

### **Update Since Charter of Project Funding Request**

Councilor Norton chartered this item at the last City Council meeting. Following this action Councilor Norton requested that an additional meeting be held, onsite if possible. In speaking with Councilor Norton, I explained that there were many in-person meetings previously, though I wasn't sure about site visits in years past. I explained that since COVID, we are trying hard to avoid in-person meetings because members of the public may feel compelled to attend such a meeting even if they may have an increased susceptibility to serious illness if contracting the virus. Similarly, some members of the public may avoid such a meeting so as not to put their health at risk.

In the time since the charter, I personally met with the co-presidents of the Crystal Lake Conservancy on a zoom call. I answered further questions and made assurances on their continued involvement with the project. **The Crystal Lake Conservancy held a board meeting and voted to support the project moving forward as proposed.**

I personally attended the Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council meeting and presented this project, explaining the importance to the City to incorporate universal access design into our projects and how the fishing platform achieves this objective. I answered questions from the Area Council following my presentation.

I have made Councilor Norton aware of these actions taken to share information with the Conservancy and at the public Area Council meeting.

## **Project Benefits**

- The Friends group submitted a non-platform design to PRC many weeks ago. This plan was reviewed extensively by the Department and by our project consultants. The review of this non-platform design was distributed to City Councilors and is titled: “Levingston Cove Project Letter”.
- The City’s proposed plan does include surface concrete to replace some of the pathways, however, the concrete surface area at the existing fishing wall/walkway is replaced with recycled composite decking. Additionally, the platform surface is also constructed with this material. This product is used extensively throughout the national parks system because of its low maintenance including not rotting.
- The proposed design protects all but 1 tree which is in poor health and replaces it in increased number and overall trunk diameter. The alternative sketch is deemed by our project consultant as having significant impact on many trees.
- The Commission on Disability is fully supportive of the universally accessible fishing platform.
- The platform extends 10 feet beyond the existing retaining wall and only at its widest point. Picture laying a basketball pole out from the retaining wall, adding a deck this small allows for universal access!
- The City’s plan prevents erosion and stormwater runoff from entering the lake. Past efforts to achieve this outcome have not been successful.

## **Public Meetings** (All but 2 took public comment: the first CPC meeting, and Programs and Services)

### Public Process to date:

- 1/30/2018 - Crystal Lake Working Group (CLWG) Kickoff
- 4/4/2018 – CLWG Meeting #2
- 5/20/2018 – Public Meeting #1 @ Newton Free Library
- 11/13/2018 – CLWG Meeting #3
- 2/26/2019 – CLWG Meeting #4
- 3/26/2019 – CLWG Meeting #5
- 4/22/2019 – Public Meeting #2 (P&R Commission Meeting)
- 5/20/2019 – Public Meeting #3 (P&R Commission Meeting) - Unanimous Project Approval
- 4/15/2021 – Crystal Lake Public Information Session
- 5/11/2021 – Newton Community Preservation Commission Hearing #1
- 6/8/2021 – Newton Community Preservation Commission Hearing #2 - Unanimous Project Approval
- 8/26/2021 – Newton Conservation Commission Hearing #1
- 9/23/2021 – Newton Conservation Commission Hearing #2 - Unanimous Project Approval
- 9/22/2021 – Newton City Council Programs & Services Committee – 6-0 Project Approval, 1 abstained
- 9/22/2021 – Newton City Council Finance Committee – Unanimous Project Approval
- 10/7/2021 – Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council – Project presentation

Massachusetts DCR's Universal Access Program is actively working to expand accessible fishing platforms such as the one proposed at Crystal Lake. These platforms have been constructed on lakes, great ponds, rivers, and reservoirs.

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/accessible-fishing-piers-and-platforms>



*The accessible fishing pier at Beartown State Forest.*

[Beartown State Forest](#), Monterey: An accessible pier runs along the edge of Benedict Pond. Accessible picnic tables, grills, and a seasonal restroom are nearby.

[Carson Beach](#), South Boston: An accessible fishing pier close to an accessible picnicking area with views of Boston in a scenic area. Public transportation is available.

[D.A.R. State Forest](#), Goshen: 3 accessible fishing docks are provided on Upper Highland lake. An accessible parking area and accessible trail are near the docks.

[Dunn State Park](#), Gardner: 2 accessible fishing piers are provided. One pier is near the visitors center and beach, and the other is across the pond by Betty Springs Road.

[Hopkinton State Park](#), Hopkinton: An accessible dock is provided.

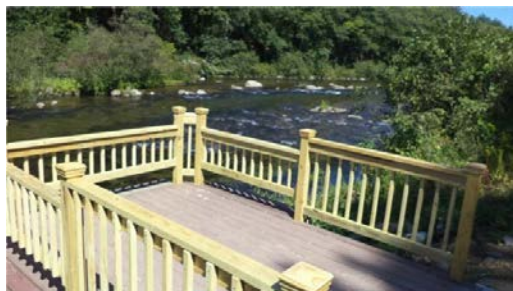
[Mt. Tom State Reservation](#), Holyoke: 2 accessible wooden fishing piers are located on Lake Bray. One pier is out in the open and has a bench, while the other is in the woods off of the accessible trail.

[Nickerson State Park](#), Brewster: Fisherman's landing offers an accessible fishing pier.

[Quinsigamond State Park at Regatta Point](#), Worcester: Fish from the accessible promenade.

[Scusset Beach State Reservation](#), Sandwich: An accessible saltwater fishing pier is located on the Cape Cod Canal.

[Wachusett Reservoir](#), West Boylston: An accessible fishing platform was added in 2017 on the Quinapoxet River, downstream of the dam. The platform is on the north side of River Road, near house number 100. Contact the Wachusett Reservoir headquarters if you need directions.



*The accessible fishing platform at the Wachusett Reservoir, on the Quinapoxet River.*