



NEWTON
Parks, Recreation & Culture

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Parks & Recreation Commission
Information Manual

2022

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Purpose of This Manual

This Information Manual is maintained for new and current members of the Newton Parks & Recreation Commission (“Commission” or “PR”). The contents are presented as a matter of information. The purpose is to provide members of the Commission with a ready reference as to its mission, function and responsibilities. This manual also gives an overview of the organization and responsibilities of the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department (“PRC”) and provides Commission members with an inventory of the many acres in Newton that are under the jurisdiction of the Commission and/or are maintained by PRC.

The Commission reserves the right to modify, revoke, suspend, or terminate any or all such plans, policies, or procedures provided here, in whole or in part, at any time with or without notice. (As approved January 25, 1999, “At least a two-thirds majority vote of the Commission is required to set aside an existing, written policy or procedure of the Commission”). The language used in this handbook is not intended to create, nor is it to be construed to constitute policies of the Commission, except where they are noted as approved by the Commission. In addition, the policies, procedures, or rules included are not intended to amend, alter, or replace any statute of the Commonwealth or ordinances of the City of Newton.

Mission Statement and Responsibilities of the Commission

Approved February 28, 2000

Amended March 20, 2000

The mission of the Commission is to act in stewardship to enhance the quality of life for all citizens by providing the highest quality parks, recreation programs and recreation areas attainable and to preserve our natural areas for future generations. The Commission provides oversight and advice to the Mayor, City Council, and PRC regarding sports, recreation, parks, open space, and the preservation of scenic beauty throughout the city. The Commission attempts to balance the concerns of natural open space preservation and passive recreation with those of organized sports and active recreation by involving these and other interested parties in its planning, oversight, and decision-making processes.

In rendering decisions regarding the use of lands under its jurisdiction, the Commission strives to act in accord with written guidelines and procedures (Newton Revised Ordinances, 2017 § 21-47). The ordinances will hereinafter be referred to as “NRO”).

The Commission involves various interested parties or stakeholders in its planning and decision-making processes. Interested parties include, but are not limited to, local community associations, advocates of preservation of natural open space, other city boards and commissions, sports organizations, proponents of cultural recreation, seniors, those with disabilities or special needs, and individual Newton citizens.

Commission Meeting Schedule

The Commission meets at 7pm on the third Monday of the month, September through June.

In the event of a Monday holiday on the third Monday, the Commission will meet on the fourth Monday.

Open Meeting Law

The purpose of the Open Meeting Law is to ensure transparency in the deliberations on which public policy is based. Because the democratic process depends on the public having knowledge about the considerations underlying governmental action, the Open Meeting Law requires, with some exceptions, that meetings of public bodies be open to the public. It also seeks to balance the public’s interest in witnessing the deliberations of public officials with the government’s need to manage its operations efficiently.

No quorum of a governmental body shall meet in private for the purpose of deciding on or deliberating toward a decision on most every matter. With certain exceptions, all meetings of a public body must be open to the public. A meeting is generally defined as “a deliberation by a public body with respect to any matter within the body’s jurisdiction.” As explained more fully below, a deliberation is a communication between or among members of a public body.

The Office of the Attorney General (in January 2018) created a useful [Open Meeting Guide](#).

Text of the Open Meeting Law may be found [here](#) starting with Section 18 and continuing through Section 25.

Conflict-of-Interest

Members of the Commission, a public agency of the City of Newton, are treated as “*Special Municipal Employees*” by the [Massachusetts Conflict of Interest Statute MGL ch. 268A](#). According to the Massachusetts State Ethics Commission (an independent state agency that administers and enforces the provisions of the conflict-of-interest law and financial disclosure law) the law seeks to prevent conflicts between private interests and public duties, foster integrity in public service, and promote the public’s trust and confidence in that service by placing restrictions on what municipal employees may do on the job, after hours, and after leaving public service

Text of the Conflict-of-Interest Law may be found [here](#).

Commission Members

Nicole Banks, Commissioner

Ward I	Ellen Gibson
Ward II	Arthur Magni, Chairman
Ward III	Midge Connolly
Ward IV	Vacant
Ward V	Byron "Buzz" Dunker
Ward VI	Beth Wilkinson
Ward VII	Gloria Gavris
Ward VIII	Vacant

Alternates

1. Randy Johnson
2. John Rice
3. Jack Neville
4. Mark Feldhusen

Parks, Recreation & Culture Department Organization

PRC is organized according to [City Ordinance Chapter 21](#) and is organized into the following divisions:

Maintenance & Community Beautification

The [Maintenance & Community Beautification](#) division is charged with maintaining all school grounds, all public building grounds including City Hall, libraries, Police and Fire Headquarters, all parks and playgrounds, community centers, burial grounds, open space areas, the Newton section of Commonwealth Avenue, and a variety of traffic islands and abutments.

Responsibilities include athletic field preparation, carpentry, equipment repair, fence repairs, field marking, natural area ice skating, irrigation maintenance, playground repairs, snow removal (public schools), special events preparations, synthetic fields, turf maintenance and management (including [Integrated Pest Management](#)). They use both a contractual and departmental workforce to accomplish these tasks. Maintenance crews also assist the Public Works Department with City streets snow removal.

