

The Protection of Webster Woods

Community Preservation Committee
Public Hearing Presentation

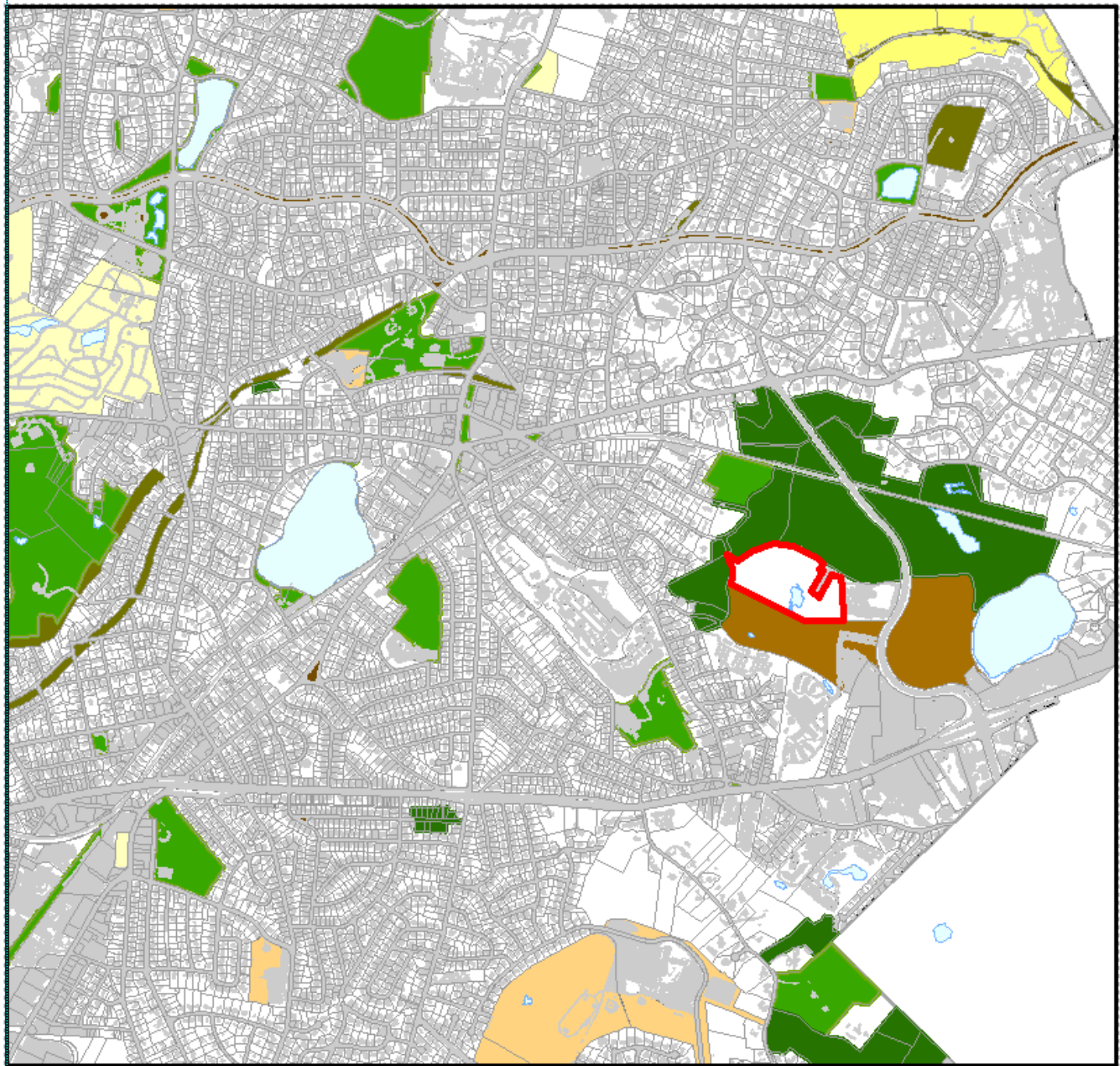
November 6, 2019



by Jennifer Steel, Chief Environmental Planner,
City of Newton

Area to be Protected

Webster Woods
is the
ecological
and
recreational
core
of Newton's largest
protected area





