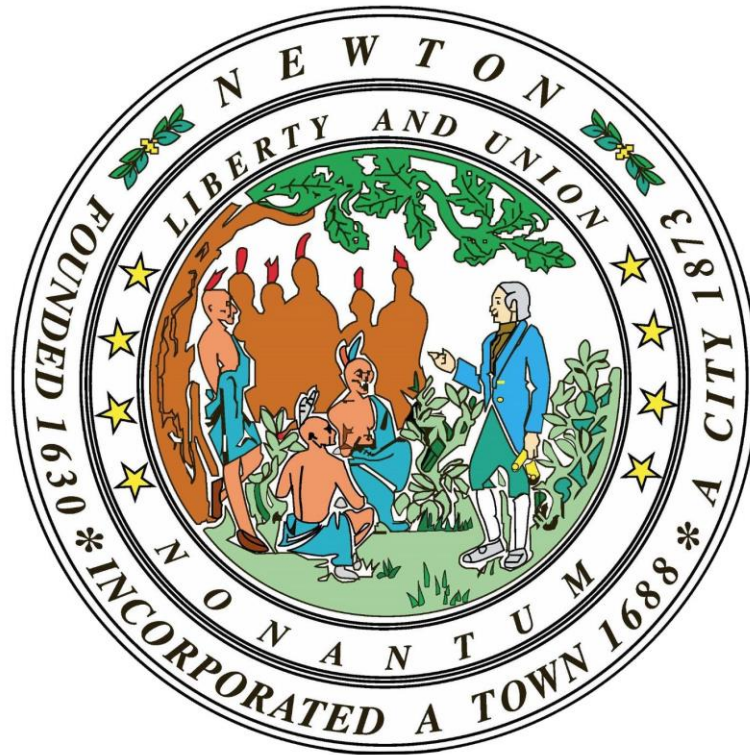


Newton City Seal Working Group Report



Ad Hoc City Seal Working Group

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Executive Summary

The Ad Hoc City Seal Working Group met roughly every other week from mid-September 2020 to mid-March 2021. Some meetings included invited speakers, other sessions were in the form of design charrettes, and many meetings were devoted to processing public input. The Chair recognizes and has deep gratitude for the hard work, intellect, due diligence, and thoughtfulness of the Group members.

Decision

The City Seal Working Group concludes that the Newton City Seal should change.

This report will detail aspects of the Seal that should be abandoned altogether; explain features that could stay, go, or be tweaked; and recommend elements that should be included in the new rendition. Our recommendation is based on four important factors:

- feedback from the community,
- feedback from Eastern Massachusetts Native groups, particularly the Massachusett tribe whose ancestors are portrayed on the seal,
- the fact that the seal does not sufficiently or accurately depict historical events, and...
- the design is outdated, unnecessarily complicated, and has degraded over time.

Impetus for the work

In the fall of 2019, Mayor Ruthanne Fuller asked the City Clerk and Director of Historic Newton to provide her with a history of Newton's official City Seal. We met a few times to discuss the history and current symbolism of the seal and by December 2019 an official history of the Seal was posted online (See A. and B. under 2. Background). The discussions led the Mayor to conclude that the Seal needed to be reviewed. However, the COVID crisis put a pause on the idea until July 2020 when Mayor Fuller called for the formation of a City Seal Working Group.

Mayor Fuller's Newsletter 8/5/2020:

The Newton City Seal was created 155 years ago. A lot has changed since 1865, which raises some key questions:

- *In what historical context was the seal designed and adopted, and what can the study of history tell us about what it conveys?*
- *Is the seal's imagery still relevant in the 21st century?*
- *Is the City's logo readable and meaningful? Is it a good design?*
- *What does the seal mean to you, if anything?*
- *Are there other graphics and/or words that would better portray the identity, spirit and values of Newton?*

Last fall and winter, I started meeting with our Director of Historic Newton Lisa Dady,

City Clerk David Olson and Dana Hanson, our Director of Community Engagement and Inclusion, to look at the history, origin and iconography of the City seal (which also appears on our City flag) and to discuss the seal's role in representing the City...

Now I think it's time to take a deeper look at our seal. I'm calling for an Ad Hoc City Seal Working Group to be formed to study our seal (and our flag). The Working Group will work to answer the key questions above and more, and to report back to me with recommendations about whether to change the seal, and if so, what that design might look like.

Since the context of history is essential to understanding the existing symbols (in many ways they are historical artifacts) and history should inform the future, I have asked Lisa and Historic Newton to lead the working group and the public process. If possible, I'm hoping the work can finish up by the end of this year. (Please know that the City Council will vote on any recommended changes.)

Forty Newtonians responded to the call and 13 citizens from throughout the city with a variety of backgrounds and a broad range of ages were chosen. This group of hardworking volunteers have consistently shown a great seriousness of purpose. Their deliberations have been thoughtful and thorough. They sought wide public input and listened intently. They studied the history behind all aspects of the seal; they discussed good graphic design and seal designs of other cities; and they paid close attention to current conversations about public symbols that show Indigenous imagery.

Massachusetts Town Seal Requirement

The requirement for Town and City Seals can be found in current Mass General Law in Chapter 40, Section 47. Section 47: Town seal; establishment; use

Section 47. Each town shall have a seal, established at a town meeting, to be kept by the town clerk. Papers or documents issued from any office or board of the town may be attested therewith. Cities which had an authorized seal in use on May tenth, eighteen hundred and ninety-nine, may continue to use such seal until changed by ordinance, and other cities shall by ordinance establish a seal of the city and designate the custodian thereof.

Background

History of the land we currently call Newton

Indigenous people, particularly the Massachusett tribe, have lived in the place we call Newton for ~ 12,000 years. People followed food sources and thus moved regularly with the seasons. They relied on hunting, gathering, fishing and planting crops. The Quinobequin, the river that runs through this land, was critical for travel, trade, food and culture. Today, most people call it the "Charles River."

English settlement in the area now known as Newton goes back to the early 1600s. By the 1630s, Newton was part of "the newe towne", which was renamed Cambridge in 1638, and was known as "Cambridge Village." In 1688, Cambridge Village officially became an independent township known by several names: Cambridge Village, New Cambridge, Newtown, and New Town. On December 15, 1691, Newton became the official name and the area became a city on January 5, 1874.

Up until about 1646, Indigenous people and English settlers also referred to this area (present-day Newton) as Cohannet. In November 1646, Rev. John Eliot informed Waban and his people that the Massachusetts General Court had granted their request to establish a Praying Town. Waban asked what the town should be called and Eliot told them "Noonatomen" or Nonantum.

Brief History of the City Seal

When Newton became a city in 1874, "it retained, with appropriate additions to the inscriptions, the seal which had first appeared on the Annual Report of the town's officers in 1865." (*Mirror of Newton*, 1907, pages 28-29). Indeed, March 1865 minutes indicate that the Selectmen "voted that the design presented be adopted for Town Seal."

The central image on the Newton City Seal has remained unchanged since at least 1874, probably 1865. It depicts a scene of Reverend John Eliot proselytizing to Native people, specifically the Massachusett, in 1646. The designer of the seal is not known, but, by the 1860s, several depictions of John Eliot preaching to the area's Native people existed and would have been easily used as inspiration or even as a direct model for the seal design.



At this point, research has not allowed us to definitively ascertain the origins or rationale for the words "Liberty" and "Union." We may speculate that since the American Civil War had just ended when the seal was adopted, the word *Union*, at least, had special

meaning for Americans.

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The Waban and Eliot image has meant different things in popular culture throughout the centuries. We will examine the scene's meaning in the 17th century, in which the historical event occurred, and in the 19th century, when a rendering of the scene was incorporated into the Newton City Seal.



Left: "John Eliot preaching to Waban and his tribe"
Eliot, the first missionary among the Indians Oertel, Johannes (1858)



Right: "John Wesley preaching to the Indians"

"Eliot Preaching to the Indians" Scene; 17th Century Context

Adapted from Merriam, Kelsey. "17th Century Context for City Seal V.2." Historic Newton, June 2019.

The scene represents a meeting between John Eliot, an English missionary, Waban, a leader of the Massachusetts tribe, and fellow members of Waban's tribe. In the scene, John Eliot stands on top of Nonantum hill and gives a sermon to the people gathered before him. Eliot, speaking to Waban and the other listeners in their native language, translates the Christian concept of the "Holy Spirit" into the Algonquin word for "wind" or "waban." When Waban hears his own name associated with the Christian God, he agrees to convert to Christianity along with many of his people who witness the sermon. (This may be a mistranslation, though, in that "East" or "Dawn" may be more accurate, and that it may have been a renaming for the purposes of a "new dawn" moment for his people.)

Place

The preaching scene is said to have occurred in what was then known as Nonantum Hill on the Newton-Brighton line. Not to be confused with today's village of Nonantum, this

area is memorialized by the City-owned Eliot Memorial Park at Eliot Memorial Road and Magnolia Street (near today's Newton Commonwealth Golf Course).

Waban

One of the Native people depicted would have been Waban who became friendly with Eliot. Waban did not hold an official title but he, along with his wife Tassansquam, was the leader of a group of Massachusetts people who lived in this area. They began to engage with Eliot's teachings, in part because they saw an opportunity to gain status with and protection from the colonists. This was the first of what the English labeled a "Praying Town" inhabited by "Praying Indians." Eventually 14 praying towns were established in the Boston area. Thus, Rev. John Eliot and Waban were an integral part of Newton's founding story. However, after their meetings, Waban and the other Massachusetts people living here remained for only five years until moving to Natick, in 1671. Eliot himself never lived here.

Waban was an important member of the Massachusetts, but he was not a sachem, or formal leader, of the tribe. His marriage to Tassansquam, daughter of the Sachem of Nashoba (Tahattawan), gave Waban land and respectability, but not the authority that he desired. Cutshamekin was the official sachem of the Massachusetts and many historians identify a rivalry between Waban and Cutshamekin. When John Eliot arrived in Nonantum in 1646, Waban seized the opportunity to align himself with the Englishman and his God. His motivations seemed to be in part to protect his people and perhaps to achieve status in this association. In the following years Waban's community moved from Nonantum to Natick. The date of Waban's death is unclear. In 1674 we see the first account of his death, a recorded deathbed confession taken by John Eliot. However, sources recounting the events of the following year describe a man called Waban leading his people into the English-imposed exile on Deer Island. While some accounts state that Waban died on the island, others describe Waban leading his people out of exile in 1678. Other documents have his "signature" in use as late as 1684.

The Praying Indians

Through his missionary work, John Eliot also helped to establish communities of Christian Natives, or "Praying Indians." At one time, fourteen such villages existed, the best-documented of which being the Natick community where Waban lived. Supervised heavily by the Puritan Church, these communities were meant to mimic European life-ways; Native peoples relinquished their semi-migratory tradition and were forced to follow strict rules of governance.

John Eliot

John Eliot was an English missionary who arrived in Massachusetts in 1631. Eliot felt

called to convert Indigenous people to Christianity, a calling which aligned with the Massachusetts Bay Colony's charter mandate. After a short stay in Boston, he settled in Roxbury and began his missionary work in the surrounding areas. In his mission to convert the Indigenous people to Christianity, Eliot learned Algonquin so that he could preach to Native peoples in their own language. Indigenous people collaborated with Eliot to create a written Algonquin language. Using their creation, they translated the Bible into Algonquin. The text, published in 1663, was the first Bible to be printed in what is now America.

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In the 17th century, the Eliot Bible was used as a tool of religious conversion, but, at the turn of the 21st century, it was used as a tool of Indigenous cultural revival. Beginning in the early 1990s, linguist and MacArthur Scholar Jessie Little Doe Baird embarked on the Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project. She used the so-called Eliot Bible to learn and revive the spoken Wompanoag language, which had all but disappeared. In addition to the Bible, Baird and others made the discovery of a treasure trove of documents including wills, deeds, petitions, marriage bands, and letters which Native people had written phonetically in Wampanoag in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Eliot Preaching to the Indians” Scene; 19th Century Context

Adapted from Silverstein, Clara. “Seal Historiography 19th Century Indian Images.” Historic Newton, June 2019.

When Newton in 1865 began using the City Seal with a depiction of John Eliot converting the native people to Christianity, it fit into a trend of 19th century interpretation of American history. At that time, the generation that had conceived and carried out the American Revolution began to die out and a new generation began to reinterpret the origins and mission of the American Republic. The role of Indians in these stories reflects the values of the Anglo-Americans telling the stories.

In *Playing Indian*, Philip Deloria theorizes that Americans had contradictory ideas of the role of Indians in America's founding stories. On the one hand Anglos wanted to glorify a “noble savage” who is free of European influence, but they also wanted to dominate the social order. Indians represented the “spirit” of a new nation, but the Anglos wanted to remain in charge of how the nation would be built. This created a “love-hate relationship of civilization and savagery,” Deloria writes.

Different generations of Americans have used Indian symbols for different purposes, but to put Newton's seal in the context of its times, in this section, we are only focusing on the 19th century. At that time, as governments were being consolidated across the

landscape, Deloria writes, Indian figures were depicted in public life to symbolize American identity separate from Europe. In addition, popular dramas about the Indians dying and offering their lands and their blessings to white people created myths about the transfer of power. These dramas portrayed Indians as vanishing people to be remembered with reverence instead of contemporaries who continued to threaten the growing nation with their claims for land and rights.

Other public institutions took liberties with stories about native people. In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln created Thanksgiving as a national holiday. The story of “friendly” Indians cooperating with the white settlers became ingrained through schoolbooks and Thanksgiving- related décor, even though tensions culminating in King Philip’s War reveal vastly more complicated relationships. The term “Pilgrims” was also coined in the 19th century – the settlers didn’t call themselves that. Nor did they wear white collars, somber cloaks, and shoes with buckles, according to research done by Plimoth Plantation.

Within this context, Newtonians likely chose an image of the native people led by Waban at Nonantum to call out the native heritage of the town (not yet a city), fitting in with the tradition of honoring the “noble savage.” Yet the native people are gathered to hear John Eliot preaching to them with the goal of converting them to Christianity. Thus the natives are recognized but not shown in charge of their own beliefs and own destiny – a disempowering scene that reflects the contradictions that Deloria points out.

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Versions of the Newton City Seal

There have been many different renditions of the seal since 1865 (see Appendix B). All include the same scene and most of the same text. There are many versions in existence now. There are two main official versions that are currently, frequently used by the City.