Maintenance participates in the Community Court Restitution Program: partnering with a number of local city and town courts systems, individuals are given community service hours rather than receiving jail time. Individuals perform much needed work such as: trash removal, branch and leaf removal and pruning.

Urban Forestry

[Urban Forestry](#) is the lead agency in the City for the care of public trees. Its mission is to preserve a safe, healthy public tree population that maximizes the benefits gained from the urban forest while striving to resolve the concerns of all our customers, encourage community and private partnerships, while providing cost-effective professional care.

The Division is overseen by the City Forester, has six tree crew members, and two inspectors. In addition to the in-house resources outside contracted services are used from time to time. The Division maintains all street trees, park trees and all other trees located on City open space, including parks, school lands, library lands, and City Hall grounds. They work closely with the City's [Urban Tree Commission](#) in the care and maintenance of the City's trees.

Cultural Development

[Cultural Development](#) administers and supports creative and cultural programming. Alongside community collaborators, they operate as a presence for equal access to arts and culture throughout the City.

Their four primary strategic objectives:

1. Promote the rich cultural heritage of the city, and stimulate and encourage cultural activities, arts appreciation, arts education, and the creative works of artists.
2. Ensure that the arts and culture are accessible to all residents.
3. Support a robust, healthy arts community where artists, nonprofit arts and culture organizations, and creative industries thrive, by promoting, connecting and empowering them toward success.
4. Provide administrative assistance to the Newton Cultural Council (the local chapter of the Mass Cultural Council) in their efforts to support the arts/culture community.

They offer a wide variety of cultural programming throughout the year including many events held on Parks & Recreation lands: July 4th, public art projects, summer concerts, and Fence Art,

Recreation Programs

This division sponsors a variety of programs year-round at indoor facilities, multi-use parks, fields, playgrounds, sports leagues, and activities across the City and beyond for Newton residents of all ages, abilities and interests.

The City has a long-standing partnership with Newton Athletes Unlimited, a non-profit that supports the City of Newton's [Therapeutic Recreation programs](#) by offering high quality recreational programs to encourage physical, social, emotional and intellectual development to individuals with disabilities.

Programs include, but are not at all limited to, the following:

[Aquatics](#): year-round swimming programs and services

[Camps](#): traditional day camps, specialty camps, outdoor adventures

[Indoor recreation centers](#): both high schools, swimming and a variety of indoor sports

[Over 55 programming](#): music, art, games, social events, health and wellness, day trips

[School vacation programs](#): offered during December, February and April school vacation weeks

[Adult and child programs](#): wide variety of sports

Parks & Open Space

This division is charged with managing park land and open space improvements under the jurisdiction of PRC. Parks & Open Space is responsible for coordinating resident-led improvement and beautification efforts, public-private partnerships, capital improvements, park land trail improvements, contractual design, and construction work. The division is also charged with keeping and maintaining the accessibility inventory for land under PRC control.

The Division's initiatives include, but are not limited to:

- Capital Improvement Project Management - [Listing of current projects](#)
- Adopt-A-Space Program
- Memorial Benches and Monuments
- Public-Private Partnerships (Friends and Advocacy Groups)