Woodlands



Rocky outcroppings and cliffs



Vernal Pool (in the spring)



Vernal Pool (in the summer)



Extensive network of trails





Educational Opportunities



The Core





The Goals for the Protection of Webster Woods

- ▶ Permanently protect natural portions of the lot
- ▶ Help protect surrounding conservation areas

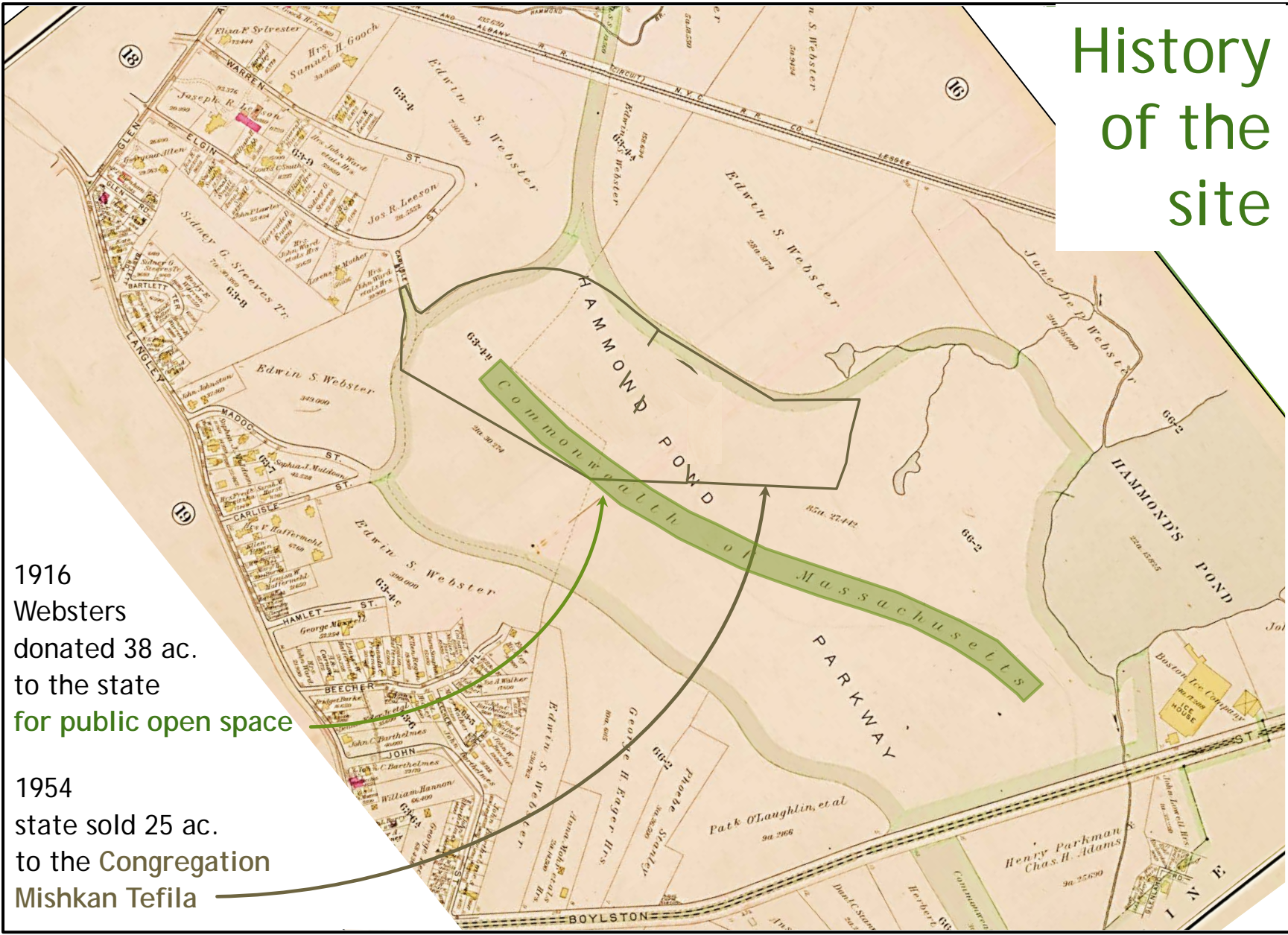
- ▶ Aligns with one of the primary purposes of the CPA
- ▶ Satisfies a long-standing open space protection priority