Engraved

This version remains more-or-less unchanged since Newton became a city in 1873. It is used by the City Clerk to authorize vital statistics, permits, records, etc.

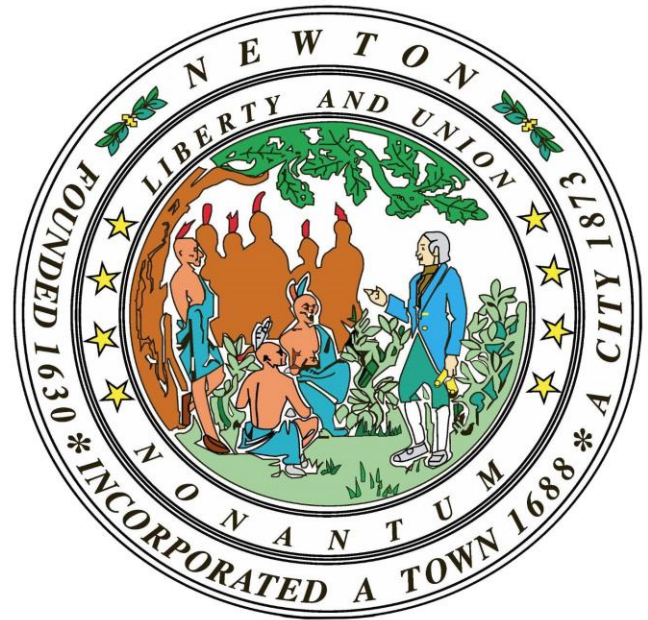


Revised

This version is a digital adaptation with a digital tracing of the image, the same as the image embedded in the floor of the City Hall lobby. It is the most widely used version and appears in media ranging from City water bills, to recycling bins, to vehicle decals.

This version appears in the City of Newton Ordinances, revised 1973:

Sec. 1-8. City seal described. The following shall be the device of the corporate seal of the city: A representation within a circle of John Eliot preaching to a group of Indians and around the same the words: "Liberty and Union" and "Nonantum;" and in an outer circle the words: "Newton: Founded 1630: Incorporated a Town 1688: A City 1873." (Rev. Ords. 1973, § 1-8) State law reference—Municipal seals, G.L. c. 40, § 47 Sec. 1-9. Documents to be sealed. All deeds and other legal documents made, given or entered into by the city, requiring a seal, shall be sealed with the city seal. (Rev. Ords. 1973, § 1-9) Sec. 1-10. Custodian of seal. The city clerk shall be the custodian of the city seal. (Rev. Ords. 1973, § 1-10) Sec. 1-11. City flag. There shall be an official city flag, the design of which shall be a field of gold with a black pale in the center which contains the city seal. The flag shall be divided into three (3) equal sections parallel to the staff, the sections at either end to be gold in color and the center section black. The official city seal shall be on the black center section and shall be in gold with black lettering. (Rev. Ords. 1973, § 1-11)



The engraved and revised versions are alike in composition, scene and text. However, there are a few notable differences. The *revised* version has added elements like stars, asterisks, rings, and colors. The *revised* version omits the odd punctuation present in the *engraved* version and standardized the typefaces. In terms of the setting, the

revised version has clarified the leaves of the oak tree and surrounding vegetation and removed a rock and hills in the background. A rifle is propped against the tree of the *engraved* version but is not present in the *revised* version. Further, the book in John Eliot's left hand has been replaced with a scroll and his right hand is beckoning, or possibly pointing up, rather than in an open palm gesture.

It is not known what informed these design decisions. Do the eight new stars symbolize anything? Was it determined that the rock was of no significance or that a scroll is more historically accurate than a book? Is the color palette based on anything?

Open Meeting Summary

A community meeting for public input was held on 19 November 2020 at 7:00 p.m.
Some responses include:

Jim Kilpatrick, Newton resident

~ 6min:30secs

Mr. Kilpatrick indicated that he had tried to raise the issue of Native American stereotypes on the seal previously, but with no responses from City, so he is glad about, and agrees with, the current work to change the seal. He has done a lot of research on this and feels that John Eliot, no matter that he was nicer than other Puritans, was preaching white supremacy. Essentially, he was saying to Native people: 'follow English culture...your religion is not good. You will go to hell. Follow the Bible.' The current seal image represents English domination over Native culture, saying 'you're no good.' It symbolizes internalized oppression.

Ellen Fisher, Newton resident

~8min:20secs

Ms. Fisher supports Jim Kilpatrick's comment that the current seal embodies complete dismissal of Native culture. Though some say this is important historically, and she agrees that Eliot believed he could better the lives of the original people, focusing on this time period embodies the complete dismissal of the cultures of the original peoples.

Ms. Fisher suggested that we either change the seal, or retire the seal altogether, keep it as an historical artifact, and teach from it. A more positive way to represent Newton is that the city is known as the Garden City. It could be interesting to include images that value outdoor spaces, trees, waterways, or gardens. Another positive image is the notion of the city of villages. [Lisa Dady conveyed that there is a law that requires Massachusetts towns and cities to have a seal.]

Jim Kilpatrick, Newton resident

~ 10min:51secs

Jim agrees with Ellen that it is better to represent Newton with nature, parks, greenery. He believes that Native people valued nature as spiritual belief, it is fitting then to have the seal honor nature. Nature and the identity with nature - seeing nature as part of one's life and spirit - is very much Native American. It is very appropriate for the seal to have a lot to do with nature.

David O., Newton resident

~ 12min:30secs

Mr. O 'Neil recommends the group find something that better symbolizes Newton. The Committee should first find a symbol that is unifying, in general, not just for a seal which is limiting. He can envision a symbol, generally accepted among Newtonians, that spurs pride in the city. He gave Rhode Island as an example - the R.I. flag is an anchor, and the motto is Hope, which works for everyone.

Nora Lester Murad

~ 18min:38sec

Ms. Murad is happy that the current seal will, hopefully, be retired. The retirement of the current seal presents a wonderful citywide opportunity to learn our history.

Public Meeting recording here:

<https://apps2.newtonma.gov/apps/mayor/seal111920.htm>

In addition to the public comments, this letter was submitted by Eliot Church, (named by the church’s founders, in 1845, for Rev. John Eliot).

May 8, 2021

Dear Lisa (and Committee),

Your recommendation that the City of Newton remove the Rev. John Eliot from the City seal is an appropriate decision on multiple counts. Foremost among them is the offense it gives to our indigenous nations. Nor does the image represent history correctly—it is a 19th century view of colonial history, as your report shows, and speaks from a parochial, patriarchal Christian stance from which I hope we in the United Church of Christ have graduated.

As it happens, Eliot's evangelistic motivations were at variance with both his contemporaries and 19th century views of Christian missions, although he did share some of the regressive attitudes about the indigenous people. But that part of the story is much bigger and requires an impossible subtlety that would be required in order to convey in a single image. Best to remove Eliot completely.

That leaves the matter of how to represent the fact that we in Newton, and in this whole country, stand and live on indigenous ground. That will be the challenge of the design team, and your committee has done a good job of researching that part of the assignment, too.

I repeat my commendation of your Committee’s work and your recommendation to the Mayor. Thank you for soliciting my perspective, and I hope we can continue this conversation together because there is more to Newton history than the city seal comprises.

Blessings,

*Rev. Richard Chrisman, Ph.D.
Eliot Church UCC
Newton, MA 02135*

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Newton North High School Survey

Group Member Isaac Tang made a presentation about the City Seal and then distributed an unofficial survey among his Newton North classmates. The 72 students responded:

- Do you know what the Newton City Seal depicts?

Yes: 93%

No: 7%

- Do you support a change of the Newton City Seal?

Yes: 78%

I'm not Sure: 15%

No: 7%

The most popular reasons given by those who felt the seal should be changed were (in order):

- It no longer represents us
- It is historically inaccurate and potentially offensive
- It is offensive
- It is poorly designed

The most popular reasons for not changing the seal were:

- It contains important history
- It is not offensive

Vision Meeting

On 17 December 2020, the Seal Working Group held a visioning meeting to synthesize community responses from the public and NNHS surveys. We grouped and examined the most popular response words which helped in developing the following 5 themes (in no particular order):

1. A place that values education.

[education, interesting, smart, intellectual, capable, invested]

2. A place that is globally connected.

[global, diverse, international, varied, eclectic]

3. A forward-thinking progressive community.

[Liberal, open-minded, aspirational, progressive, adaptability]

4. The villages enable us to foster our sense of close-knit community.

[city, villages, neighbor, community] emotions you feel when you are part of a community: [friendly, loving, safe, helpful, peaceful, welcoming, together, family, inclusive]

5. Newton values the preservation of green spaces.

[paths, garden city, trees, green, environmental, sustainable, open space, Charles River]



After collecting and distilling the ideas submitted from the community, the group set out to identify the most important thematic categories. Working individually, each group member ranked these themes on a three-tiered scale (Top priority, Important Priority, Other Priority). The individual responses are in the Appendices, summarized here:

	Education	Global / Diversity	Progressive / Future	Community	Environment	Historic	Native Reference
Amy				Villages	A natural feature	3	2
Jim	1	2	Next Generation	3	3	2	3
Kerry	3			Inclusivity	Charles River	3	
Steve	2	1		Villages	River, Tree, Sun	3	3
Judy B.	Learning	3			3	3	3
Ryan	3				3	3	
Alyssa		3	3		2	2	3
Diana					3	3	3
Judy D.	2	3	Parents	2	3	3	3
Weighted Total	14	9	8	24	23	15	14

Working Group Responses. Top Priority given a weight of 3. Important Priority = 2. Other Priority = 1

A tally of these responses shows that *Community* (Inclusivity, Villages, etc.) and *Environment* (Trees, Water, Open Spaces) are the highest priorities among group members. Notably, these themes were mentioned in every response. *History*, a *Native Reference*, and *Education* received the next level of response. *Global* and *Progressive* themes had the lowest totals. Responding members also identified specific imagery and design elements. Suggestions that relate to the two most popular themes of *Environment* and *Community* were:

Environment

- Water: Charles River/Quinobequin, 3 Ponds/Lakes
- Trees: an Oak Tree
- The Sun
- Native symbols: fish, feather, wolf?
- 7 hills
- Colors: green and blue
- Echo Falls
- Canoeing

Community

- 13 Villages represented by symbols (stars, leaves, etc.)
- Roundness of Seal
- People on equal ground
- "Union" in motto
- Community buildings: Cupola on library, City Hall, Echo Bridge

Indigenous Views

One of the first priorities of the Seal Working Group was to understand the perspective of local Native groups. Gil Solomon, Massachusetts Sachem, and Maria Turner, Nipmuc leader, submitted formal responses to the Working Group. Following, are those letters and additional Native voices that are critical to understanding the history represented by the seal.

Gil Solomon, Massachusetts Tribe at Ponkapoag:

May 3, 2021

TO: The Town of Newton City Seal Working Group

The current seal is historically accurate since your site was the first Praying town in the Bay Colony and Eliot was responsible for creating this type of village. However Waban was not a leader chosen by the people but by Elliot. Massachseuk leaders were Sachems chosen by the tribe for their ability to provide and protect. Waban was not that person. Most of these leaders chosen by Eliot renounced these positions after it was plain that the promise of equality with the invaders was false and the people returned to the ways proscribed by the ancestors. The fact that some lasted until the

18th century was due more to the resilience of our people than to the model proscribed [sic] by Eliot.

Our problem with the Seal is the false premise that the native people accepted the model and the premise that was presented, rather than a means of survival and secondly that we are displayed in a subservient role.

It is great that Newton honors its original name, others that have survived have not. Most all have eliminated any reference to the Massachuseuk people that were the first inhabitants of their town in their official documents and emblems.

Our desire would be that our people not be depicted as less than the invaders nor as extinct should any words displayed on the seal be those of reconciliation and honor. Certainly Massachuseuk people should appear on the seal and in Colonial dress as well since that was what was proscribed [sic]. Eliot could be there as well with a single person dressed in the same way to depict Waban. Not all the Massachseuk were willing to accept Christianity as defined by Eliot.

*Nanepashmequin,
Sachem to the Massachuset People at Ponkapoag*

Maria Turner, Natick Nipmuc Tribe:

April 26, 2021

Thank you and the group for all of the work that you have done. It appears you included as many communities as possible and received much input.

These are my thoughts about the seal. I do not like the representation of the current seal that is used, I have concerns around the appearance of John Eliot and his overpowering stance to the Indigenous figures. Whether he holds a bible or a scroll, it still gives an appearance of some sort of tool that is used to marginalize a group of people. Also, the Indigenous people are depicted faceless, which appears to denote they are less important. As a matter of fact, the Indigenous male in front has a skeletal type of face which depicts death to me. The appearance of facelessness is showing how unimportant they appear to be. All the individuals on the seal look like a bad cartoon drawing. Once again, the John Eliot male figure is shown to overrule a group of warriors. Also, I do not appreciate the words, "Liberty and Union", as liberty was not offered to the Indigenous people who were forced from their land and no union ever came about. The word Nonantum should be removed as this is John Eliot's word.

My thoughts for a seal include viewing the back of an Indigenous warrior person, possibly standing looking out at the river wearing his skins with a fur hide hanging off his back and a staff or hunting tool in his hand, his wife and young child standing by his side. Include a tree form that is local to the area. This could possibly be the depiction of Waubon and Tassanquam (using the correct spelling of their names) looking out over water and land that they are about to leave.

The word Land of the Massachusett should be added.

I think the use of an Algonquin word of Cohannet or Quinobequin with the correct spelling should be included.

Of course, I realize that the committee has received many thoughts and wishes around what the seal should interpret. I feel that it is important it does not make a group of people feel less than when they look at it.

Thank you for the opportunity to give thought to the Newton seal. I do appreciate it. Let me know if you have any questions.

