Concern:

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 as well as several other trees, is an important and constant reminder of the historic nature of our neighborhood and City.

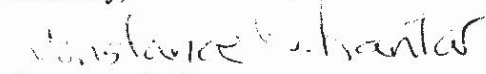
This area of Newton was one of the earliest settlements in the area, and boasted the first ornamental and fruit tree nurseries. Many of the beech trees (now seen throughout Newton) were brought over from England by an ancestor of the Durant family.. The size of the beech tree on the empty lot, adjacent to the Durant-Kenrick Homestead, indicates that it is in the vicinity of 150-200 years.

We, in the Durant-Kenrick Homestead neighborhood, treasure this site -- both the Homestead, with its early 18th century exterior and interior architecture, and the adjacent open space, 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, specifically, Newton's role in American history, as the Durant family members were active in the years leading up to the Revolutionary War.

This site is a major historic, educational, and environmental asset that, under the guidance of the Newton Historical Society, would be available for public education and enjoyment. Preservation of the adjacent open space and restoration of the gardens would be a meaningful addition to the City.

We are very grateful for the initial grant given by the CPC to the Newton Historical Society for the initial architectural and horticultural studies, and we are very hopeful that the CPC will continue its support of the further development of this cultural, historic, and educational asset.

Sincerely,



Constance G. Kantar
Kenrick Street Abutter



Susan S. Kaplan
Chair, Farlow Hill Neighborhood Association

Ward
I Gail Glick
II Reenie Murphy
III Anne Larner
IV Jonathan Yeo
V Susan Heyman
VI Claire Sokoloff
VII Marc Laredo, Vice-Chairperson
VIII Dori Zaleznik, Chairperson

Newton School Committee

100 Walnut Street
Newtonville, MA 02460
Tel (617) 559-6110
Fax (617) 559-6101
www.newtonpublicschools.com
schoolcommittee@newtonpublicschools.com

Mayor David Cohen
Ex officio



September 21, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of the Newton School Committee to urge the Community Preservation Committee to continue to support the plans of the Newton Historical Society for the Durant Kenrick Homestead at 286 Waverley Avenue. Having completed the needs assessment, the Historical Society is undertaking a fundraising effort in order to begin a restoration of the property for the purposes of establishing a museum devoted to 18th century life in Newton.

This local resource would be particularly valuable to the school system for students of all levels, but especially for the revised third grade social studies curriculum focusing on local history. There is a renewed State mandate to study American history. A museum within the community would be a major resource for our students to bring an era of local history alive. Students would have the opportunity to tour the museum and to visualize 18th century life through the restored home and 18th century furnishings. The museum would also provide an opportunity to learn about two local families, the Durants and Kenricks. Representatives of these two families occupied the home at different times until the 1940s and were active in establishing horticultural activities for the State. Owners Arthur and Frances Dewing (descendants of the Durants) engaged in preservation of this property years ago and students would also have a chance to research early preservation activities in New England.

We strongly support the Society's application for Community Preservation Act funding for partial funding of the project so that the restoration could proceed. This museum could serve as both a school and community resource to bring alive the history of our city.

Sincerely,

Dori Zaleznik
Chairperson, Newton School Committee

DZ/djr

Letters of Agreement