History of the site

1916
Websters
donate 38 ac.
to the state
for public open space



History of the site



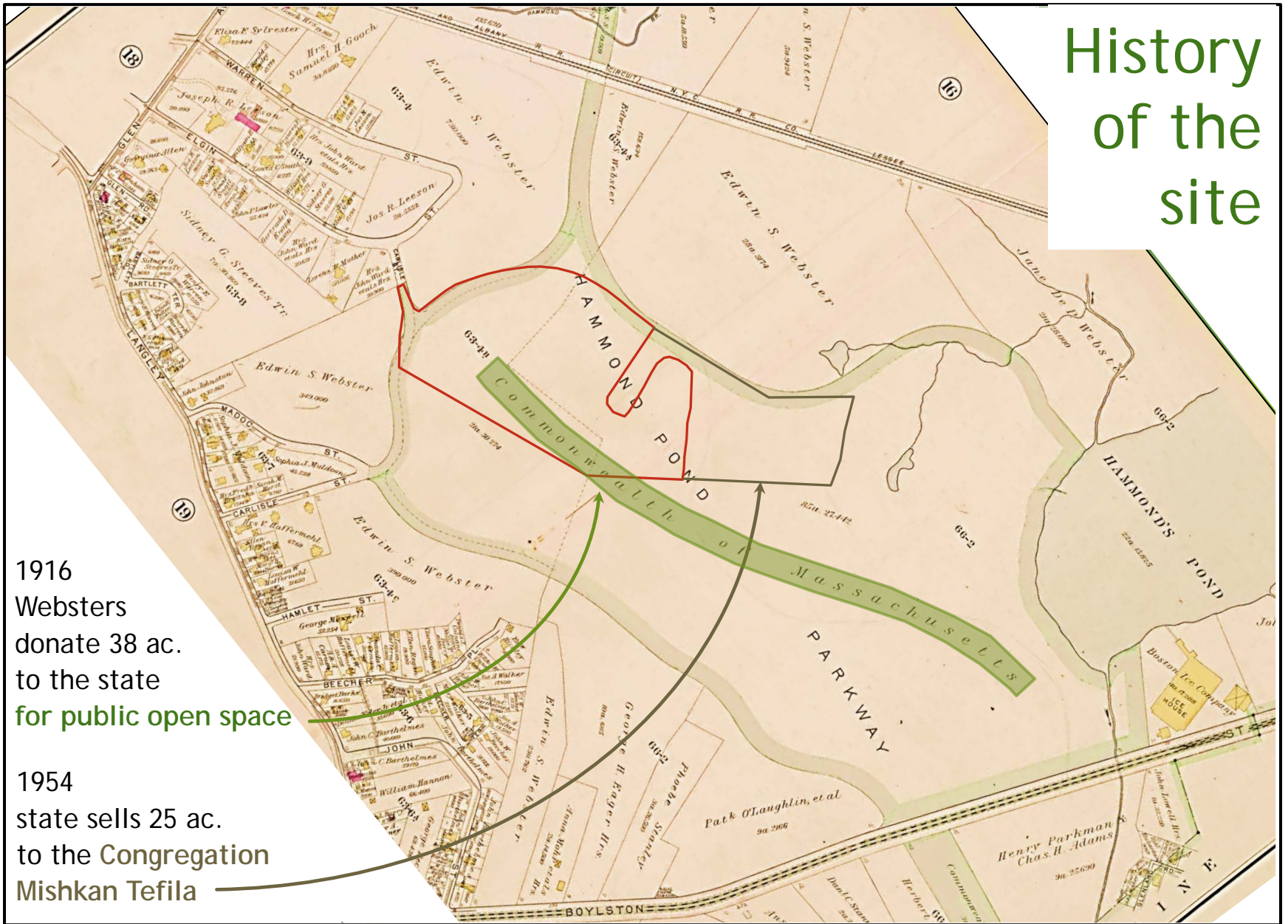
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Area to be Protected



**300 Hammond
Pond Parkway**

Newton, Mass.
Map Date: 10-21-2019



100 50 0 100 Feet

The information on this map is from the Newton Geographic Information System (GIS). The City of Newton does not guarantee the accuracy of this information. Each user of this map is responsible for determining its suitability for his or her intended purpose. City departments will not necessarily approve applications based solely on GIS data.