*Maria Turner
Chairperson
Natick Nipmuc Tribe*

Native voices present and past:

- Dr. Larry Fisher (Wompimeequin Wampatuck) is a Newton resident who lives in the city with his family. He self-identifies as a member of the Mattakeeset Band of the Massachusetts tribe. During a meeting of the Seal Group, his comments were: *I'm really blessed to even still be living in Nonantum [Newton]. You know, a lot of people who are families of color, they can't even afford to live in a place that originally... belonged to the Massachusetts. ...Not to say 'belonging to,' because the concept of land ownership was much different back then than what it is now, it's a monetary value today. Back then it was a cultural value... a cultural connection of identity and where you were from, and that itself had so much value.*

Dr. Fisher is troubled by the image on the current city seal, stating: *To me, it looks like a bunch of dumb Indians, that don't know where they're at, or what they're doing. They look like they're students. Some of them are even sitting down... When I go to the archives and look at all these images, it's always helpless Indians that don't look confident in who they are and who they come from. But if you look at our language... It's all about being very sure about who we are where we come from.*

Dr. Fisher contends that John Eliot's impact on the Massachusetts Tribe is complicated. *Because of John Eliott's efforts to write the Massachusetts language, we've been... able to teach our young people the language... It was a great deed that was done for us all these years later so our young people are speaking the Massachusetts dialect in which John Eliot wrote that native dictionary. But also there were the efforts to teach Christianity that ... caused a lot of division.*

- In an article about the "first Thanksgiving," Linda Coombs (Aquinnah Wompanoag) says: *When the colonists came over in the 17th century, they had to get rid of us in one form or fashion or another whether it as converting us, moving us,*

annihilating us, or shipping us out of the country into slavery, and I just wish people knew that because this history is not yet well known, but that's what it took for America to be what it is today... Time Magazine article, November 23, 2020

- Jean O'Brien (Ojibway) explains: *But as the 17th century goes on, they create this elaborate legal structure that is designed to justify their presence on Indian homelands. What they do is they create a legal system where they purchase the land and this is done through all variety of persuasion, coercion, that maintains at least the appearance of legality.* As quoted in the film *We Still Live Here: Âs Nutayuneân*, 2010.

- Earl Mills, Sr., Mashpee Wampanoag, as quoted in the film *We Still Live Here: Âs Nutayuneân*, 2010: *People come here and all of a sudden, you know, we're called savages and the cross comes. ... The cross becomes your right to take my land: to kill me because I'm a savage and you're not following this cross.*

- Naticksqw Chief Caring Hands, Natick Praying Indians website: *Although we are not the only descendants, we are the only existing Praying Indian Tribe. The blood of a praying Indian is both physical and spiritual. Our lineage of both is unbroken. ... As a chief honored in the spiritual lineage of Waban, first indigenous minister of light and a remnant surviving the physical and spiritual holocaust of a blessed people, the Praying Indians stand as first ambassadors of this country to the world. In an inordinate display of reconciliation, we extend our hand to our captors.*

Native voices from the past:

- Monequasson was among the Native people that John Eliot attempted to convert in the 1640-50s. *When I first heard instruction, I beleeved [sic] not, but laughed at it, and scorned praying to God; afterward, when we were taught Cohannet (that is the place where he lived) I still hated praying, ... but afterwards, because I loved to dwell at that place, I would not leave the place, and therefore ... I prayed not for the love of God, but for the love of the place I lived in.* From Clark, the Eliot Tracts.

- Waban's words were recorded by John Eliot: *Sometime I thought if we did not pray, the English might kill us.* Waban in John Eliot, *A further Account of the progress of the Gospel*, 1659.... *a little while ago after the great sickness, I considered what the English do, and I had some desire to do as they do, and after that I began to work as they work, and then I thought I shall quickly die, and I feared lest I should die before I prayed to God.* John Eliot, *Tears of Repentance*, 1653.

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Comments on the Design

One of the questions that Mayor Fuller asked the Seal Working Group to answer was, “is the seal good design?”

The short answer is *no*.

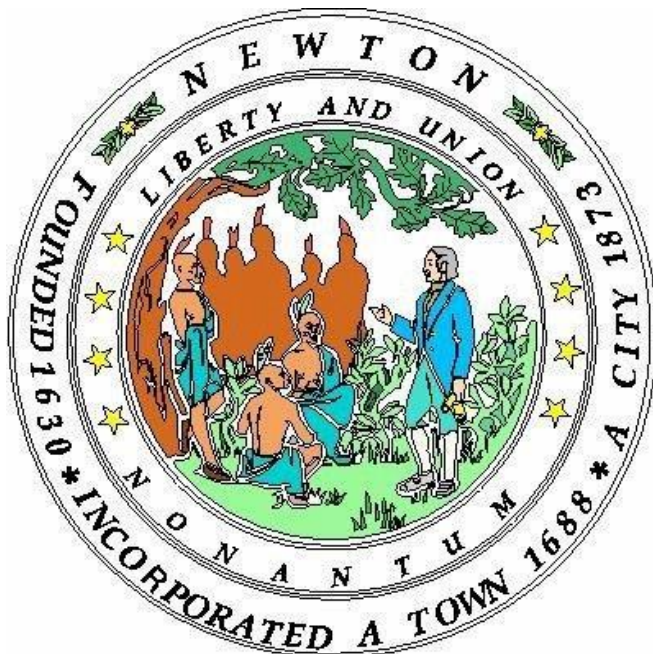
The longer answer is: While the *engraved* version is successful both visually and in accomplishing its narrowly-defined purpose, it has an “old fashioned” appearance and is difficult to translate into digital formats. The *revised* version, the one mostly commonly used now, suffers from some visual missteps and is inadequate in fulfilling its function.

There are three main reasons why the design of the *revised* version fails, each a deeper level of complexity to solve:

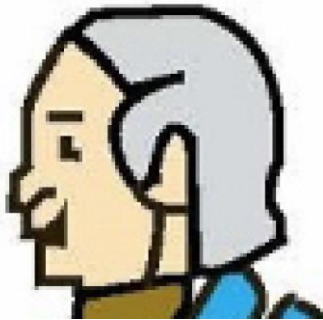
- Degraded quality
- Ill-considered decisions when digitized
- A changing function

Degraded Quality

The seal image file itself has degraded in quality over the many years it has been used. The *revised* version of the seal was created 15+ years ago and has endured numerous iterations along the way. A typical online version that the Working Group located through the City is this one:



Fortunately, some higher resolution versions can be found on the internet. Still, the many years of saving and resaving the file itself has yielded strange artifacts and cartoonish effects like these.



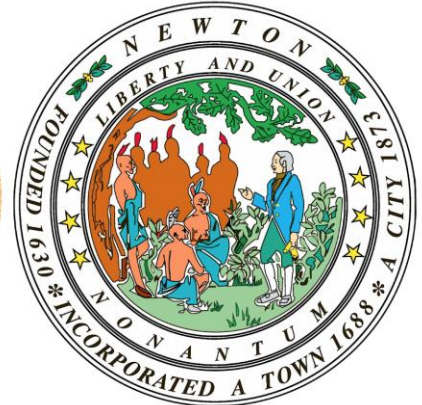
Even the definitive *engraved* version has not been immune to degrading quality over the years. On the left is how the seal looked in 1955. On the right is how it looks today.



This kind of visual decay is not uncommon and is easily remedied with a quality refresh.

III-considered decisions when digitized

While the file quality is superficial and easy to address, there remain design issues directly attributed to the manner in which the *revised* version was digitized. When creating a digital file, the designer chose to make a tracing in which details were lost.



In this pursuit, a few questionable design decisions were made.

1. The word Newton which is the most prominent text on the prior versions, has been downgraded and given equal weight to the rest of the text.
2. Similarly, all the text has been reset in Times New Roman and the lettering is awkwardly spaced. In the engraved version, it's easy to tell what is a place name, what is a motto, and what are important dates. The revised version offers no such visual cue.
3. The revised version uses asterisks as a decorative delimiter. While there is nothing technically wrong with this, there are already stars and fleurons doing the same work.
4. Further element creep is seen by the number of new concentric rings. The engraved version has 4. The floor version, 5. And the revised version brings the total to 8.
5. The same kind of exponential increase is seen in the colors used. The engraved has 2. The floor seal uses 3 and the revised uses 16. Designwise, it is almost always best to keep the palette as simple as possible. There is no need for 6 different shades of orange.
6. One of the reasons that the art in the scene is so confusing and difficult to parse stems from the way the figures were revised. Because of this, much of the imagery is oddly outlined and unclear.



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future design should take into consideration the process of repeated iterations of digitization.

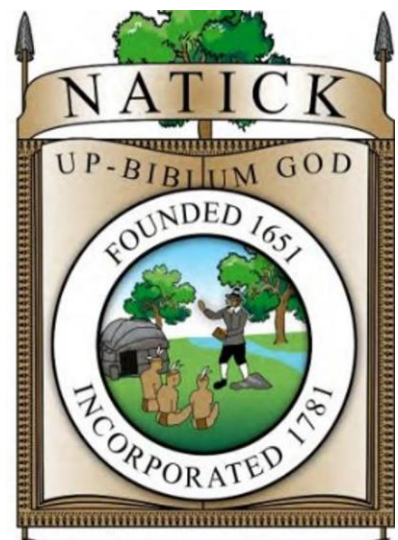
A Changing Function

A bigger issue to clear up, however, stems from the changing function of the seal. For 150 years the seal was used by the City Clerk for official documents. But it stands to reason that a city emblem can represent the city on more than just certificates. It was added to the flag, podiums, vehicles, the city website, and tax bills. Its function changed from that of officializing legal documents to something broader, something more like a city brand. But in this capacity, the *revised* version falls short for several reasons.

1. It is unoriginal. A brand should be unique but the Working Group reviewed several seals from Massachusetts cities and towns and noted that many show a moment of contact between European settlers and Indigenous people. (Natick's Town Seal also depicts the interaction between Eliot's missionaries and the Indigenous people, that "Praying Indian" community having moved to Natick from Nonantum / Newton.)

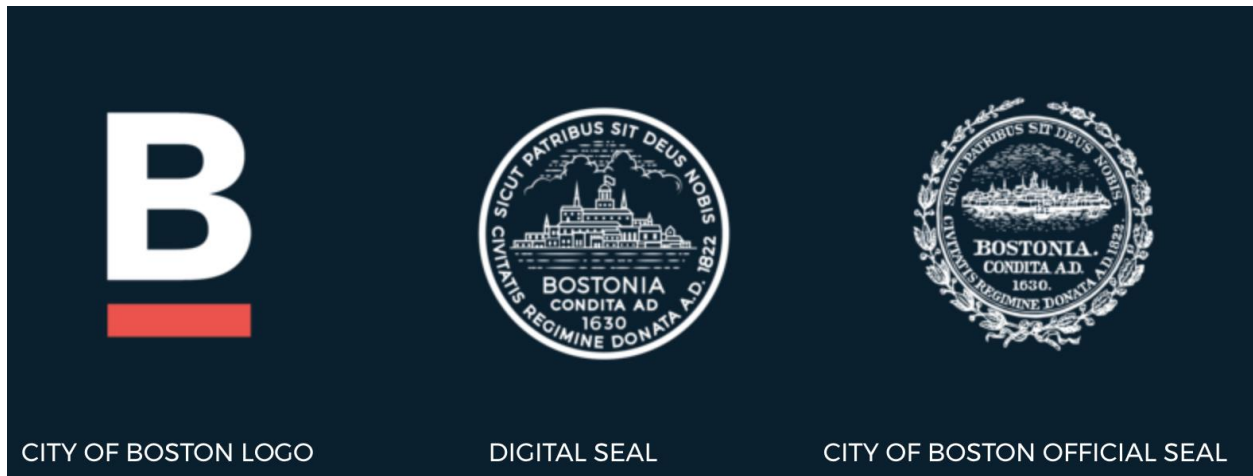
2. Seal requirements are different from brand requirements. For documents, the original seal only had to be 2 inches in diameter. It was designed to be read at small sizes. When scaled to the size of a recycling bin, it doesn't look right. Conversely, when converted digitally for an avatar, it is confusing and jumbled.

3. Further incompatible distinctions: A city seal is tied to the city's past; a city brand is future-oriented. The brand reflects the aspirations of current residents and can be



changed to reflect future residents—while the seal typically remains constant to show municipal authority and history.

One solution is to develop a logo alongside the seal. This is the approach taken by Boston.



Whatever the solution, it's clear from a design point of view that the current seal falls short of its target. A compromise might be found by overhauling the current *engraved* version and using it to inform a simplified *logo* version to use as a brand. This will be discussed more in the section called *A Branding Option Case Study*.

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Working Group Recommendation

Change the Seal

The City Seal Working Group recommends that the City of Newton make changes to the City Seal. Our recommendation is based on four important factors:

- feedback from the community,
- feedback from Eastern Massachusetts Native groups, particularly the Massachusett Tribe whose ancestors are portrayed on the seal,
- the fact that the seal does not sufficiently or accurately depict historical events, and...
- the design is outdated, unnecessarily complicated, and has degraded over time.

What Elements to Keep

Although the Working Group recommends a change to the city seal, we recognize that the seal does have some pieces that are meaningful to current sensibilities. The engraved version—as a seal—has a lot going for it: 150+ years of use, exemplar of the form, an authoritative tone, and charming typography. After months of weighing the evidence gathered from the community and considering the role of a city seal, we do not recommend a complete overhaul of the seal, rather we strongly recommend that elements of the current design carry through to the new design. As an official symbol that is not entirely “broken,” and for the sake of tradition, we believe that a visual through-line between the past and future should be achieved.

We have determined the following about each component of the emblem:

- Circular shape – retain for its official and traditional feel
- Stars, laurel, lines – these could stay or go
- “Liberty and Union” - these words can stay or go depending on context. While there is nothing wrong with them, and a case can be made for keeping the motto, it is anticipated that new words will arise from the contemporary feedback and displace this archaic phraseology. If needed, these words can be a tool for the objective of retaining a connection (visual and/or textual through-line) to the outgoing seal.

The motto “Liberty & Union” seems to have origins in the 18th century. For example, in 1774 it was used in Taunton, MA as an opposition to British rule. It was later popularized in the closing line of a celebrated speech given by Massachusetts Senator Daniel Webster in 1830.

- Founding dates - these phrases can stay or go depending on context.
- Nonantum - The group contemplated retaining this Algonquin word as a means to connect with Indigenous people, past and present. However, the history of this word is complicated. The recommendation is to remove this word for the reasons listed in *What Elements to Change* below.

What Elements to Change

We recommend removing:

- **The scene of John Eliot preaching to Waban and other Indigenous people.** This scene lacks historical context and accuracy. It also glorifies the arrogant concept of devaluing a culture and trying to change that culture’s view of the sacred, their traditions, customs, and everyday way of living. Moreover, Eliot’s mission, representing the Church and the State of the Bay Colony and England,

was to cajole or force a way of life on the people who have lived here for thousands of years. The work of these early missionaries, and their governmental counterparts, has been called “cultural genocide” by Historians. As a result, the scene is disrespectful to the Massachusetts Tribe, on whose land we live and whose ancestors suffered violence and degradation, and to people of any background who eschew proselytization and conversion work. This scene needs to be replaced with something more suitable.

