



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS NEWTON

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May 15, 2015

Alice Ingerson
Community Preservation Committee Program Manager
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
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Dear Alice:

Below are the comments and recommendation approved by the League of Women Voters of Newton regarding the application for the Historic Newton Archives. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sue Flicop".

Sue Flicop
LWVN Steering Committee

Comments:

The LWVN supported this proposal when it first appeared in 2007-09. The outlines of the task to be completed remain the same. The proponents have come back for more funding three times, this time representing a fourth request.

While the LWVN appreciates that construction costs have risen over time, and that the original request may have been too low, it is time to ask why the repeated requests for funding? Why hasn't this been constructed already, before costs increased? Can the proponents guarantee that the funds will be spent in the manner intended and before another request is necessary?

We appreciate the need for making the archives at the Jackson Homestead accessible and safe. We also feel this is an important resource for our community and should be properly maintained. Our concern, as this project drags on and become increasingly expensive, is can Historic Newton manage the project in a reasonable period of time.

There are several other archives owned by the City that are located in various buildings around the City. Might it be time to consolidate these resources in a single, fireproofed, air conditioned and fully secure location that is accessible to all?

Recommendation:

We urge the CPC not to approve it until there has been a satisfactory explanation about why more money is needed and assurances that this already-eight-year project can be completed soon. LWVN supported the first and subsequent proposals to fund this project. Keeping our history secure and available is a value we share with many in the City. We support the need to have a modern and accessible archive, but we cannot support this application.