

P.O. Box 610038, Newton Highlands MA 02461 CrystalLakeConservancy@gmail.com

May 7, 2021

Mark Armstrong, Chair
Community Preservation Committee
City of Newton
1000 Commonwealth Ave
Newton, MA 02459

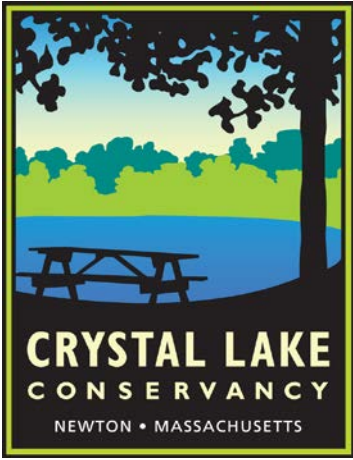
Dear Community Preservation Committee,

The Crystal Lake Conservancy was organized specifically as a long-term steward of Crystal Lake. We have been committed and focused on a healthy lake and its watershed for the past 10 years. During this time, we have been testing and acquiring vital data across the lake and from the coves regarding clarity, temperature, bacteria, nitrates, ammonia and phosphorus. One of our concerns has been runoff from the streets and watershed that allows unwanted pollutants and nutrients to run into the lake with little natural filtration.

Levingston and Cronin's Coves are greatly utilized, and this heavy use has created challenges between accommodating people while maintaining the shoreline. Levingston Cove is unusual in that it has an expanded cove area. The fishing area is actively utilized while at the same time accommodating joggers, strollers, dog walkers, people using wheelchairs and other pedestrians as they try to move safely by the fishermen. Additionally, the land pitch at the sitting area is subject to erosion and runoff damage. Newton Parks and Recreation and Culture Department along with Newton's Environmental Engineer, Maria Rose, have tried numerous types of restoration to no avail. We believe the plans create a more sustainable and safe area for fishing and pedestrians without sacrificing access to the lake. The proposed landscaping combines the re-engineering of a new slope for improved maintenance and reduction of runoff while providing additional sitting areas and better access to the lake.

Parts of Levingston Cove once had a lovely grass lawn. This open area has been enjoyed by multigenerational lake lovers. During the pandemic, it has been a highly used gathering place for people who live nearby and who come from other parts of the city. After a heavy rain, the combination of the velocity of the surrounding street water that jumps the curb and the lack of adequate grass or plantings to slow and absorb the pollutants and nutrients contributes to run-off directly into Crystal Lake. The proposed plans provide mitigation for this problem by creating terracing and rain gardens that will help absorb the runoff before it gets to the lake itself. The proposed sitting areas and walkways will allow people with mobility challenges to sit in this area and to enjoy improved access to the lake.

One of the many enjoyable activities for people is the ability to get close to the water's edge. Concepts for redesigning the cove's immediate shoreline were recently presented. While a small number of plantings may help improve the



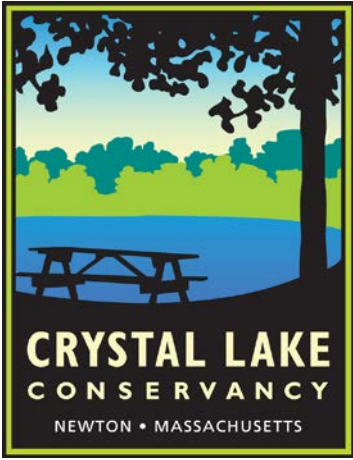
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shoreline, it is important that the plans ensure that people can continue to access the water's edge. Plantings must not create a barrier wall of foliage. Stabilization of the shoreline is important but access to the lake for all users should be maintained. The suggested stones and rocks at the shoreline are an unnatural feature that could limit enjoyment and safety for lake visitors. We look forward to working with the Parks, Recreation and Culture department to ensure a balance between environmental stewardship and maintaining excellent public access at Levingston Cove.

The plans before you are a synopsis of two years of meetings and input from the City's Crystal Lake Working group, Newton Parks and Recreation and Culture Commission, multiple advocacy groups and the general public. We believe that with the revisions as noted above, they provide an innovative but practical restoration of Levingston Cove. It is important to ensure Crystal Lake is accessible to many more generations by slowing eutrophication of the lake. This plan is a step in that direction. Please commit the necessary funding for these improvements. This will be a wonderful addition to our community for all residents and visitors to enjoy.

Sincerely,

Janice Bourque and Schuyler Larrabee
Co-Presidents of the Crystal Lake Conservancy



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