The Group recommends using this opportunity to flip the narrative from one of disregard to one of respect and acknowledgment. We feel strongly that some element of the final design should connect to Indigenous heritage and/or to the continued presence of Native people in Massachusetts today. Some possibilities:

- Incorporate a land acknowledgment, e.g. replace the date markers in the outer circle with something like “Founded in 1630 on the land of the Massachuset.”
- Choose symbolism that has meaning to the Massachuset tribe today.
- Use Algonquin words, e.g. Cohannet or Quinobequin, or other suitable language as guided by Indigenous advisors.

● **The word Nonantum.** The recommendation is to remove this word: a) There are different interpretations of the meaning of the word, which would cause confusion in the ongoing explication of the seal’s content; b) in any case, the word was conferred by Rev. John Eliot acting as an agent of the Church and State whose mission was to convert Indigenous people to English customs and beliefs; c) in present-day Newton, one of our 13 Villages is named Nonantum which does not tie to the early history of Newton but to the latter part of the 1800s, also a recipe for confusion.

In November 1646, Eliot informed Waban and his people that the Massachusetts General Court had granted their request to establish a town. Eliot told them the town should have a new name and suggested “*Noonatomen*,” which signified “rejoicing.” As Eliot explained, it was the English who were rejoicing at Waban and his followers’ desire to “know God.” [Eliot’s own account of his meeting with Waban (Waubon) and the new name of the village from: *Eliot, J., Wilson, J. and Shepard, T., 1865. The Day-breaking, if not the sun rising of the Gospel. New York: Reprint of 1647 edition for J. Sabin.*]

“This place was called Nonantum or Noonatomen by Eliot, which signifies in English “rejoicing.” The word, according to Dr Trumbull, [James Trumbull, a 19th Century philologist] means literally “I rejoice” or “I am well minded.” The form Noonatomen (or Nonantomum) is plural, “we rejoice.” ... It is well to observe that no Indian would have applied such a name to a locality, for the reason that their own names are invariably descriptive in one way or another of the place designated.” [The Significance of John Eliot’s Natick,” William Wallace Tooker, American Anthropologist, September 1897.]



Jackson, Francis *History of the Early Settlement of Newton*, 1854. Nonantum (now Newton Corner). Site of Waban's interactions with Eliot as seen on the current Seal.



Map of Nonantum (now Newton Corner), 2020. Site of Waban's interactions with Eliot as seen on the Seal.

Finally, keeping this place name, which in the 17th-century referred to the region of Farlow Hill where Waban and his kin lived, is quite confusing now that there is a Newton Village called Nonantum which does not connect to the current City Seal. That neighborhood was referred to as North Village in the mid-1800s when the seal was first adopted and continued to be North Village until around the 1880s. The name of the village may have evolved due to the Nonantum Worsted Company’s large presence there.

New Elements

The Group gathered, documented, and synthesized community input as well as the considerations and analysis of the Group itself. The results are found in the Present-Day Responses section of this report and in the Creative Brief (Appendix A). The creators of the new Seal are meant to use this feedback to inspire the new design.

Branding Option Case Study

It’s reasonable to assume that the city will continue to use the seal emblem as both a seal and a brand. While this is not ideal for several reasons, developing a separate logo (like the City of Boston) can be a costly endeavour. Here is a hypothetical example of how to have “the best of both worlds.”

	
<p>Seal (Overhauled from Engraved Version)</p>	<p>Logo (Informed by Seal)</p>

Setting the central image aside (the question mark is a placeholder), the engraved version could be overhauled it in the following ways:

- Retain much of the content of the outer rings as a link to previous iterations of the seal.

- Consolidate the dates to the original founding year with an added land recognition note “Founded 1630 on Massachusetts Land”. The Group feels that years 1688 and 1873 are optional or even unnecessary.
- The new central image should be in black and white (engng, scratchboard, etc.) for consistency with prior versions as well as the requirements of the City Clerk.
- Remove *Nonantum* and potentially replace with a suitable Algonquin word or phrase, e.g. Cohannet or Quinobequin as guided by Indigenous advisors.
- Retain “Liberty and Union.” The Working Group identified these words as worthy of being retained or abandoned, depending on context. It should be noted that the phrase itself seems far removed from—and even contrary to—The English Colony’s 17th-century relationship with indigenous peoples, but in a context absent that reference, and if the case can be made for these words in the 21st century, retaining them would be a through point to the original symbol.

The new central image can now inform a simplified, less restrictive logo version. The logo version doesn’t need to check the many boxes required of a seal. It doesn’t need to be circular. It doesn’t need to have the dates and motto. It can look modern and fresh and can be updated as needed to continually look modern and fresh. Graphically, it would make sense for the logo version to tie back to the seal in more than just content, perhaps also in elements like line weight and typography.

The success of this solution would involve developing clear guidelines about when and where to use the seal vs. the brand. A good rule of thumb is “seals tie back to the government while brand is more about the community.”



Next Steps

With respect, we offer this report to Mayor Ruthanne Fuller for her consideration. If she accepts the premises of this report, her administration will present it to the City Council for consideration and an eventual vote.

If approved, a new City Seal will need to be created. The Mayor’s office will put out an RFP for design services. The Creative Brief (Appendix 1) will guide the designers. The Seal Working Group believes that we can be of critical service during the design process. Having spent nine months diving deeply and thinking broadly about this topic, we are well-positioned to help bring to reality a new design that reflects the aspirations of Newton.

Finally, the Working Group has indicated that there should be an educational component to the process wrap-up. Lisa Dady, on behalf of Historic Newton, affirms this with a commitment to 1. Install educational signage providing context to the “old” seal in places where the emblem is permanent, such as City Hall’s lobby floor. 2. Offer presentations to stakeholder groups (e.g. neighborhood associations, community groups, elected officials, etc.) about the history behind the current seal and the rationale for a new one. 3. Provide resources to Newton Public Schools about the history that the seal represents.

The Seal Working Group stands ready to assist in each of these steps.

Appendices:

Appendix A. Creative Brief

The purpose of the brief is to communicate the design direction for a design team creating the new mark.

Vision Statement:

Newton is a leader of progressive thinking respecting social justice, environmentalism, education, and a culture of inclusivity.

Target Audience for City Seal:

The audience is very broad in regard to who will be using and seeing the seal in day to day life. That includes children through seniors and a diverse population of ethnicity, cultures, educational backgrounds, and vocations. Because of this broad range, the mark aspires to find common ground that serves to unite.

Design Objective:

The goal is to create a seal that is forward-looking and represents the core values of respect, diversity, equality, and inclusion that the City of Newton encourages all citizens to aspire to. Emphasis should be on communicating the values of **humanity, Indigenous land recognition, a tree to represent conservation, and the river which is a defining feature of Newton. Secondary supporting elements are the 13 villages, government iconography, and a global element.**

Key Newton values to be mindful of:

- All are welcome and included.
- Respect for land recognition and representation of native cultures.
- Diversity of people and the equality of opportunity.
- High quality education.
- Green spaces and environmental sustainability.
- Global perspective

Creative Requirements:

Must-haves:

- The word "Newton"
- Circular
- "Official" look
- Meaningful early date - See Appendix E - Early Newton Dates.
- Native land recognition, e.g. *Founded on the land of the Massachuseuk*
- Retention of some elements or visual "through line" from the outgoing seal

Other elements for consideration:

- The words "Liberty and Union" depending on context
- Some connection to Indigenous people, e.g. use of Algonquins word(s); reference to Massachusetts people; place names such as Cohannet or Quinobequin. Note: Massachusetts tribal leaders should review the design and guide choices. In a Zoom meeting (21 April 2021) with Faries Gray, Sagamore of the Massachusetts Tribe at Ponkapoag, he favored the idea of an Indigenous land acknowledgement which he believes would be a first for a City or Town seal. He also singled out the river as a meaningful symbol, past and present. It was a lifeline (transportation, food, spiritual medicine) for many tribes and may still be a source of enjoyment and relaxation (medecine) today.

Applications: Color & BW; stone engravings; etchings; print & digital; vehicle decals; signage; clothing; screen printing, embroidery; recycling and trash bins; official documents.

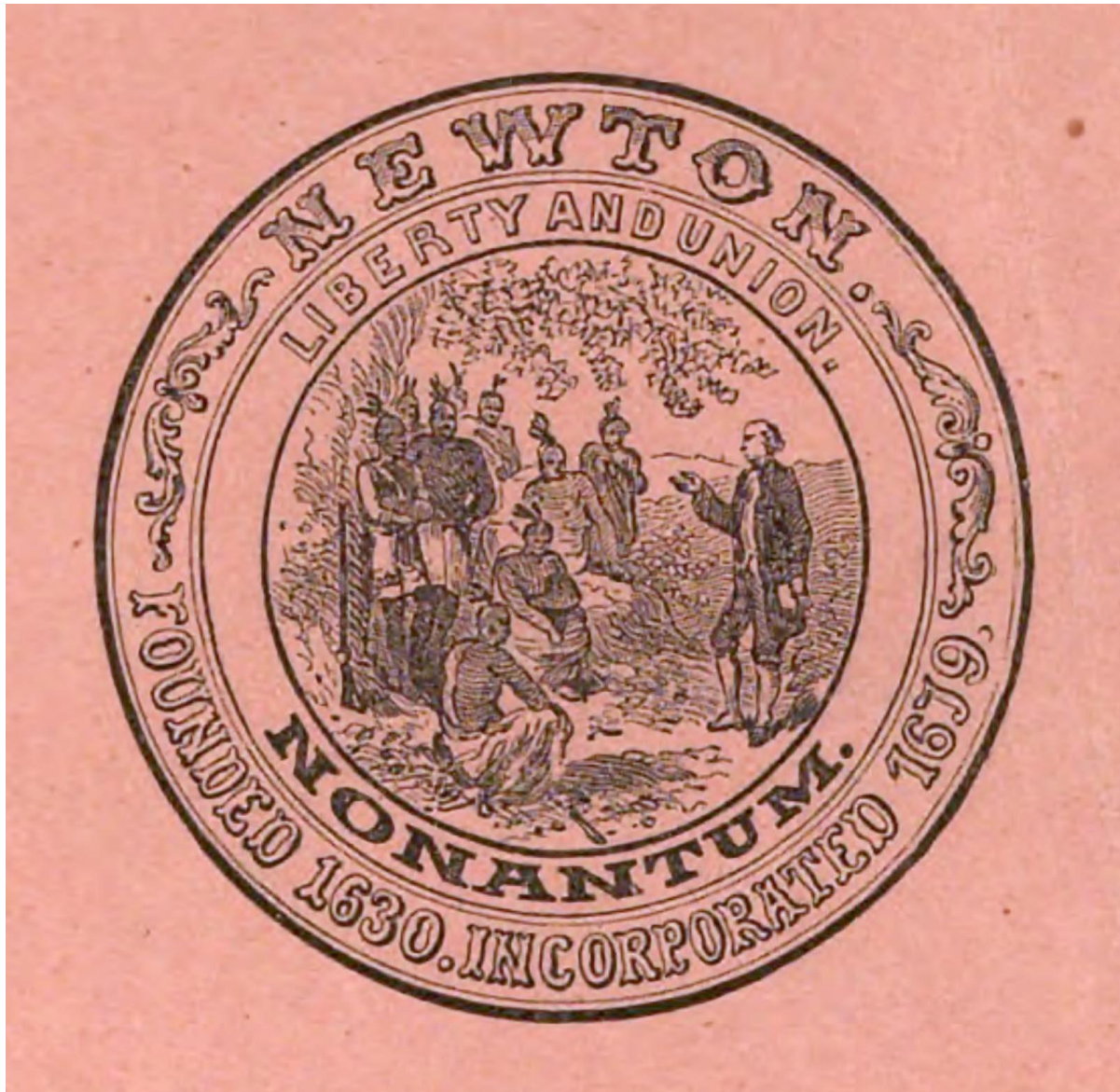
Appendix B: Seal Renditions



One official version used by the City Clerk

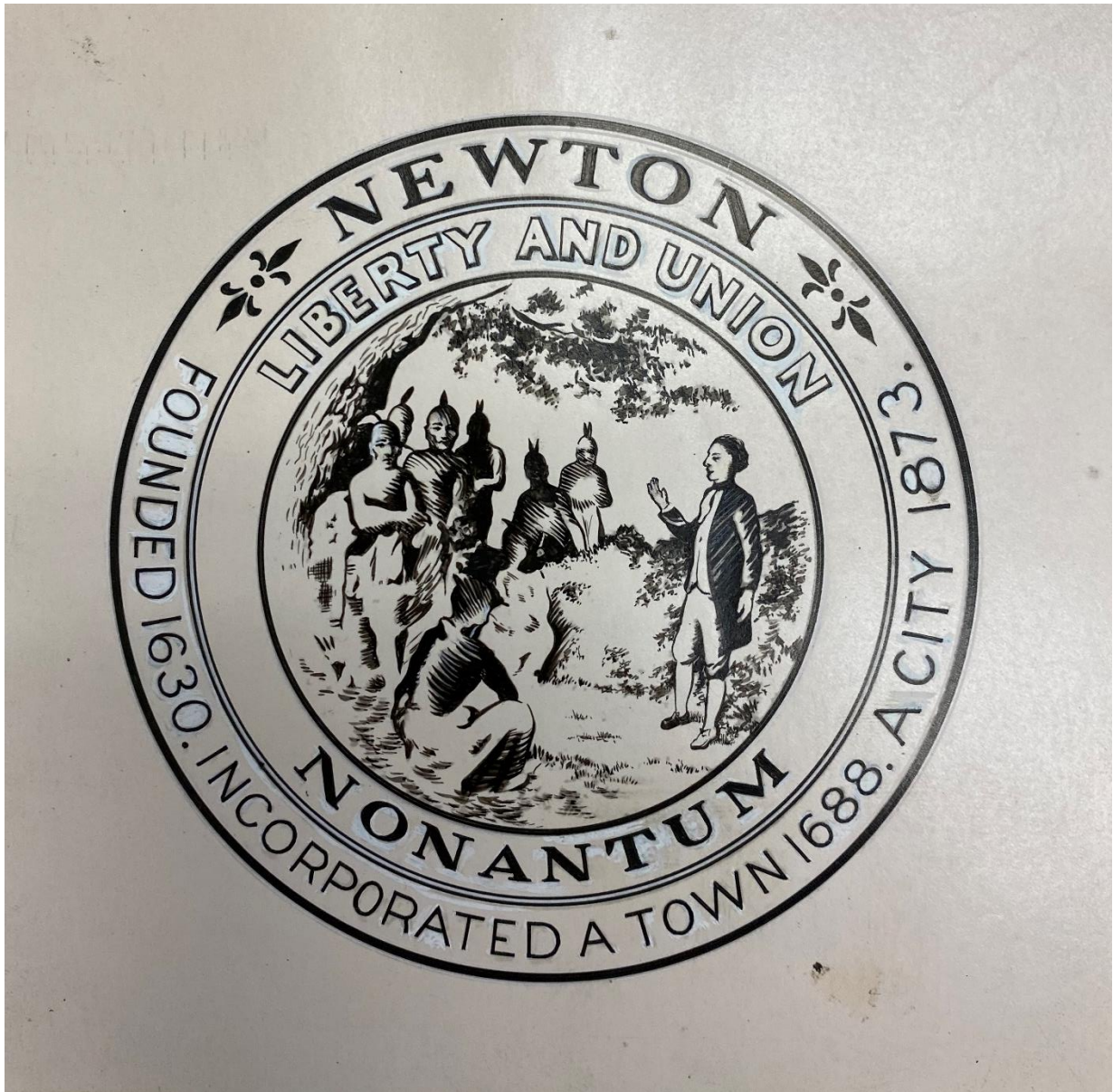


Stamped on an official document



1865 Version

The seal as it appears on the *1865 Annual Report of the Finances of the Town of Newton*, the year of its adoption. Note: Incorrect incorporated date and not yet a city.