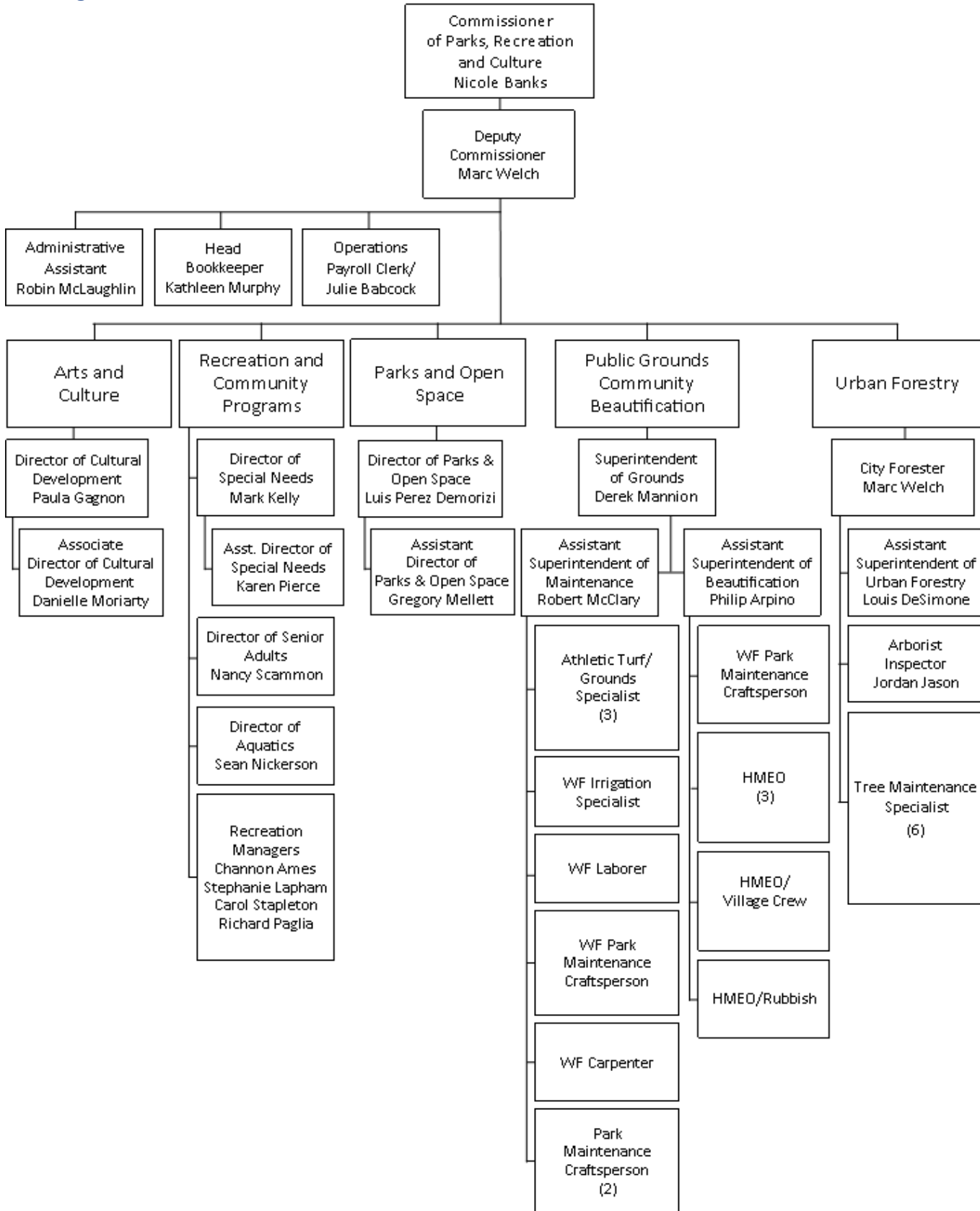
Administration

PRC Administration performs a wide variety of duties essential to smooth internal day-to-day operations. They are also on the front line to provide customer service for all residents and participants of PRC programs.

Additionally, Administration:

- Supports the Commissioner, staff, department boards, working groups and P & R Commission;
- Supports and works with other City departments;
- Maintains a productive work environment; and
- Processes payroll and payables.

PRC Organizational Chart



Inventory of Parks and Recreation Lands

Following is a list of all the parks and playgrounds, arranged alphabetically, which are maintained by the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department (PRC). It is followed by a listing (name only) of the same properties arranged by ward.

In addition to parks and playgrounds, PRC is responsible for the following:

- Commonwealth Avenue Median Strip - former trolley car right of way along the entire length of Commonwealth Avenue
- 41.2 acres (partial) of the Leo J. Martin Golf Course (shared with/operated by the MDC)
- 71.8 acres (total) of the Commonwealth Golf Course (would revert to Conservation Commission if no longer used as a golf facility)
- 278 sites including school grounds, roadside green areas, public grounds, road triangles, burial grounds

Terms used in the list

Playing Fields/Courts

- Baseball - regulation
- Baseball - junior
- Soccer - regulation
- Soccer - practice
- Softball - regulation
- Softball - practice
- Basketball - full
- Basketball - half: lined
- Basketball - hoops only: not lined
- Basketball - youth: full, but lower hoop height

Jurisdiction

- Newton Public Schools - PRC maintains almost all school playgrounds, fields and courts.

Special Conditions

- Conservation Commission - proposed modifications to any PRC property containing, sited on, or abutting wetland or water must be reviewed by the Conservation Commission

Off-Leash Recreation Areas

- When this is a “feature” it indicates that there is an off-leash area, fenced or unfenced. Off-leash permits are required and available from the [City Clerk](#). Otherwise, dogs must be leashed.

Angier School Playground

Address: 1697 Beacon Street, Waban

Ward: 5 Size: 4.7 acres

Parking: lot

Playing Fields/Courts: junior baseball/softball, practice soccer; tennis (3), basketball (1 full and 1 half court)

Play Structures: ages 5-12 play area with swings (2)

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y

Jurisdiction: Parks, Recreation & Culture

Auburndale Park

Address: West Pine Street, Auburndale (Contiguous to Flowed Meadow Conservation Area)

Ward: 4 Size: 29.9 acres

Parking: on-street and lot

Playing Fields/Courts: regulation baseball (lighted), regulation soccer; full basketball, tennis (2)

Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings; ages 5-12 play area

Features: city memorial site and permitted picnic area (Dell “Chub” Ryan) with tables and grills; “Cuz Connelly” recreation building with office and restrooms; lighted Charles River skating area; accessible exercise equipment adjacent to park lot; 1.3-mile trail; dugouts, concession stand

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: N

Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Bowen School Playground

Address: 280 Cypress Street, Thompsonville

Ward: 6 Size: 8.8 acres

Parking: school lot

Playing Fields/Courts: junior baseball, practice soccer; full basketball, youth basketball (lower hoop height)

Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings; ages 5-12 play area with swings

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y

Jurisdiction: Newton Public Schools

Boyd Park

Address: Jackson Road, Nonantum

Ward: 1 Size: 5.8 acres

Parking: on-street and school lot

Playing Fields/Courts: junior baseball (2), practice soccer; full basketball

Play Structures: ages 5-12 play area with swings

ADA-Park: Yes ADA-Apparatus: No

Jurisdiction: Parks, Recreation & Culture

(Officer Robert) Braceland Playground

See Upper Falls Playground

(Charles) Brown and Oak Hill Middle Schools Playfields

Address: Wheeler Road, Newton Centre

Ward: 8 Size: 11.3 acres

Parking: lot and on-street

Playing Fields/Courts: regulation baseball, practice football, regulation softball (3), regulation soccer/lacrosse/field hockey (4)

ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: na

Jurisdiction: Newton Public Schools

Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Bullough's Pond Park

Address: Bullough's Park, Newtonville

Ward: 2 Size: 1.4 acres (not including pond)

Parking: on-street

Features: benches and lookout area

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: na

Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Burr Park

Address: 142 Park Street, Newton Corner

Ward: 1 Size: 5.1 acres

Parking: on-street (drop-off area on Waverly Ave.)

