

**Nathan Giacalone**

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**From:** Nadia Khan  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 9:43 AM  
**To:** Nathan Giacalone  
**Subject:** FW: Levingston Cove project--for Wednesday  
**Attachments:** Levingston Cove memo.docx

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**From:** Andreae Downs <adowns@newtonma.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 20, 2021 2:21 PM  
**To:** City Council <citycouncil@newtonma.gov>; Nadia Khan <nkhan@newtonma.gov>  
**Subject:** Levingston Cove project--for Wednesday

Colleagues:

My thoughts on Levingston Cove

Andreae Downs

Newton City Council

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**MEMO**

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**TO:** PROGRAMS & SERVICES COMMITTEE

**FROM:** ANDREA DOWNS

**SUBJECT:** #281-21 LEVINGSTON COVE

**DATE:** SEPT. 20, 2021

**CC:** PUBLIC RECORD

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Colleagues:

As I cannot attend your meeting Wednesday, I write today to strongly support the Parks & Recreation Commission's proposal to rehabilitate Levingston Cove on Crystal Lake with \$1.4 m in Community Preservation funds.

Crystal Lake is a municipal gem, and much like Walden Pond is loved nearly to death by its abutters, swimmers, sunbathers and those who visit for the walk or the view.

The urgent issue with the Cove parkland is that it is literally disappearing into the lake. Erosion is severe, and every bit of soil that enters the lake carries with it the nutrient Phosphorus, which when combined with warmer temperatures, provides ideal conditions for the growth of blue-green algae, aka cyanobacteria, or the bright green, foul-smelling slime that can kill dogs that ingest it, create rashes on human skin, and is highly correlated with neuro-degenerative diseases in people who swim or boat in it.

Our P&R department has shown its good stewardship of new park projects with the reconstruction of the fields & woods in Newton Highlands (Winchester/Dedham streets) and the Heartbreak Hill Reservoir Park.

The Department has adopted many of the public's suggestions in their final design, including those of the Crystal Lake Conservancy and Friends of Crystal Lake, changing the rock used at the "grass" slope, for instance. There is no shovel-ready alternate plan for this site, certainly nothing that meets the long list of goals and objectives, which include:

1. Access for those with disabilities—in fact no place on the lake is there passive recreational access for people who use wheelchairs. Failure to comply with ADA and MAAB in this project opens the city to legal liability.
2. Less concrete—P&R uses decking for much of the fishing area
3. Capturing stormwater via raingardens (which remove nutrients and allow infiltration)
4. Improving water quality
5. Protecting and preserving existing trees

In addition, this project unlocks another \$75,000 that Rep. Ruth Balser secured for accessible paths from Levingston Cove to the public beach area.

I invite you to have a look at the current fishing area. There is no room for an accessible platform there without either the current plan or removing all the plant and tree material between the current path and the road, and replacing that with a 5' retaining wall and required guardrail. The resulting design would feel narrow and, in warmer weather, hot.

Please join me in supporting this good proposal.