Official artwork, circa 1930s, by Edward C. H. Denton.
Accompanying label: "This is original drawing of Newton Seal,
must not be loaned. // For reproductions, photostats, may be
loaned but signed for and returned to City Treasurer's office. // Mr.
Colby // made by Edw. C. H. Denton..."



1889 version

Embossed on a Newton history book published in 1889. A rifle is clearly visible propped against the Oak tree.



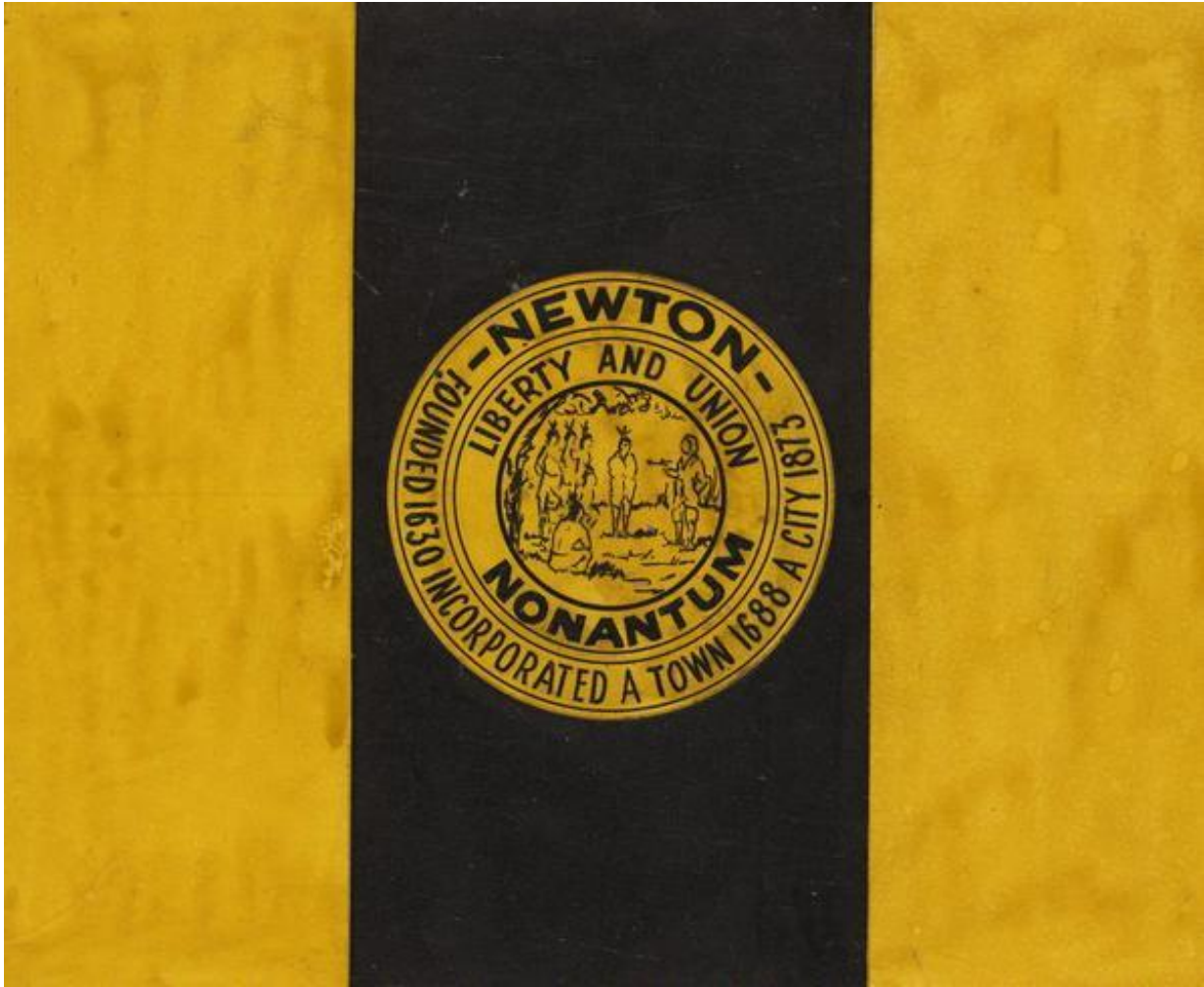
Ceramic relief sculpture at Newton Free Library



Version at Newton Free Library



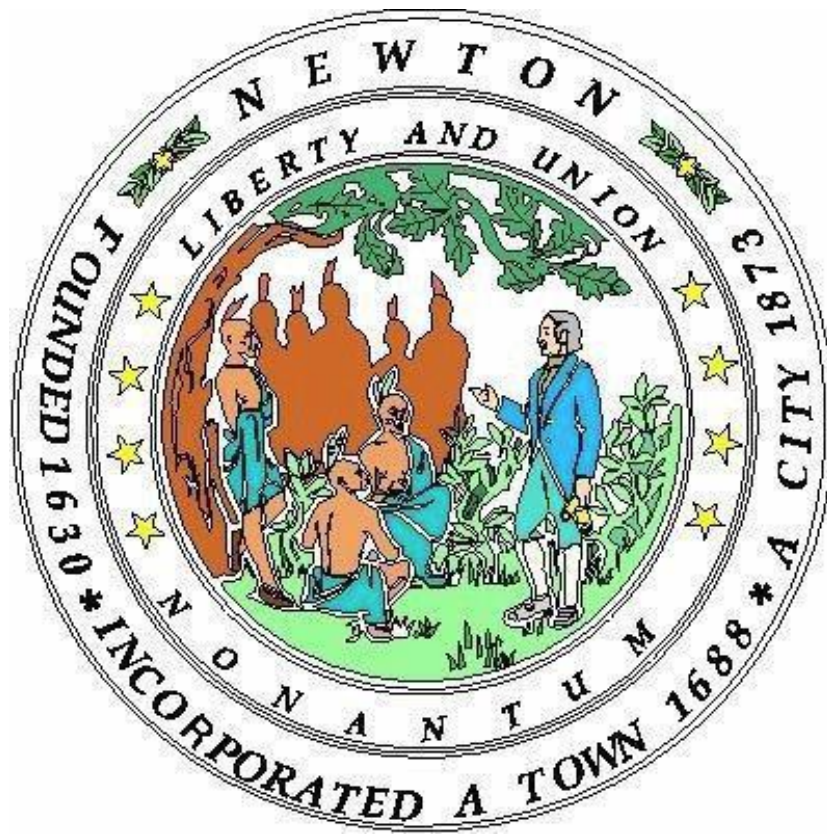
Embedded decoration on the floor of City Hall. This is the version from which the *revised* version was traced.



Version on Flag of Newton (1955)



Version on 2021 water bill. Note: This version too is slightly different, *Newton* is larger than the other text and there are fewer rings.



Version used by the City Communications Department



Version on embroidered patch for police uniform, 2021.



Version on dropbox outside of City Hall

This version can also be found on a flag in the War Memorial. Notable differences: Wigwams (inaccurate for this region), a ceremonial pipe, different clothing for the central Native figure, and differences in typeface.



Version on the floor of the Pellegrini Park Fieldhouse Gymnasium (Parks, Recreation, and Culture building) in the Village of Nonantum. Distinct to this version: Colors of Italy and "The Lake." Note the similarities to the dropbox version above.



Version on recently installed utility box.

What's notable here is that this is the seal as it existed in 1873.

Appendix C. Relevant Newspaper Articles

been made. The exercises closed with the singing of "America" and the Doxology.

THE EVENING SERVICES

were of a more elaborate character, and were held in Eliot church. The stormy night interfered somewhat with the attendance, but prominent citizens were present from all parts of the city, and seats were reserved in front for the city council and other city officials, who attended in a body, the ex-Mayors of the city, the city clergy, and other citizens who have held office in the state. The Eliot choir furnished music, and the pulpit platform was filled with chrysanthemums and potted plants.

Mayor Cobb opened the exercises with the following introductory remarks:

"Friends and Fellow-Citizens—The city of Newton has invited you to assemble here this evening in loving memorial of the life and labors of our patron saint, the apostle John Eliot.

"When the founders of our municipality were called upon to choose an emblem for our city seal there was one scene in our earliest history which at once suggested itself as pre-eminently appropriate.

"They saw these hills and valleys covered with the primeval forest, and under the wide spreading branches of a grand old oak on the eastern slope of the hill, Nonatum, stood a white man in clerical dress, his face lighted with the love of the Master, and crowding about him a band of dusky Indians listening intently while he strove to impart to them the words of eternal truth—and that is the picture which adorns every official document of the city of Newton, embalming for all generations the sweet memories of a noble character.

"Thus did he proclaim the universal brotherhood of man. When Fr. Gabriel Druillette, a Jesuit priest and missionary to the northwest Indians, came on a pilgrimage to New England, he was welcomed by Eliot to his heart and home, and was urged to spend the winter with him. Mark the scene and learn in this conference of these devoted servants of God, widely separated by creed and method, but united in faithful endeavor for the uplifting of their fellows, a grand lesson of religious toleration, and further may this self-sacrificing life remind us of our individual responsibility as integral parts of the body politic."

In conclusion he introduced the orator of the evening, Hon. William Everett, who spoke on the "Life and Work of John Eliot," in part as follows:

"The anniversary, which we are called together to commemorate tonight is essentially different in character from the various anniversaries which have been held around us.

"When one of our towns finds that it is 200 years old and commemorates its first settlement, there is a good deal of sameness about the affair. It is simply the story that the town became crowded and the swarm settled in a new place.

"Our 250th anniversary tonight is of an event entirely unique. In this place, Oct. 28, 250 years ago, John Eliot first felt the call to his Indian mission. He was called to a work absolutely without precedent in New England. In it he could hardly expect much emolument and very little of what the world calls glory, but it placed upon his head a crown of priceless value.

"You know the story of his work better than I can tell it to you. Out of the quiet pastoral life at Roxbury sprang this grand mission.

"I regard Eliot as one of the most striking instances of the noblest type of the race. He was one of the few men who live in one age, and are yet in advance of it. He was a man of his age. He took the profession then considered the most honorable, and performed his part with the purest sanctity and wisest charity. Yet he was not so entirely of the spirit of the age that he would not have been considered in any age a type of a liberal man.

"Had he never preached to the Indians he would have been honored by his contemporaries. Eliot was one of those amazing men who, having paid in full their debt to their own age, enter into work of which their age has no conception.

"He minded no obstacle. What heart conceived, mind planned and hand executed. His work stands to this day as an ex-

ample to those who would take up the same work.

"We may apply to John Eliot the term which is applied to his master, 'He emptied himself.' All that he could acquire and all that he could find out he gave out to his forest friends.

"Eliot himself did all he could to promote education among the Indians. His only object was to give to them the share of happiness he enjoyed, and the share he looked forward to. Over 200 years have passed. Have any of our master builders in Indian education been able to build on other lines than those he has laid down? The work he did ought to have shamed his contemporaries. Had they given one-hundredth as much attention to the Indians' salvation as to the question of whether the Indians were members of the lost tribes of Israel his measure of success would have been different."

It was an eloquent address, as Prof. Everett is one of the most finished orators of the country, and enlivened by many happy references to topics of the day, as when he referred to the taking up of Eliot's work of educating the Indians at this day, he said, the school at Carlisle, one of the very few schools which has had the honor of having been defeated by Harvard at football.

Mr. William C. Bates, in behalf of the Eliot Memorial Association, presented to Mayor Cobb the deeds of the Eliot terrace and of a memorial fund to be used in perpetuity for the purchase of prizes to be given to the Newton school children writing the best essays on early New England history, the prizes to be known by the Apostle's name. Mr. Bates said: "In selecting the form of memorial the committee of the association was not unmindful that a granite or marble shaft is to many the appropriate form of memorial sculpture, but these have so long been used as an expression of mortuary grief that another form was adopted, the terrace, which should be substantial, harmonious and give opportunity for suitable inscriptions.

"That location of the Eliot terrace is all that can be desired; the inscriptions on the tablet is historically correct; in the vicinity was Waban's wigwam.

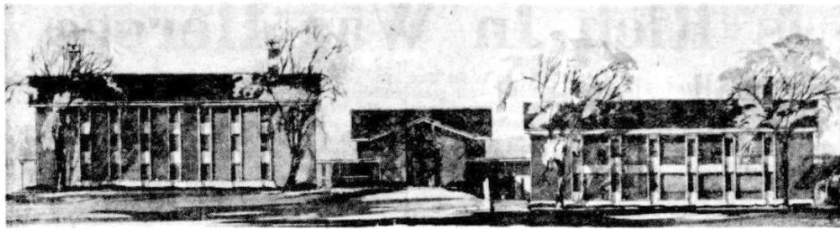
"The trustees of the Eliot Memorial Association deem this anniversary the fitting time to convey to the city of Newton the plot of land and memorial terrace for perpetual ownership and care; they do this confident in the belief that future generations will value this spot with increasing landmarks connected with the beginnings of New England.