Playing Fields/Courts: regulation soccer and softball; full basketball, tennis (4)

Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings (fenced); ages 5-12 play area with swings (unfenced)

Features: recreation building, splash pad

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: N

Burr School Playground

Address: 171 Pine Street, Auburndale

Ward: 4 Size: 10 acres

Parking: school lot, on-street

Playing Fields/Courts: regulation softball, soccer (2); full basketball (2), volleyball

Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings; ages 5-12 play area with swings

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y

Jurisdiction: Newton Public Schools

Cabot Park

Address: 101 Eastside Parkway, Newtonville

Ward: 2 Size: 11.8 acres (includes Cabot School Playground)

Parking: on-street

Playing Fields/Courts: Junior baseball, regulation softball, regulation baseball and regulation soccer/football; bocce (4), tennis (2) and lighted full basketball

Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings

Features: field house; off-leash recreation area (fenced)

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: N

Cabot School Playground

Address: 229 Cabot Street, Newtonville

Ward: 2 Size: 11.8 acres (includes Cabot Park)

Parking: on-street

Playing Fields/Courts: half basketball

Play Structures: ages 5-12 play area with swings (2)

Features: musical instruments

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y

Jurisdiction: Newton Public Schools

Captain Ryan Park

Address: Washington Street and Cherry Street, West Newton

Ward: 3 Size: .35 acres

Parking:

Playing Fields/Courts:

Play Structures:

Features: benches and game table, city memorial site

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: na

Carleton Park

Address: Carleton Street, Newton Corner

Ward: 1 Size: .1 acre

Parking: none

Features: benches and picnic table

ADA-Park: Yes ADA-Apparatus: na

Chaffin Park

Address: Vernon Street and Centre Street, Newton Corner

Ward: 1 Size: .75 acres

Parking: on-street

Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings

Features: lighted, accessible walkway, seating, and game table

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: N

Charlesbank Park

Address: Nonantum Place, Newton Corner

Ward: 1 Size: .5 acre

Parking: on-street

Play Structures: ages 5-12 play area with swings

ADA-Park: Yes ADA-Apparatus: Yes

Clafin Playground

Address: 101 Eastside Parkway, Newtonville

Ward: 2 Size: 1.2 acres

Parking: on-street

Features: off-leash recreation area (unfenced)

ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: na

Cold Spring Park

Address: Beacon Street or Plymouth Road, Newton Highlands

Ward: 5 Size: 65 acres

Parking: on-street and lot

Playing Fields/Courts: regulation softball, regulation soccer/lacrosse/field hockey; tennis (3) (ADA-Accessible) and full basketball (2)

Features: natural wooded area with trails; exercise equipment (ADA-Accessible near Beacon St. entrance); 1.46-mile Life Course/stone dust trail through the woods (not ADA-Accessible); off-leash recreation area (unfenced)

ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: varies

Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Coletti-Magni Park

Address: Corner of Watertown Street and Bridge Street, Nonantum

Ward: 1 Size: .46 acres

Parking: on-street

Features: benches and game table, city memorial site

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: na

Countryside School Playground

Address: 191 Dedham Street, Newton Highlands

Ward: 8 Size: 2.0 acres

Parking: lot and on-street

Playing Fields/Courts: junior baseball, practice soccer (2); full basketball

Play Structures: ages 5-12 play area with swings

ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: N

Jurisdiction: Newton Public Schools

Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Crescent Street Playground

Address: Curve Street, West Newton (behind Baptist Church)

Ward: 4 Size: 2.0 acres

Parking: on-street

Play Structures: ages 5-12 play area with swings

ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: N

Cronin's Cove

Address: Lake Avenue, Newton Highlands

Ward: 6 Size: .5 acre

Parking: on-street

Playing Fields/Courts:

Features: fenced with benches, on Crystal Lake

ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: na

Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Crystal Lake Park

Address: 30 Rogers Street, Newton Highlands

Ward: 6 Size: 2.0 acres; Crystal Lake: 24 acres

Parking: lot and on-street

Features: Gil Champagne bathhouse; designated swim area with docks, sandy beach with benches

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: na

Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Davis Park

Address: Eden Street, West Newton

Ward: 3 Size: 2.0 acres (includes NCSC Playground)

Parking: on-street
 Playing Fields/Courts: regulation softball; full basketball
 Play Structures: ages 18 mos. - 5 play area; ages 5-12 play area; swings for both age groups
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y

Edmands Park

Address: Blake Street, Newtonville
 Ward: 2 Size: 32.6 acres
 Parking: on-street
 Features: unpaved trails
 ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: na
 Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Eliot Memorial Park