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Mayor - Ruthanne Fuller
GIS Administrator - Douglas Greenfield

Process to-date

- ▶ 1981, 1989, 1995, 2001, 2003, 2007 - Parcel identified as priority in Open Space and Recreation Plan
- ▶ 2015 - City Council resolution urging Mayor to “preserve the conservation and recreation character of 300 Hammond Pond Parkway” .
- ▶ 2018-2019 - Mayor worked to fully understand the public interest in permanent protection of the ecological and recreational values
- ▶ 2018-2019 - Mayor had substantial discussions with BC about permanent conservation of the undeveloped land.
- ▶ 2019 - Mayor announced her intent to ask the City Council to preserve the undeveloped land by eminent domain and pay BC fair market value.
- ▶ 2019 - Newton Conservation Commission supported preservation of the undeveloped land through eminent domain



Requested Funding for the Protection of Webster Woods

- ▶ \$15,200,000 from CPC for acquisition
- ▶ \$525,000 from CPC for legal and other
- ▶ \$15,000 from CPC for CR monitoring

\$15,740,000 from CPC

- ▶ \$200,000 from citizens for acquisition



Requested Funding for the Protection of Webster Woods

- ▶ There will be no increase in taxes as a result of this acquisition.
- ▶ No money will be taken from the City's General Fund.
- ▶ This will be funded with CPA funds, which cannot be used for City services.
- ▶ The CPA takes in roughly \$4 M each year.
- ▶ Newton's CPA planning process will ensure that funds will remain available for other open space projects, as well as for housing, historic, and recreation projects.



Anticipated Timeline for Protection of Webster Woods

- ▶ 11/6/19 - CPC Public Hearing
- ▶ 11/12/19 - CPC recommendation vote
- ▶ 11/25 -12/2/19 - City Council approval
- ▶ January 2020 - Payment is made; Webster Woods becomes City property

Help us save Webster Woods permanently



Presentation by Elizabeth Wilkinson
Chair, Mayor's Advisory Panel on Webster Woods

to Community Preservation Committee Public Hearing
6 November 2019

The process to preserve the woods began in 2015.



The Friends of Webster Woods and the Newton Conservators began conversations about preserving Webster Woods at the end of the summer of 2015, when Temple Mishkan Tefila announced that their property was for sale.

Political momentum

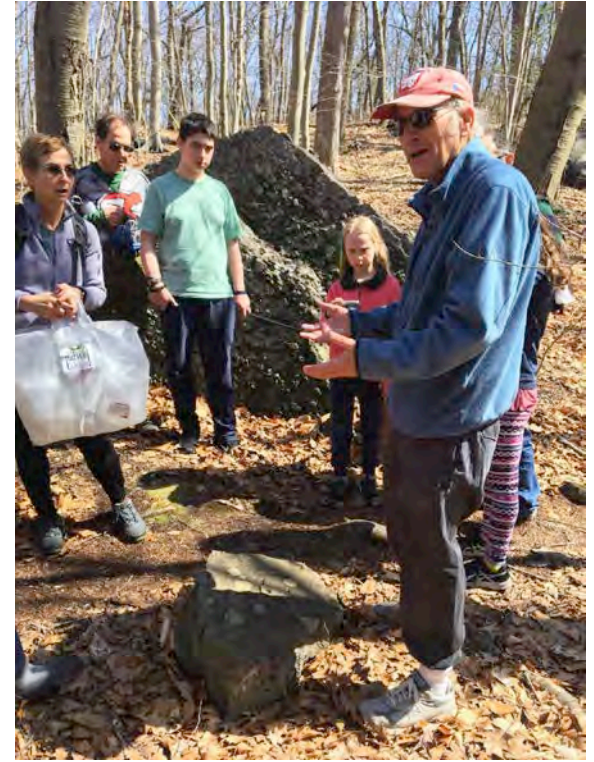
- In October of 2015, the Board of Alderman passed a resolution to preserve Webster Woods:



- In the Mayoral Election of 2017, Newton Conservators and Friends of Webster Woods asked all seven candidates to make a pledge to preserve the woods if elected.
- Six of the seven candidates made strong pledges to do so.
- In January of 2018, Mayor Fuller established the Webster Woods Advisory Panel.