"The memorial fund of \$300 now created provides by the deed of trust for the management of the study of American history by the offer of an annual prize for essays upon such subjects as may be announced from year to year. We must believe that the annual study of some particular period or subject of early American history and the subsequent friendly competition for the Eliot prize for the Eliot essay by pupils of Newton schools forever will create an Eliot memorial more lasting and beneficent than any ordinary structure, which the art of man can build.

"Mr. Mayor, in behalf of the trustees of the Eliot Memorial Association, I have the pleasure to present to you as the official representative of the city the Eliot terrace and the Eliot memorial fund.

The exercises closed with the benediction by the pastor emeritus of the First church, Rev. D. L. Furber.

November 12, 1896



NEW CLASSROOM BUILDING—Architect's sketch of new classroom building for Newton Andover Theological School.

Half Century Of Population Steady Growth

The following table shows the increase of residents in Newton by decades:

1910	39,806
1920	46,054
1930	65,276
1940	69,873
1950	81,964
1960	92,384

During the past decade the

Last Town Meeting Here Was Held On Nov. 4, 1873

The last Town Meetings in Newton were held on April 7, October 13, and November 4, 1873. At the first of these, the subject of a change in the form of government was debated. The other half of the original Cambridge Village (which had become the town of Brighton in 1807) was to be annexed to Boston on the first day of the following year, and a few Newton citizens recommended the same course for her.

Others urged that no change be made. J. F. C. Hyde led the force favorable to the change to city government, and finally secured the appointment of a committee to petition the Legislature for a charter. At the second meeting the proposed "Act to establish the City of Newton" (Acts and Resolves, Chapter 826) was accepted by a vote of 1224 to 391.

At the third and final meeting, the annual state election was held, and the Town Clerke made a final entry in the Town Records:

"The Town Meeting held November 4, 1873, above recorded, was the last town meeting held in the Town of Newton. Newton became a City January 5, 1874."

*Town Clerk of the
Town of Newton"*

As a City, Newton retained

with appropriate additions to the inscriptions, the Seal which had first appeared on the Annual Report of the Town's officers in 1865. The designers of the Seal had chosen a most appropriate symbol for the municipality, the scene on Nonantum Hill where Rev. John Eliot taught the Indians, not only the Christian religion, but also the Christian methods of civilized life in towns.

"We exhorted them to fence their ground, with ditches and stone walls upon the banks," he writes, "and promised to help them with shovels, spades, mattocks, crows of iron."

When the General Court in 1646 appointed a committee to buy land for Waban's tribe on Nonantum Hill of Mr. Sparhawk, that they might have in undisputed ownership lands on which they might build a town and "live in an orderly way amongst us."

The Indians "desired to know what name this town should have, and it was told them it should be called "Noonatomen," which signifies in English, "rejoicing," because they, hearing the Word and seeking to know God, the English did rejoice at it." The word "Nonantum" on the City Seal thus proclaims to the world that the City — like that first township within its bounds — "rejoices" in the blessings of a Christian community."

Letters To The Editor

THE ELLIOT MEMORIAL

To the Editor of The Graphic:

I visited the Elliot Memorial on Sunday, for the first time in several years, and was deeply pained to find the conditions that exist. To speak plainly, the monument has been neglected and abused in a way that is a disgrace to Newton. A hole as large as a man's hand has been broken through the tablet. In spite of a

THE WHOLE

warning sign rubbish, including a big tin pan, was much in evidence. The bounds of the reservation are not clearly defined, so that I could not tell whether the uncut grass was within or without the ground, but suffice to say that the place has the neglected, unkempt air of a back yard in a tenement district.

It is too late to say anything of the bad taste which was shown when the broken knobs on the railing were replaced with cement affairs which neither match nor harmonize with the stone of the structure; but I noticed that one of these objects was already chipped as though they were being used as targets by hoodlums.

It is deplorable that this simple monument, erected fifty years ago through the public spirit of citizens, should be treated in this fashion. John Eliot's mission to the Indians, begun in Newton, was the one his-

John Eliot's mission to the Indians, begun in Newton, was the one historic event of general significance which ever occurred in our city limits. Its importance is recognized in the design on our city seal. Eliot's converted Indians saved the lives of many colonists in the struggle that came soon after the time of his mission, if indeed they did not save the colony itself from destruction. It would have been a real grief to those who planned and secured the monument if they could have seen its present state. Is the historic sentiment so utterly lacking today that this simple memorial cannot be properly preserved?

The tercentenary year is at hand and Newton will no doubt give it fitting observance. The heroism and sacrifices of our men and women in the World War are still to be commemorated. Of course we shall not forget these duties. But Newton is surely rich enough and sufficiently appreciative of its debt to the past to do all this and still pay proper honor to the memory of John Eliot.

FRANK H. RIBT

Appendix D. Survey Responses

Email Remarks

- I don't see a way to keep Native Americans on the seal in any form without offending anyone but if they are not represented. we are erasing that part of Newton's history. I wonder if there is a way.
- Ruthanne, For Pete's Sake - please DO NOT CHANGE the City Seal of Newton. Enough history is being erased across the country. Please don't add Newton to the mix.
- 1. GARBAGE 2. OVERGROWTH 3. LOST_HISTORY
- I am not sue what the issue is here? Having Native Americans in the seal? or what? could you explain this to me? Thank you. Dr. Jack Porter
- The city seal is historic and reflects a founding principle. Preservation of historical symbols allows us to reflect on the depth and changes time brings. Changing the seal will destroy this sense of time and how we are tied to it. The object is not to whitewash history but to acknowledge its imperfections and build upon it. Perhaps this energy could be better spent finding ways to safely open Newton's schools so that all our children could have a future.
- Here are three words to describe Newton: Diversity, Vibrandy, Integrity
- Though I seldom hear this nickname any more, Newton was long known as "the Garden City." For me the phrase suggests garden clubs and suburban women living earnest but superficial lives. For years Helen E. Hokinson's New Yorker cartoons gently mocked this leisure class. But in recent years the environmental effect of gardens has been brought to our attention. "Gardens help the environment by reducing air and noise pollution, erosion, and energy costs, minimizing carbon footprint, filtering the groundwater, and providing a food and home source for various animals and insects." (Quotation from Google) Perhaps we need only to recast and reinvigorate those three little words, "The Garden City."
- 3 WORDS: fig newton cookie
- I think of symbols of Newton present and past: definitely Charles River as that is where the early indigenious people stopped to rest and eat..Library as it is well known and well thought of . . Trees as we are known as the Garden City . . .I hope you can use my ideas; also the Boston Athenaeum has a lot of historical info and drwgs.

As Collected by Working Group Members

Member 1—Comments from my neighbors:

- the image as it is should be changed
- possibilities if the image is changed: natural element, a tree, the river, a building (city hall?)
- some of my older neighbors (40-65, and not educated in Newton) are unaware of John Eliot and Waban, although they know the nearby monument
- some of my older neighbors (around 60) think the seal should be changed, but did not offer ideas to me, rather answered on line
- the younger set of neighbors (educated in Newton, 15-30 years old) thinks that the seal should be changed, and that it should be apolitical

Member 2—What would you like Newton to be known for?

- Open ALL views and opinions, whether you agree with it or not
- I want Newton to improve its public buildings and roads
- Newton has been known as the “Garden City” Since 1874
- I always want it to be the top cities and work in
- I want people to be involved and care about the preservation of the community for the next generation

Member 3—What do you think that residents who don't want the seal changed, might say?

- The seal is an extremely powerful touchpoint. It's not just on our trash bins and water bills, but also 150 years of important birth, death, marriage, and deed documents—which makes it a kind of heirloom, not passed to us but through us.
- The power of the seal is not in its beauty, the power is in its endurance. It is our long history that sets Newton apart from other communities across the US.
- Does it matter that it might not be historically accurate? I don't think so because it's not supposed to be literal and it needs to rely on symbolic imagery to make its point. It's meant to INTRODUCE a history lesson, not BE the history lesson.
- The people on the seal are not my people. But I am a resident of Newton and Newton is a city that originated from the convergence of these groups. By depicting a meeting that defined this city, it connects all residents of Newton from those farming here in the 1700's to those arriving tomorrow.
- There are thousands of Newton residents across hundreds of years who don't get a say in whether or not to change our seal. And we have a steward's responsibility to preserve it.

Member 4—If you were to talk about the City of Newton in three words, what would they be?

Location	Location	Location
Education	Diversity	Villages
Trees	Open Space	Neighbors
Gardens	Walking	Paths
Churches	Restaurants	Services
People	Golf	Transportation
Tennis Courts	Parks	Public Schools
Colleges	Google People	Welcoming
Wealthy	Flexibility	Garden City
Family	Friends	Together
Born and Raised	Charles River	Diversity
Sports	Facilities	Indoor Programs
Fishing	Canoeing	Grills

Camps	Pre-Schools	After-Schools
Little League Fields	Football Fields	Soccer Fields
John Kelly Statue	Senior Center	People
Hospital	Police Department	Fire Department
911 Memorial	Dedications	Benches
Farmers Market	Safety	Opportunities
Heart Break Hill	Together	Parks
Play Groups	Schools	Villages
13 Unique Villages	Safe City	Working Councilors
Schools	Diversity	Close to Logan
Entitlement	Superiority	Close-minded
Trees	Open Space	Community Gardens
Entitled	Polarizing	Affluent
Petty	Not Diverse	Segregated by Wealth
First Responders	Location	Awful Roads
Familiar	Family	Five Generation Residents

Responses from NNHS Survey

Do you support a change of the Newton City Seal	Why?
I'm not sure	N/A
Yes	It portrays Native Americans as the wrong skin color obviously, and also whitewashes the history of Native Americans in Massachusetts, who were largely wiped out
Yes	We need to represent the true history of our city and our country
Yes	Being more accurate to how the relations between the European settlers and the Native Americans is important in my opinion It was certainly far from the fine and dandy times that the seal depicts.
Yes	Its outdated and we need a new seal that is more representative of Newton as a whole.
Yes	Because it depicts a scene that could be interpreted as racist.

Yes	The image is paternalistic and was most likely not a consensual image choice between the Native American tribe and the white men who were depicted. I think the seal should be more inclusive as well because Newton has a small percentage/no Native Americans and there are more than just white men in Newton as well therefore there should be a more inclusive seal. Maybe we could consensually (with the NA's tribe permission) honor the sacrifices they were forced to make to relocate so that Newton could be built. We could also move away from historical images and recognize our progress and future. As a city we are proud of our education/sustainability so maybe the seal could have something to do with that.
Yes	Because the image that is used right now is an offensive depiction of Native Americans
Yes	I think that if people who are depicted on the seal say it's offensive or it makes them feel uncomfortable then we shouldn't use it for our own purposes.
Yes	The Seal depicts a time where the persecution of Native Americans was taking place and I don't want that being represented in Newton.
Yes	While the depiction of Native Americans at all on the seal is commendable, the depiction act of being converted is not. It represents the loss and destruction of American culture, rather than the depiction of strong and proud Massachusetts culture. The seal should STILL depict Massachusetts tribe members, but not during the era of the loss of the culture but in its zenith.
Yes	the white man has always been depicted to have more power than its counterparts. the racism has been so desensitized that this topic is finally being brought into light now.
Yes	I think the way Native Americans are shown on our seal should be changed, not erased.
No	It's unnecessary as it offends no one.
Yes	I don't know if this is offensive enough to change but the seal is the brand of the city and I don't think that the first thing that people see about our city is an offensive symbol that seems a little "icky".
Yes	It's time for our seal, a representation of our city, to be inclusive and considerate of indigenous peoples. This is the first of what should be a series of systemic changes made in antiracism efforts
Yes	With everything going on right now and the current state of racial unrest in the United States, I think we as the city of Newton should be conscious about what we can do to contribute to the "solution".
Yes	It isn't the worst thing in the world, but it misrepresents Native peoples and isn't the image what we want Newton's image to be. It's an easy, minor change, and there's absolutely no reason to keep it.
Yes	I think we need a more inclusive and a seal that better depicts our city
Yes	The seal is outdated and has a harmful depiction of the relationship between Native Americans and Settlers. We shouldn't advertise our city with the paternalistic imagery of the seal.
Yes	Because I think that the seal has a lot of negative history, and I think that it's time for a change.

I'm not sure	I do not think it is my place to determine whether or not the seal is politically right. The historical context behind it is a bit iffy, I know, so I believe it is best left to discussions with the Massachusetts tribe about their opinion on the matter.
Yes	It's quite outdated and rather boring with few tenets of good design
Yes	I don't think it's fair to keep an image of Native Americans on our city seal when they were forced out of this area and many were killed. If the image depicted a Native American leader or a group of Native Americans in a celebratory or respectful way, it would be different, but the story behind the image makes it disrespectful. Although I think it is necessary to reckon with our history and acknowledge our awful treatment of Native Americans, it should not be the image that represents Newton.
I'm not sure	Im not sure what is offensive in the picture of the seal
Yes	I think the seal is outdated, and paternalistic. I think there are better ways Newton can represent itself in an image. And it's important that all people feel welcome in Newton, and this seal doesn't really reflect that attitude.
Yes	I think that it can be very difficult to accept change, but it's important that we recognize how old this seal is and understand the gravity of what it actually depicts. There are so many opportunities for an image that is more representative of Newton today and Newton's history.
I'm not sure	I do not know much about Newton and it's city seal
Yes	I think that the imagery can be found offensive to some people. Additionally, it seems like it isn't an accurate depiction of what actually happened (like it's sugar coating it).
Yes	I believe that leaving the seal as it is now maintains an old rhetoric we may not want to push. It holds racist stereotypes about Native Americans that do not align with Newton's values.
Yes	The seal seems demeaning and offensive to Native Americans, and depicts the Massachusett tribe as willingly leaving and converting to christianity, which current tribe representatives seem to dispute.
I'm not sure	
Yes	Because I feel like our seal needs to be updated.
Yes	The thing that it depicts somewhat glorifies what happened to the Native Americans in Massachusetts, and I don't think that what happened is a thing that deserves to be glorified.
Yes	I think it is problematic to support settlers who tried to take land from indigenous people.
Yes	Because it is outdated and it doesn't really show much about Newton right now
Yes	It is no longer relevant and doesn't represent a positive message to everyone
Yes	We should not honor outdated elements of Newton.
Yes	I think it is important to have a seal that is respectful and doesn't have the potential to offend any person/group.
Yes	I don't think the image is really relevant or representative of Newton and its values anymore.