Address: Eliot Memorial Road, Newton Centre
 Ward: 7 Size: .2 acre
 Parking: on-street
 Features: city memorial site
 ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: na

Elmwood Park

Address: Lowell Avenue and Elmwood Avenue, Newtonville
 Ward: 2 Size: 1.5 acres
 Parking: on-street
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: na

Emerson Playground

Address: Pettee Street, Newton Upper Falls
 Ward: 5 Size: 1.0 acre
 Parking: on-street and lot
 Playing Fields/Courts: regulation softball; full basketball
 Play Structures: ages 2-5 with swings; ages 5-12 play area with swings
 Features: Emerson Community Center
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y

Farlow Park

Address: Eldredge Street and Church Street, Newton Corner
 Ward: 1 Size: 5.0 acres
 Parking: on-street
 Playing Fields/Courts: junior baseball and practice soccer; half basketball (3)
 Play Structures: ages 2-5 and 5-12 play areas with swings
 Features: listed on the National Historic Register
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y

(Richard J.) Forte Memorial Park

Address: 235 Rear California Street, Nonantum
 Ward: 1 Size: 6.0 acres
 Parking: parking lot
 Playing Fields/Courts: lighted regulation soccer (2) and lighted regulation softball; lighted full basketball, bocce (3)
 Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area
 Features: restrooms in storage facility, city memorial site
 ADA-Park: Yes ADA-Apparatus: No
 Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Franklin School Playground

Address: 125 Derby Street, West Newton
 Ward: 3 Size: 2.7 acres

Parking: on-street
 Playing Fields/Courts: regulation baseball (2); full basketball
 Play Structures: ages 5-12 play area with swings (2)
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: N
 Jurisdiction: Newton Public Schools

(Harry) Gath Memorial Pool and Bathhouses

See Russell J. Halloran Sports and Recreation Complex
 Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Hamilton Playground

Address: 545 Grove Street, Newton Lower Falls
 Ward: 4 Size: 4.3 acres
 Parking: lot and on-street
 Playing Fields/Courts: regulation baseball, regulation softball, practice soccer (2); full basketball, tennis (2)
 Play Structures: ages 5-12 play area with swings
 Features: building with indoor gym, meeting rooms, and restrooms
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y

Heartbreak Hill Park at Waban Hill Reservoir

Address: Manet Road, Chestnut Hill
 Ward: 7 Size: 5 acres
 Parking: on-street
 Features: walking path
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: na

Horace Mann School Playground

Address: 225 Nevada Street, Newtonville
 Ward: 2 Size: 7.8 acres (includes building site and park, behind)
 Parking: on-street and school parking lot
 Playing Fields/Courts: junior baseball; full basketball
 Play Structures: ages 5-12 play area with swings
 ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: N
 Jurisdiction: Newton Public Schools

Hunnewell Playground

Address: Grasmere Street, off Hunnewell Avenue, Newton Corner
 Ward: 1 Size: 4.6 acres
 Parking: on-street
 Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings
 Features: Off-leash recreation area (fenced)
 ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: N

Hyde Playground

Address: Lincoln Street, Newton Highlands
 Ward: 5 Size: 1.0 acre
 Parking: on-street
 Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings; ages 5-12 play area
 Features: city memorial playground, accessible game table with seats; picnic tables
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y

Islington Oval

Address: Islington Road, Auburndale
 Ward: 4 Size: 1.5 acres
 Parking: on-street
 Features: Open Space

ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: na

Kennard Park

Address: 246 Dudley Road, Newton Centre

Ward: 8 Size: 14.0 acres

Parking: lot

Features: Parks, Recreation & Culture headquarters; natural wooded area with trails

ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: na

Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Lincoln-Eliot School Playground

See *Boyd Park*

Louise Levingston Cove

Address: Lake Avenue, Newton Highlands

Ward: 6 Size: .5 acre

Parking: on-street

Playing Fields/Courts:

Features: lakefront on Crystal Lake, benches, non-motorboat launch, fishing (requires city license)

ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: na

Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Lowell Park

Address: Watertown and Walnut Streets

Ward: 2 Size: .6 acres

Parking: on-street

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: na

Lower Falls Community Center

See *Hamilton Playground*

Lyons Field

See *Auburndale Park*

Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Mason-Rice School Playground

Address: 149 Pleasant Street, Newton Centre

Ward: 6 Size: 1.0 acre

Parking: lot

Playing Fields/Courts: half basketball (2)

Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings; ages 5-12 play area

Features: shade structure

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y

Jurisdiction: Newton Public Schools

Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

(Richard J.) McGrath Park

Address: Washington Street, West Newton

Ward: 3 Size: 10.1 acres

Parking: lot with handicap accessible spaces (use PRC spots ONLY)

Playing Fields/Courts: regulation football, baseball (2), soccer/lacrosse (3); tennis (7)

Features: Off-leash recreation area (fenced)

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: na

Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Memorial Park

Address: Stein Circle, Oak Hill

Ward: 8 Size: 3.0 acres
 Parking: on-street
 Playing Fields/Courts: junior baseball, practice soccer; tennis (2)
 Play Structures: ages 5-12 play area with swings
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: N