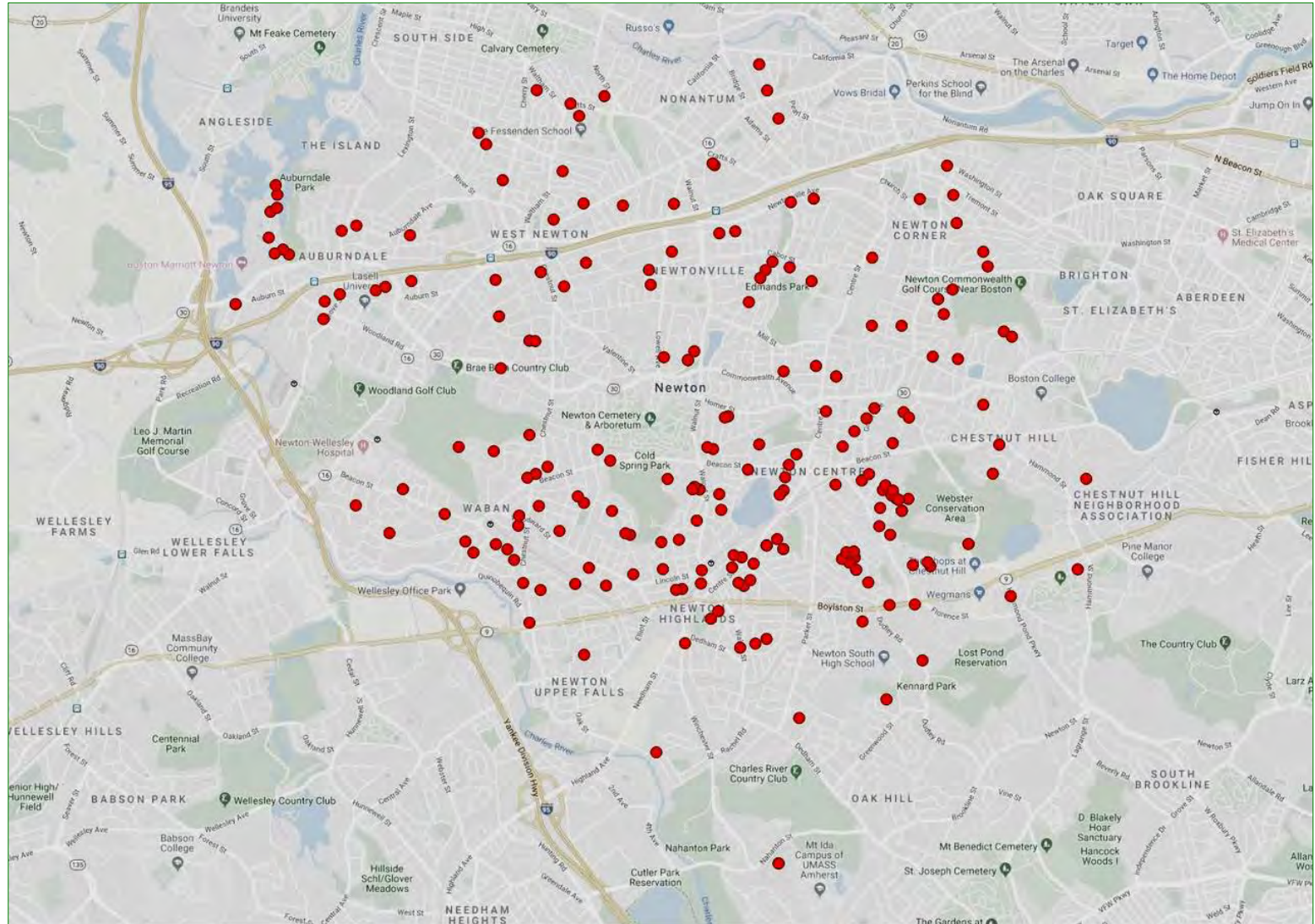
Walks in the Woods



Signs of support all over Newton



Supporters petitioned to save Webster Woods.



Please help to preserve Webster Woods permanently .

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