Yes	Because it depicts the scene and fate of so many natives who were coerced out of there land which caused them great harm.
Yes	I don't think having something of one specific religion on our city's seal represents our city or our city's diversity in the way it should.
No	I've heard of it and judging from what I learned in class today, I do not think it will be a good idea for it to change.
Yes	It seems to be a bit outdated
Yes	I don't like image it depicts and if it could help start change for other towns in MA that would be amazing
Yes	The historical 'reasonings' for the Seal's design do not hold today
I'm not sure	I like having our seal depict history and Native Americans who are indigenous to Newton but I feel there is a more respectful way to depict this other than a white man preaching to them to leave. It would be nice to have a new seal but also very expensive to replace all the city's bins and things with the seal on them. Not many people even know what the seal is so I'm not so sure it's worth changing.
I'm not sure	There are parts that make sense in theory but may not work out as thought.
Yes	considering how far we have come as far as recognizing indigenous people, it is no longer relevant
Yes	idk i just do
No	Because the original seal shows a lot of important history and we shouldn't change it
Yes	It is historically inaccurate and may be seen as rude or negative for several others.
Yes	I think it would be a positive change
Yes	Because based off of all the research and conversation we did in my class at school id say it makes more sense to change the seal rather than keep it because like many have stated it isnt as relevent anymore. and the reasoning behind it is valid and just mase more sense. plus change can be good.
Yes	Because we are uncovering so much about American History today and the hypocrisy involved, it should be natural to uncover the truth about things like our city seal and correct them.
Yes	I don't think the seal represents Newton as a city and its people. I think the idea behind the seal is wrong and it should be changed to something accurate and respectful.
I'm not sure	I dont have enough information
I'm not sure	I'm not really sure to be honest, because I don't know the meaning and whole story of the Newton City Seal since I didn't really pay attention to it, so I don't have an opinion yet unless I know the whole story/meaning of the Newton City Seal.
Yes	why not
Yes	Its a false depiction of our city.
I'm not sure	not sure
I'm not sure	cause yeah

Yes	Like Isaac explained, we wouldn't want the "brand" of Newton to be portraying a historically inaccurate image of a white man standing over indigenous people. It implies a sense of superiority of white people over Native Americans.
Yes	The old one depicts something that should not be recognised
Yes	I think it is historically inaccurate and it's showing a white man speaking which is kind of saying white people are more important here.
Yes	I don't really see a reason as to why there should be problems with changing it despite that seal being the seal of newton for centuries. I feel like I don't have enough information to really draw out a complete opinion, but right now if I had to say something I'd say I wouldn't really mind. of course that's just me.
No	Because the original seal has a lot of important history on it
Yes	I don't think it portrays what newtons about.
I'm not sure	I don't really care to be honest
Yes	I don't understand why it should stay. It was created all those years ago and depicts something that we look down upon now. If we realize now that it was wrong and we have the power to fix it or change it, why aren't we? How do we want to present ourselves? Our seal is everywhere and says a lot whether we like it or not. So we can be the progressive city that we say we are and do something about it, or we can be the stubborn stuck up people we really are. People are starting to pay attention to these kinds of things. People that never had a voice are beginning to find their voices and ally themselves with powerful individuals to make change. Why not? It's the perfect opportunity to right a wrong and show that we are open to change and becoming better and better. We are so much more that turning the other way and ignoring it. That's why we have an advisory group. People really care about this and it's very hard to forget those that wronged you even so long ago. It's time for us to stand up for those that were here first.
Yes	I don't really see a reason as to why there should be problems with changing it despite that seal being the seal of newton for centuries. I feel like I don't have enough information to really draw out a complete opinion, but right now if I had to say something I'd say I wouldn't really mind. of course that's just me.
Yes	Because it depicts the scene and fate of so many natives who were coerced out of there land which caused them great harm.

Responses from Community Feedback Survey

If you were to talk about the City of Newton in three (3) words, what would they be?	What would you like Newton to be known for?	Other comments:
community, inclusion	For being a welcoming community to all	

global, historical, urban/suburban	racial and economic diversity, the life experiences of its residents, green city	
Community, Diverse, Engaged	Inclusion	
Urban green trees	Great culture, green spaces	
Community, diversity, and academic excellence	Diversity and breadth of a small city (including people, art, restaurants/stores, etc.) that maintains a strong sense of community	
Community, Diverse, Engaged	Inclusion	
Villages, Parks, Diversity	Its economic, social, racial diversity, and a well-educated, health-minded population that both enjoys its proximity to Boston but benefits from the beautiful environs Newton offers,	
diversity, urban-suburban, historical	inclusiveness	
Progressive, Passionate, Resourced	Inclusivity, Diversity, Fairness	
Inclusive, diverse, supportive	A socially liberal environment, well governed that's responsive to its residents	Moved here fifteen years ago to live with my family in a two family home in Newton Centre. Couldn't be more pleased!
Diverse, Urban, Educated	Diversity, inclusion and being progressively-minded	I'm proud to live in a community that is diverse and inclusive! I hope the seal can represent this wonderful city and also inspire everyone to continue to strive for excellence!
Safe, educated, concentration of wealth	Safety, creativity, civilized under social pressures, valuing history, intellectual openness, valuing education	
White, "Liberal," Bubble	Secure and affordable housing for all, Leader in Antiracism, Thriving BIPOC community	This is a very important group. Please lead us through a process of learning. The process is just as important as the outcome.

International, Educated, Villages	Progressive ideas incubator	Be careful when replacing the existing seal that you aren't perceived as whitewashing Newton's history. The existing seal, while it may be seen by some as insensitive, at least implies recognition of Native Americans interrelation with the city's establishment.
entitled, striving, welcoming	social justice and environmental leadership	
		This is an absolutely insensitive endeavor during a financial recession due to this pandemic. The cost to change paper, envelopes, and other city goods to reflect a new seal is plain absurd. I've been a Newton resident for many years, and I cannot name a single person who would even be able to point out the Newton seal in a lineup. This is a classic example of a poor use of government time and resources, and people need to frankly find better things to do with our taxpayer money and energy. If the seal has been deemed no longer reflective of the city of Newton (and I'd ask by whom and how many people), then consider postponing it until we're able to feed and house some people in our own city through this pandemic. Or, better yet, have that team of people offer up their own resources to replenish the goods, instead of taking resources away from more dire basic needs of our citizens.
Peaceful, helpful, loving	A family friendly city - best of both worlds (city and residential)	
Trees, villages, diversity	Safety and education	Keep Nonantum on the seal
Community, education, neighborhood	Diversity and equity	
Peaceful, helpful, loving	A family friendly city - best of both worlds (city and residential)	

Elitist, Overpriced, Safe		<p>Being a state-wide leader in welcoming diversity into our city through, among other things, low income and affordable housing and our hiring practices (particularly at management levels). Being known as a welcoming and anti-racist city.</p> <p>Embracing the arts, particularly public art, as a means to break through cultural, political and social barriers with beauty and creativity.</p> <p>Continued excellence in our schools, in matters of public safety and truly being "The Garden City" by maintaining our green spaces creatively.</p> <p>Leading in our state in terms of environmental stewardship, carbon reduction in our public buildings and through a zoning code that, for example, would require all new build outs to have solar panels and meet pre-established criteria for carbon reduction (both residential and commercial).</p> <p>Maintaining our outstanding library in a manner commensurate with its standing in the community.</p> <p>Developing and maintaining stellar programs and services for our seniors and a new intergenerational center for the community.</p> <p>Joining the few communities in our area that have been brave enough to ban leaf blowers entirely.</p> <p>Being a fiscally responsible entity with fully funded retirement and OPEB systems.</p>
home , inclusive, garden city	Being open and welcoming to all, superior schools and services	the seal does not reflect our values.
don't change seal	a city for all opinions	keep your ears and minds open to all views
Leafy green, neighborhood, smart	Friendly, great quality of life	Newton is a hybrid community between suburban & urban, walkable & green, featuring diverse natural areas and charming neighborhoods with easy access to Boston.
Trees, villages, diversity	Safety and education	Keep Nonantum on the seal
Education; Tolerance; Engagement	Educational excellence; Support for diversity; Environmental preservation	
NEWTON		

liberal, White, NIMBY-ish	integration of low-SES and higher-SES folks in same neighbourhoods; green space; community engagement (e.g., sports, classes, events)	Consider something that will stand the test of time. Does the seal even have to have people on it?
Educational Opportunities	An open, caring, inclusive community providing opportunity for all.	I like Liberty and Union on the seal. I do not believe that any missionary person or activity supports those values. Quite to the contrary, the very spirit of missionaries creates an atmosphere of Us vs Them - the opposite of liberty and union. I've thought about suggesting various other people for the city seal, but each has, in my mind, too many disadvantages and is just too specialized. I've come to the conclusion that the best image for the city seal, under the existing Liberty and Union, would be that of Newton City Hall.
Diversity, Inclusion, Pride	I would like Newton to be known for its diverse and inclusive people	
close to Boston! or Nice but crazy! or Purportedly good schools	A nice place to live; good quality of life	The words "fiscally irresponsible" go along with "Nice but crazy ", and I'm referring to both NewCAL and Newton North High schools as examples. Seems we always go for the most expensive, dramatic option first. NewCAL will hopefully resolve in a reasonable place, but not without drama. Gotta love it! At least people care!
Resourceful, diverse and engaged	Inclusion and community	
Nature, transit, community	Excellent schools, a good place to raise a family, friendly neighbors, a walkable/bikeable community.	
neighborhoods, resources, education	diversity in all forms	
villages, trees, community	community, open space, vibrant village centers, access to public transit	
expensive, overrated, too big	A Community city, stop being like Cambridge! City history values news to come back! Cater to the original newton people who still live here not the newcomers!	Don't change the seal it's our history! Newton has changed so much it's not the same anymore.

Soft, knee jerkers, & unsupportive		Mayor, stop turning your backs on the people that protect you day in and day out.
13 villages strong	Part of the underground railroad	Historically known as the Garden City
Green,	Equity, social justice, community	
progressive, diverse, green	Inclusive and welcoming, forward thinking, family friendly, engaged, strong neighborhoods, excellent schools, safe, beautiful	Thank you for your work!
		Please leave the seal alone and get back to work for all of our citizens-we are in unprecedented times with covid-the city seal and other small issues like this should be the least of your concern. Please stop this nonsense!
Going too far.	To be brave enough to throw out liberal ideas that are destroying the city	These questions have nothing to do with changing the city seal! This is all rubbish! NO TO CHANGING THE SEAL!
Rude people, one sided thinking, mismanagement	A return to common sense	
Rich white liberals	Anything but caving to activists	Grow up and tackle some real issues.
Inclusive, welcoming, diverse	A community of support, accepting all people	
Expensive, overpopulated, Cambridge	Not changing our history	Leave history alone
Not very "welcoming"	Less complaining	Fix the roads, not the mascot
		Don't change the seal, history is history
Liberal. Historic. Leafy.	Fig Newtons. Patriotic history. Accomplished residents.	Please don't change the seal. Changing the seal is not respectful to Native Americans — its patronizing. Also another example of erasing them from American history.
Best police department	A city that actually supports what's important	Fix some real problems!!
Liberal echo chamber	Being inclusive of all opinions	Leave history alone.
Pothole tire damage	Decent roads	You're worried about a city seal when West Newton looks like a war zone.
Historic, garden, liberal	Figs	I think the seal should be left alone
No changes	No changes	Please do not make changes to the deal.

Do Not Change	Everything it's always been	
expensive, hoity-toity, liberal	affordable housing and drivable roads	fine to change the seal if most people want to, but please explain what the objections are to the current one
Welcoming, progressive, trees	Diversity	
wealthy, passionate, ineffective	being inclusive and progressive	
Historical	Not placating to the woke mob	Stop wasting our tax dollars on virtue signaling policies. Our history has bright and dark past. Changing seals, removing statues of Columbus, and other woke ideologies do not change what happened. These symbols and statues project your own insecurities with your white privilege. Our city council should be looking at issues such as our infrastructure, declining middle class, and rise of prescription drug abuse. I know we can walk and chew bubblegum at the same time but this committee is nothing short of a PR move. Remember its evolution to revolution.
city, neighborhood, nature	diversity, being a place where many different kinds of people can be welcomed and feel at home	
Don't change a thing!	Kindness	
I give up	Beautiful old homes	Do not like the big changes in this city .
education greenery neighborhoods	Smart, welcoming, decent, safe	Would love to see 13 stars on the seal for the 13 villages! I want to thank all of you for volunteering to replace this (in my opinion visually terrible and condescending to First Peoples) city seal!!
History	Doing the right thing	Erasing history doesn't allow for growth. Is Newton going to erase the Village of Waban. Really?
location, education, safe city	A welcoming community for all	Repairing pavement/street issues in a more timely manner
livable, interesting, friendly	outstanding schools, close to Boston, nice place to live	13 villages rather than one large city
Aspirational, Fractured, Striving	I want Newton to be known as a place that leverages the global expertise and valuable lived experiences of all those who live, work, and study here to improve Middlesex County, Massachusetts, and the US	I think this process of examining Newton's seal can be part of a larger healing and accountability process that needs to happen.