Memorial-Spaulding School Playground

Address: 250 Brookline Street, Newton Centre
 Ward: 8 Size: 2.0 acres
 Parking: lot and on-street
 Playing Fields/Courts: junior baseball (2), practice soccer (2); full basketball
 Play Structures: ages 5-12 play area with swings
 Features: city memorial garden
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y
 Jurisdiction: Newton Public Schools

Nahanton Park

Address: Nahanton Street and Winchester Street entrances. Newton Highlands
 Ward: 8 Size: 57 acres
 Parking: lots
 Playing Fields/Courts: regulation soccer, regulation softball
 Features: Nature Center building; memorial path along Charles River; fishing dock; canoe launch; community garden
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: na
 Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Newton Centre Green

Address: Centre Street, Newton Centre
 Ward: 6 Size: 2.0 acres (divided by Langley Road)
 Parking: lot and on-street
 Features: Historic village center green with shaded open lawn areas, benches and flower gardens, city memorial site
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: na

Newton Centre Playground

Address: 69 Tyler Terrace
 Ward: 6 Size: 17.9 acres
 Parking: on-street
 Playing Fields/Courts: regulation baseball, practice baseball, practice soccer (2); lighted full basketball, clay tennis (5) with practice backboard
 Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings; ages 5-12 play area
 Features: off-leash recreation area (unfenced)
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y
 Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Newton Highlands Playground

Address: Winchester Street, Newton Highlands
 Ward: 6 Size: 12.6 acres
 Parking: lot
 Playing Fields/Courts: lighted regulation soccer/football, regulation baseball; tennis (2), full basketball
 Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings; ages 5-12 play area
 Features: paved walking trails
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y
 Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Newton North High School

Address: 457 Walnut Street, Newtonville
 Ward: 2 Size: 18.4 acres

Parking: on-street and parking lots
 Playing Fields/Courts: regulation soccer, softball, lacrosse and football; tennis (10) lighted; track
 Features: location of PR&C indoor recreation programs
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y
 Jurisdiction: Newton Public Schools

Newton South High School

Address: 140 Brandeis Road, Newton Centre
 Ward: 8 Size: 7.0 acres
 Parking: lot
 Playing Fields/Courts: lighted football/soccer; lighted tennis (12), full basketball
 Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: N
 Jurisdiction: Newton Public Schools
 Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Peirce School Playground

Address: 170 Temple Street, West Newton
 Ward: 4 Size: 2.0 acres
 Parking: school lot, on-street
 Playing Fields/Courts: junior baseball, practice soccer; youth basketball
 Play Structures: ages 5-12 play area with swings (2)
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y
 Jurisdiction: Newton Public Schools

(Joanne C.) Pellegrini Memorial Playground

Address: Hawthorn Street, Nonantum
 Ward: 1 Size: 4.2 acres
 Parking: lot and on-street
 Playing Fields/Courts: lighted regulation softball and regulation soccer; tennis courts (2), half basketball
 Play Structures: ages 2-5 and 5-12 play areas with swings
 Features: shade structure, city memorial site
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y (except tennis courts)

Richardson Playground

Address: Allen Avenue, Waban
 Ward: 5 Size: 5.4 acres
 Parking: on-street
 Playing Fields/Courts: junior baseball, practice soccer
 Play Structures: ages 5-12 play area with swings
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: N
 Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

River Street Playground

Address: River Street, West Newton
 Ward: 3.5 acres Size: .75 acres
 Parking: On-street

Play Structures: ages 5-12 play area with swings
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: N

Russell J. Halloran Sports and Recreation Complex

Address: 250 Albemarle Road, Newtonville
 Ward: 2 Size: 24.9 acres (includes Avery Woods Conservation Land)
 Parking: on-street (250, including handicap accessible spaces)
 This complex is fully lighted.
 Harry Gath Memorial Pool and Bathhouse - fully accessible

- Outdoor pool with diving boards, water slide, and lift

- Large shade structures with benches and deck
- Separate fenced wading pool area with shade structure

Playing Fields:

- Regulation softball-fenced (Jean Hays Cole), regulation softball, regulation baseball, junior baseball (James E. Murphy), batting cage, junior baseball (Bob Roche), junior baseball, regulation soccer and football

Courts: Tennis (2) and full basketball

Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings; ages 5-12 play area with swings

Features: Recreation field house with meeting room, restrooms, gazebo, benches and concession stand (league-managed)

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y

Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Spears Park

Address: Corner of Washington Street and Walnut Park, Nonantum

Ward: 1 Size: .25 acre

Parking: on-street:

ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: na

Stearns Park

Address: Jassett Street, Nonantum

Ward: 1 Size: 3.4 acres

Parking: on-street

Playing Fields/Courts: practice baseball; full basketball

Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings; ages 5-12 play area with swings

Features: Picnic tables, game tables and benches; rain/shade shelter

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y

The Cove

See *Auburndale Park*

Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

The Reverend Louis E. Ford Playground

See *Crescent Street Playground*

Thompsonville Playground

Address: Cypress Street, Thompsonville

Ward: 6 Size: 8.8 acres

Parking: on-street

Playing Fields/Courts: practice baseball, practice soccer; hoops-only basketball

ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: na

Tom Torchia Playground

See *Davis Park*

Underwood School Playground

See *Farlow Park*

Upper Falls Playground

Address: Chestnut Street, Newton Upper Falls

Ward: 5 Size: 8.8 acres

Parking: lot and on-street

Playing Fields/Courts: regulation baseball, regulation softball, practice soccer (2); tennis (2), full basketball

Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings

Features: off-leash recreation area (unfenced) - lower level only

ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: N
 Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Veterans Memorial Park

Address: Washington Street, opposite Newton History Museum, Newton Corner
 Ward: 1 Size: .1 acre
 Parking: on-street
 Features: city memorial site
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: na

Ward Park

Address: Montrose Street, Newton Centre
 Ward: 7 Size: 3.5 acres
 Parking: on-street and lot
 Playing Fields/Courts: junior baseball, softball and soccer; half basketball
 ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: na

Ward School Playground

Address: 10 Dolphin Road, Newton Centre
 Ward: 7 Size: 3.1 acres
 Parking: lot
 Playing Fields/Courts: tennis (1), hoops-only basketball
 Play Structures: ages 5-12 play area with swings
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y
 Jurisdiction: Newton Public Schools

Warren Lincoln Playground

Address: Montclair Street, Waban
 Ward: 5 Size: 5.4 acres
 Parking: on-street
 Playing Fields/Courts: regulation baseball, practice soccer
 Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings; ages 5-12 play area
 ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: N

Washington Park

Address: Washington Park, Newtonville
 Ward: 2 Size: 1.0 acres
 Parking: on-street
 Features: lighted open space within the Newtonville Historic District; benches
 ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: na

Webster Park

Address: End of Warren Street, Newton Centre (adjoins Webster Woods)
 Ward: 7 Size: 1.0 acre
 Parking: on-street
 ADA-Park: N ADA-Apparatus: na

Weeks Park

Address: Hereward Road, Newton Centre
 Ward: 6 Size: 11.1 acres
 Parking: lot and on-street
 Playing Fields/Courts: regulation softball (2), regulation soccer/lacrosse/field hockey (3); tennis (4)
 Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings
 Features: game tables
 ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: N

Wellington Playground

Address: Kilburn Road, West Newton

Ward: 3 Size: 1.9 acres

Parking: on-street

Playing Fields/Courts: full basketball, tennis

Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings

Features: neighborhood supported perennial and pollinator flower beds

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: N

West Newton Commons Playground

Address: Elm Street and Webster Street, West Newton

Ward: 3 Size: 3.7 acres

Parking: on-street

Playing Fields/Courts: regulation baseball, practice soccer (2)

Play Structures: ages 2-5 play area with swings

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: N

Williams School Playground

Address: 141 Grove Street, Auburndale

Ward: 4 Size: 1.1 acres

Parking: lot, on-street

Playing Fields/Courts: practice softball; hoops-only basketball

Play Structures: ages 5-12 play area

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: N

Jurisdiction: Newton Public Schools

Zervas School Playground

Address: 30 Beethoven Avenue, Waban

Ward: 5 Size: 1.0 acre

Parking: lot and on-street

Playing Fields/Courts: practice soccer; hoops-only basketball

Play Structures: ages 5-12 play area with swings (3)

ADA-Park: Y ADA-Apparatus: Y

Jurisdiction: Newton Public Schools

Special Conditions: requires Conservation Commission review/possible approval for any modifications

Inventory of Parks and Recreation Lands: by Ward

WARD	PARK/PLAYGROUND	WARD	PARK/PLAYGROUND
1	Boyd Park	4	Islington Oval
1	Burr Park	4	Lower Falls Community Center
1	Carleton Park	4	Lyons Field
1	Chaffin Park	4	Peirce School Playground
1	Charlesbank Park	4	The Cove
1	Coletti-Magni Park	4	The Reverend Louis E. Ford Playground
1	Farlow Park	4	Williams School Playground
1	Forte (Richard J.) Memorial Park	5	Angier School Playground
1	Hunnewell Playground	5	Braceland (Officer Robert) Playground
1	Lincoln-Eliot School Playground	5	Cold Spring Park
1	Pellegrini (Joanne C.) Memorial Playground	5	Emerson Playground
1	Spears Park	5	Hyde Playground
1	Stearns Park	5	Richardson Playground
1	Underwood School Playground	5	Upper Falls Playground
1	Veterans Memorial Park	5	Warren Lincoln Playground
2	Bullough's Pond Park	5	Zervas School Playground
2	Cabot Park	6	Bowen School Playground
2	Cabot School Playground	6	Cronin's Cove
2	Claflin Playground	6	Crystal Lake Park
2	Edmands Park	6	Louise Levingston Cove
2	Elmwood Park	6	Mason-Rice School Playground
2	Gath (Harry) Memorial Pool and Bathhouses	6	Newton Centre Green
2	Horace Mann School Playground	6	Newton Centre Playground
2	Lowell Park	6	Newton Highlands Playground
2	Newton North High School	6	Thompsonville Playground
2	Russell J. Halloran Sports and Recreation Complex	6	Weeks Park
2	Washington Park	7	Eliot Memorial Park
3	Captain Ryan Park	7	Heartbreak Hill Park at Waban Hill Reservoir
3	Davis Park	7	Ward Park
3	Franklin School Playground	7	Ward School Playground
3	McGrath (Richard G.) Park	7	Webster Park
3	River Street Playground	8	Brown (Charles) and Oak Hill Middle Schools Playfields
3	Tom Torchia Park (see <i>Davis Park</i>)	8	Countryside School Playground
3	Wellington Playground	8	Kennard Park
3	West Newton Commons Playground	8	Memorial Park
4	Auburndale Park	8	Memorial-Spaulding School Playground
4	Burr School Playground	8	Nahanton Park
4	Crescent Street Playground	8	Newton South High School
4	Hamilton Playground		

