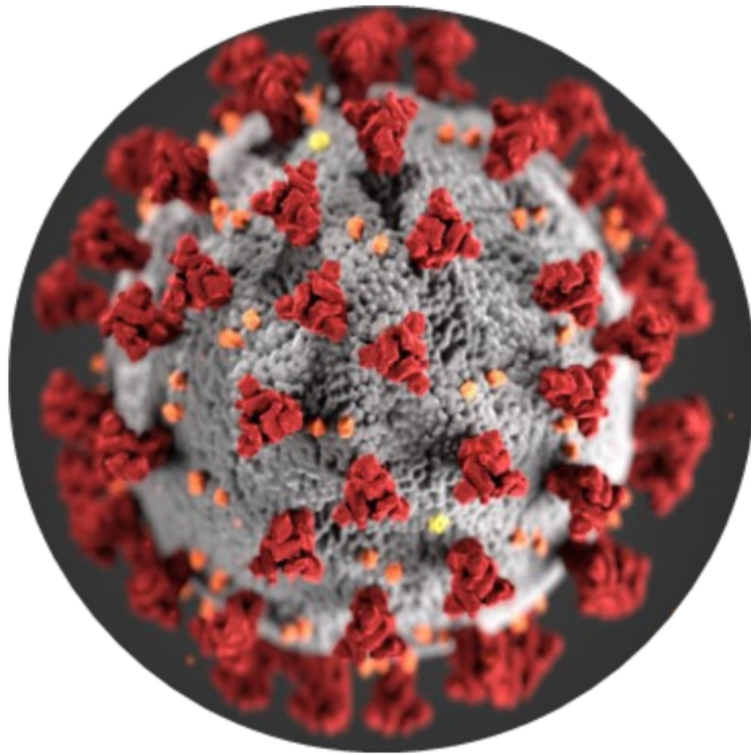


Newton Upper Falls Area Council 2020 Annual Report



NEWTON UPPER FALLS AREA COUNCIL



January 29, 2021

City Council
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Ave
Newton MA 02459

Dear Honorable Members of the City Council:

Pursuant to Section 9-10 of the City Charter, the Newton Upper Falls Area Council is pleased to provide you with this Annual Report of its activities for the calendar year 2020.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Anil Adyanthaya', is written in a cursive style.

Anil Adyanthaya
President

About the Newton Upper Falls Area Council

2012 was the inaugural year of the Newton Upper Falls Area Council. Newton Upper Falls was the second of Newton's villages, following Newton Highlands, to take advantage of the Newton city charter's provision allowing for the creation of an area council "to encourage citizen involvement in government at the neighborhood level by permitting limited self-government." Following a petition drive and a public hearing before the Programs and Services Committee, the Board of Aldermen approved the creation of the Newton Upper Falls Area Council on March 21, 2011. Since then, Area Councils have been established in Waban and Newtonville.

The nine members of the Area Council were elected during the city elections in November 2019 or appointed shortly thereafter and were sworn in in January 2020. The nine members of the 2020-21 Area Council are in alphabetical order:

Anil Adyanthaya (Tamarac Road)
Kathaleen Brearley (Rockland Place)
Patty Connolly (Rockland Place)
Susan Huffman (Indiana Terrace)
Nina Kochs (Cottage Street)
Marie Jackson (Spring Street)
Jack Neville (High Street)
Jeff Riklin (High Street)
Jay Werb (Williams Street)

Ward Five City Councilor Bill Humphrey is an ex officio member of the Area Council. Ward Five At-Large City Councilors Deb Crossley and Andreae Downs provided much appreciated support for our work.

Carol Stapleton, Manager with the Parks & Recreation Department, while not an official member of the Area Council, attends every meeting and has provided invaluable organizational guidance and other assistance to the Area Council.

At a subsequent Area Council meeting in 2020, the following officers were elected by a vote of the Area Council:

President – Anil Adyanthaya
Vice President – Jeff Riklin
Secretary – Patty Connolly
Treasurer – Susan Huffman

The Area Council addresses all issues in full session and currently has no subcommittees.

Work of the Area Council

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the events typically sponsored and managed by the Area Council, such as the John Rice Upper Falls Soup Social and Upper Falls Village Day, were cancelled. Our in-person monthly meetings, like most meetings around the world, were moved to an online format and were conducted via Zoom.

Despite the challenges created by the pandemic, the Area Council still continued to serve the residents of Newton Upper Falls as best it could:

- Worked with Northland to establish a communication channel for receiving updates on the project
- Worked with the City on the proposed renovation of Pettee Square, including the possible creation of a pocket park next to the Upper Falls Greenway
- Communicated information about the City's proposed zoning redesign to the village
- Created a memorial for City Councilor Brian Yates in recognition to his service for Upper Falls
- Represented Upper Falls during discussions on pedestrian improvement near Ellis Street and Quinobequin Road
- Advocated for improved traffic light operation at Oak Street and Christina Street
- Promoted Upper Falls businesses during the economic slowdown caused by the pandemic.
- Maintained existing communication channels such as Facebook and the Upper Falls News (the latter thanks to the great effort of Editor in Chief Margaret Alexander) and supported the introduction of a Google Group for Upper Falls residents

Area Council Finances

The Area Council does not receive any direct funding from the city and has to rely on donations and its own fundraising efforts. The Newton Upper Falls Community Development Corporation has been a significant benefactor, underwriting many of the projects described above. At year end, the Area Council had a gross amount of \$3788.74 in its bank account at Village Bank, which was \$28.95 more than we ended with in 2019.

http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/neighborhood/upper_falls/default.asp