Controlled by developers	Valuing history, trees and green space	
diverse, educated, eclectic	Outstanding schools	
Environmental. Great education	Environmental. Lots Trees. Walkable	
inclusion, sustainable, learning	Quill: Mrs. Prasad. our library, the Massachusett people Archer: Barack Obama, lava, Indigenous people rights, transgender-friendly bathrooms. Ashia: Revolutionary childhood education, racial and faith-based diversity, sanctuary, curiosity, and environmental justice	We think the new seal should still credit the Massachusett people of this land, but in ways that show they are modern, contributing, and still here.
Do not change		Do not change the city seal
Wealthy, privileged, white	Community support, community growth, inclusion and generosity.	I showed the seal of Newton to my 10 year old who clearly identified the white man in the depiction as the person “in charge”. Please help us develop a symbol that allows anyone (male, female, non binary, disabled, Black, white, elderly etc.) to recognize the value they bring to this community instead of another depiction of white supremacy that just functions to exclude so many people.
the Garden City , or A City of Villages		<p>I think The “3 words” question invites a misplaced emphasis on “higher qualities.”</p> <p>I resist the urge to define Newton as a city of these kind of specific qualities - a city of learning, or fellowship, or the arts. Because these are aspirational goals - not qualities we are actually known for. If we claimed “city of Learning”, for our excellent childhood education system, we’d be misunderstood as pallid pretenders to Cambridge’s educational crown.</p> <p>And We could say Arts, but our offerings are no match for Boston. Fellowship? We’d be seen as misguidedly believing we’ve already attained a summit when we know we are just orienting for the climb.</p> <p>What we CAN call ourselves is “the Garden City,” because ... it’s already our name.</p> <p>“The Garden City” defines us as a community that values our outdoor space; our trees, our waterways, our parks and ponds, and our gardens.</p> <p>Or, perhaps, “A City of Villages.” Villages has the advantage of hinting at a sense of history, as well as defining us as an</p>

		<p>amalgamation of many communities.</p> <p>My Father-in-law, on a walk down our street on his first visit here, exclaimed "It's Gan Aden!" (Hebrew for Garden of den). Ours is not an unusual or special street — just a quiet street of smaller houses, and lots of mature trees.</p>
loud leaf blowers	peace and quiet	Perhaps the seal could have a landscaping crew walking around with gas leaf blowers. This is the sights and sounds of Newton.
good government. neighborhoods. schools	Above	Newton's history is important but is far from unique.
Parks, schools and people	Diversity and Justice	
Community, Tradition		Please leave the seal alone. History can not be changed.
Beautiful Strong Resilient	Sustainability and green infrastructure-- trees, gardens, bushes, ect. especially as we are the Garden City	Having a tree or a garden with a rabbit or a turkey would be very representative of our beautiful city depicting the wildlife that we work hard to protect--- A fun idea is why don't we have a competition among high school art students (an art teacher would have to nominate them to participate) after the theme is decided upon to design a seal and then a vote can be taken on which one is best
Unfortunatly predominatley White	Diversity and social justice	Great city but a grade of D on multicultural inclusion
Affluent, safe, white	Being progressive	Newton is not nearly as diverse as we advertise ourselves to be, and we should make an effort to bring more affordable housing to the area not just meant for rich families.

	UNITY	
Taxes too high. Trying to change zoning during the pandemic is not necessary, wasting tax money by using consultants	Garden city with the village concept kept in place.	The seal should not be changed.
villages, hills, crystal lake	education; progressive	

Working Group Member Thematic Ideas

After collecting and distilling the many ideas submitted from the community, the working group set out to identify the most important thematic categories. Each member ranked these themes on a 3 tiered scale (Top priority, Important Priority, Other Priority). They also included their ideas on visual design. These are the individual responses

Name: Amy Golahny

Top Thematic Priorities: A natural feature, as the Charles River, perhaps named Quinobequin to acknowledge its original name

Important Thematic Priorities: Idea for design: the outline of the city within a circle, and include part of the river. Acknowledge Native peoples with the name Quinobequin or Nonantum, as suggested already, but I am not sure that either of these is entirely agreeable.

Other Thematic Priorities: Major dates are a possibility, as suggested, and somehow reference to the villages.

Visual Design Ideas: Suggestion for a building, if that is agreed upon: the library, to indicate education and the value of knowledge

Name: Jim Murphy

Top Thematic Priorities:

1. Community investment and inclusivity
2. Valuing Newton's history
3. Looking out for the next generation

Important Thematic Priorities:

1. Diversity
2. Global connectedness
3. Environment and sustainability

Other Thematic Priorities:

1. Education

2. Villages

Visual Design Ideas:

1. I like the idea of using the Charles River in the design. The notion of flow works well with time, movement, and connectedness.
2. A small set of significant dates in Newton's history in the design might work well (might even be enough reference to John Eliot to pass muster with those reluctant to deemphasize him).
3. Referencing the original Massachusetts inhabitants in the design would be a good thing. I had been thinking that using the Charles' original name, Quinobequin, would be nice, but it means "meandering", and I'm not sure that's the right message. :-)

Name: Kerry Prasad

Top Thematic Priorities:

1. Charles River
2. Inclusivity/ Equity (this is aspirational for me)
3. Education

Visual Design Ideas:

1. Round seal- this shape indicates inclusivity, connectedness,
2. River, water
3. Seal should not be "too busy"

Name: Steven Sulewski

Top Thematic Priorities:

1. The River as a staple of life for many generation of people who have lived here
2. A tree to represent the value of preserving our green spaces
3. The Sun to signify vision, hope, a new day looking forward, as well as a nod to alternative energy
4. A Human Element could represent Native Americans, a group of people standing or working together, or other representation of people on equal ground.

Important Thematic Priorities:

1. A fish, feather, wolf, arrowhead or other Native American symbol (if the human element design listed above does not cover that already)
2. 13 Villages could be incorporated in the form of dots, stars, or other segments. Perhaps the stars could be presented as a constellation in the sky.
3. One of these: Something that represents city government ideals such as a building architecture (dome), social justice (gavel or scale), bell, education (an open book)...
4. City name and founding date or dates
5. Secondary descriptive copy such as "Nonantum" or "Liberty and Union" or whatever we feel is appropriate.

Other Thematic Priorities: I like the idea and visual of the seven hills but it is much lower on my list of priorities. Someone mentioned an iconic fountain. I am open to that as well since it might have importance to the city workers. Also low on my list. A global element

Visual Design Ideas: Traditional with modern elements. The city seal should have design elements that give it the look of official authority, trust, and duty. This can be accomplished in the typography, elemental design flourishes, line work, or symbols. The design of the more complex elements such as the river, trees, sun, people, Native American symbols can be simplified in a modern design approach. This will not only provide a progressive slant but will also be practical in terms of simplicity and readability.

Name: Judy Battat

Top Thematic Priorities:

1. Strong statement of active, ongoing values.
FREEDOM, INCLUSION, EQUALITY FOR ALL
2. Brief, but comprehensive statement of what characterizes the identity of Newton:
LEARNING, COMMUNITY, HISTORY, ENVIRONMENT
3. Acknowledgement of Indigenous People who lived here chose it, cared for it.
MASSACHUSETT ANCESTRAL LAND

Important Thematic Priorities:

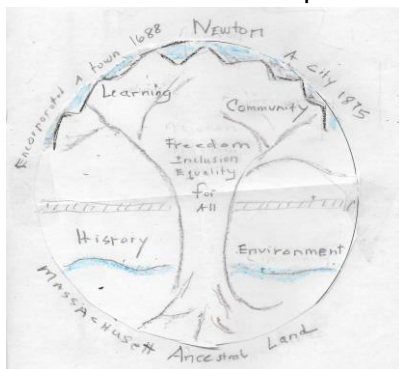
1. Necessary Additional/subsequent Historical facts
 - a. INCORPORATED A TOWN 1688, A CITY 1875
2. Land and landscape characteristics that are key to Newton identity, past, present, future.
 - a. 7 HILLS, RIVER, OAK TREE. (as on original seal and memorial, and for 'importance of open space, trees, garden city') RR GOING EAST TO WEST (representing importance of transportation and connection to Boston, and to Western MA. Also signifying Underground RR.)

Other Thematic Priorities:

Village identity—village names

Visual Design Ideas:

- I like reference to the old seal image.
- I advocate for the components I included, not for the amateur sketch:



Name: Ryan Naragon

Top Thematic Priorities: What's striking to me is how closely the existing seal aligns with the current themes that we've touched upon so far. viz.

- Community and connectedness: “Union” in the motto; showing two groups coming together
- Environment: Emphasis on the oak tree and nature; choice to depict the setting outdoors when we learned from Niki Lefebvere that it probably took place inside
- History: a 19th century rendering of an event that took place 2 centuries prior; a timeline that orbits the main content
- Education: highlighting a scene of (religious) teaching

Deconstructing further, there are certainly thematic elements of the seal that have not come up in our surveys. “Liberty,” oddly, does not easily fit into our thematic groupings. Also, while the scene could be read as coming together (The 1896 Newton Graphic article said it showed “The universal brotherhood of man”), it could also be read as the flip side of coming together—ie. leaving identities behind. This makes the evangelism component problematic for me and I’m still not sure how to treat the Native Peoples component in a way that will hold for the next 100 years.

I think a new seal should be a thematic successor to the old one which is why I place greater weight on the concepts of history, education, environment, and coming together and place a lower priority on the global, emotional, and aspirational concepts that have recently bubbled up.

Visual Design Ideas: If the themes in the existing seal are portable, I wonder if the graphical elements also hold. Certainly there are a handful of filler elements (stars, concentric rings, asterisks, fleurons, etc.) that don’t add anything, unless there is a symbolic reason that I’m not aware of. I do think that a single year would suffice as it now reads like a municipal cv. I’m still on the fence about the “Liberty and Union” and “Nonantum” mottoes, though I think the reasons for expurgating them are less compelling than the reasons for changing the central scene. The characters aside, what I like about the Eliot scene is that the tree is readily identifiable as an oak. I dislike that the crowd and vegetation are in an entangled heap. Also, there seems to be a firearm which I’m not wild about.

I think it was David O. at the open meeting who touched on the distinction between a city seal and a city brand. While there is a lot of flexibility afforded a brand, a city seal has a narrowly defined function. The city clerk said it’s for attesting “papers or documents issued from any office or board of the town...” With this in mind, I think any revision should adhere to the traditional style of a town seal, ie. circular in form, authoritative in tone, historical in foundation and legible in small sizes.

[Update after 1/21 Meeting with Chief Sachem Wompimeequin Wampatuck]

- After hearing the very illuminating perspective from the chief, it’s clear to me that “Nonantum” should be preserved. One option that would help keep the term distinct from the modern day village would be to set it in the native alphabet. Doing so would also be both visually interesting and more inclusive.
- I had not heard the term “bent tree” before, but the tree on the seal clearly registered as one with the Chief. He referred to bent trees along the Charles. Does anyone know more? Meeting tree + River is a visual rife with enough symbolism to check multiple thematic boxes.

Name: Alyssa Toro

Top Thematic Priorities:

1. Globally connected; forward-thinking (I would combine) (this could simply be in the design delivery or words used)
2. A nod to history (Indigenous people, land, etc). Can a few simple symbols capture this symbolically?

Important Thematic Priorities:

1. A graphic nod to the villages (13 leaves, etc)
2. The use of the color green to symbolize the green spaces and blue to symbolize the Charles River

Visual Design Ideas: Would make the design simple, modern and reflective of 2021

1. Would convey a sense of warmth/welcoming-this was loud and clear with the feedback from the community
2. Not too complex that it's hard to decipher or read in small uses

Name: Diana Doyle

Top Thematic Priorities:

1. I go back to what I have seen the Mayor refer to as Newton's core principles: respect (environment, history and people), diversity (community minded), and acceptance (activism, inclusive).
2. I also think it's important to represent in some way Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

Visual Design Ideas:

1. 13 Villages
2. Charles River, Ponds/lakes
3. 7 Hills
4. Boston Marathon - heartbreak hill
5. Garden city - trees, open space
6. Echo Bridge
7. Founding Date
8. Underground Railroad

Name: Judy Dore

Top Thematic Priorities: XIII Villages

- a. Diversity
- b. Community
- c. Welcoming
- d. Pride

Important Thematic Priorities: 2. Education

- a. Schools
- b. Teachers
- c. Safe City
- d. Parents

Other Thematic Priorities: Culture

- a. Recreation

- b. Open Space
- c. Arts
- d. Parks
- e. Trees

Visual Design Ideas: Symbols

- f. The Dome of City Hall
- g. The Library (1990)
- h. Water Fountain in Memory of City Employees (2002)
- i. Charles River: With trees on either side and someone canoeing or kayaking on the river
- j. Seven Hills
- k. Echo Falls
- l. Slogan: "Together we climb to the future."
- m. EXAMPLE:



Appendix E. Early Newton Dates

In the Creative Brief (page 28), we recommend that a significant date be included. There is nothing tidy about the constructs that define Newton. The boundaries, the name, the dates, and the type of government fluctuate over time. Villages annex and cede. Names evolve but overlap in time: *newe towne* > Cambridge > Cambridge Village > Newtown > Newton.

However, these two dates stand out for insertion on the new seal:

1. 1630 because this has always been on the seal and there is no compelling reason it shouldn't continue. Additionally, this is the date that Cambridge (which originated as an amalgam of current day Cambridge + Newton) uses on its seal. Finally, it is a watershed year that marks a major transition of control by the English as established by the Bay Colony's government.

2. Incorporated 1688: This year probably marks the earliest actual incarnation of modern Newton (boundaries, people, government, but not yet name) as it broke off from Cambridge. However, it would be hard to use the Indigenous land acknowledgement, say "Incorporated on Massachusetts Land" since the control of that land would have changed hands 50 years prior. Still, this date also has precedent, having been on the seal since 1879.

- 1630 - The "founded" date on the current Seal. In the 1630s, the Massachusetts Bay Colony established a tract of land called "the *newe towne*," renamed Cambridge in 1638, which contained Newton then known as "Cambridge Village."
- 1638 - Named Cambridge [Newton History Exhibit at Jackson Homestead]
- 1639 - First colonial settlers arrive [Newton History Exhibit at Jackson Homestead]
- 1646 - Rev. Eliot's meeting with the Massachusett. In 1647, The General Court grants land to establish an "indian praying town" (Eliot uses verbs like "make" and "layout" the town) in an area within the town known variously as *newe town*, *Cambridge Village*, or *Cohannat*. The settlement is given the name Noonatomen. [Eliot's Pamphlet].
- 1679 - The original "Incorporated a Town" date on the seal. The error was only discovered in 1879 in an obscure Record of the Council document. [History of Newton].
- 1688 - Separated from Cambridge Village. The current "Incorporated a town" date on the seal
- 1691 - Renamed Newtown [Newton History Exhibit at Jackson Homestead]
- 1873 - The "[Incorporated] a city" date on the seal
- 1874 - Another widely used date of incorporation owing to the process spanning Dec 1873 - Jan 1874

Appendix F. Relevant Links

Seal Working Group web page: <https://www.newtonma.gov/government/mayor-fuller/mayor-s-initiatives/city-seal-working-group>

Click [HERE](#) for the 10/8/20 meeting recording of the lecture by Niki Lefebvere, Director of Natick Historical Society and Kelsey Merriam, Education Manager of Historic Newton, plus Q&A.

If you have questions or comments about the history of the seal, or the City Seal Working Group, please be in touch with Lisa Dady at ldady@newtonma.gov.