Field Houses, Recreation Centers and Community Centers

PRC manages the following buildings:

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURE HEADQUARTERS (Administration, Urban Forestry, Maintenance and Beautification)

Kennard Park, 246 Dudley Road, Newton Centre 02459

617-796-1500

parks@newtonma.gov

ALBEMARLE FIELDHOUSE* and **GATH POOL BATH HOUSE**

Russell J. Halloran Sports and Recreation Complex, 250 Albemarle Road, Newtonville.

AUBURNDALE COVE FIELD HOUSE*

Auburndale Park, West Pine Street, Auburndale

BURR PARK FIELD HOUSE*

Burr Park, Waverly Avenue, Newton Corner

CABOT PARK FIELD HOUSE *

Cabot Park, 101 Eastside Parkway, Newtonville

EMERSON COMMUNITY CENTER*

Emerson Playground, Pettee Street, Newton Upper Falls

FORTE FIELD HOUSE*

Richard M. Forte Memorial Park, 235 California Street, Nonantum

GIL CHAMPAGNE BATH HOUSE

Crystal Lake Park, 16 Rogers Street, Newton Highlands

JEANNETTE CURTIS WEST COMMUNITY CENTER (“The Hut”)

Newton Centre Playground, 69 Tyler Terrace, Newton Centre

Note: This facility is unoccupied and unusable.

LOWER FALLS COMMUNITY CENTER*

Hamilton Park, 545 Grove Street, Newton Lower Falls

JOANNE C. PELLEGRINI COMMUNITY CENTER*

Joanne C. Pellegrini Memorial Playground, Hawthorn Street, Nonantum

NAHANTON PARK NATURE CENTER*

Nahanton Park, Nahanton Street, Newton Highlands

*These facilities are available for rent.

Outdoor Special Events

The process to review and approve applications for outdoor special events is determined by the size and complexity of the proposed event and is described in detail in the [Outdoor Special Event Application kit](#).

There are two event categories:

1. Small Low Impact
 - a. Attendance less than 500 people
 - b. Duration: 5 hrs. or less
 - c. Approval is generally made administratively, i.e., PRC Commissioner
2. Large High Impact
 - a. Attendance 500 people or more
 - b. Duration: full and multi-day
 - c. Approval involves Commission review and public hearing, i.e., two-month process

Requests for Other Uses of Park Land

To submit a proposal to the Commission for use of PRC land, the following steps are standard in the two-month process:

1. Requestor contacts the Commission Secretary to provide a written copy of the proposal and make an appointment with the PRC Commissioner.
2. Requestor is added to the Commission agenda for an informational meeting. The proposal is presented to the Commission and discussed with the Commission members.
3. Abutters are notified and invited to a public hearing held at the next month's scheduled Commission meeting.

Commemoration Policy

PRC offers three ways for residents and non-residents to make [donations and memorials](#) to commemorate deceased loved ones: planting a tree, installing a bench and making a tax-deductible financial donation.

Trees

The City welcomes the opportunity to plant commemorative trees. These will be site-selective and at least 2 to 2 1/2 inches in diameter. An accompanying plaque may be mounted on a nearby ground pedestal.

All trees will be selected and planted by the City of Newton Urban Forestry Department according to City of Newton planting schedules. All requests for commemorative trees should be directed to Urban Forestry Director by emailing urbanforestry@newtonma.gov or calling 617-796-1500.

Benches

The City can arrange for a commemorative bench with an embedded plaque. Bench selection and siting are determined by the Director of Parks & Open Space upon request and subsequent site visit.

All requests for commemorative benches should be directed to the Director of Parks & Open Space by emailing parks@newtonma.gov or calling 617-796-1500.

Donations

PRC works with public and private partners to supplement and support the City of Newton's parks, trails and recreation opportunities; particularly those that help children, at-risk youth, seniors and the disabled.

Field and Court Use

Besides PRC and Newton Public Schools use of City facilities, our playing fields, tennis courts and other open spaces are available for use by outside groups. (The website has a [Field Policy Application](#) dated 2/1/16.)

PRC coordinates with sports groups, including Little League, to manage the maintenance of our fields to a level that ensures safe and quality playability. These arrangements have evolved over time such that currently there is some variation from group to group as well as from one field to another. There are no written agreements that proscribe the division of responsibilities.

PRC is collaborating with the ballfield groups to update and formalize the terms and conditions of these partnerships.

The process to obtain a field permit:

1. Establish a household or organizational account on MyRec. <https://newtonma.myrec.com/>
2. Apply using a [field permit application](#). The application is reviewed by the Permit Manager in the order in which it was received.
3. If accepted, the applicant is assigned a tier (see chart below), informed of their acceptance, and added to the calendar.

Applicants are required to apply annually. Applications generally are specific to one of three sessions:

Session One: April 1 - Father's Day

Session Two: Monday after Father's Day – third Sunday in August

Session Three: First Monday in September through Thanksgiving

Field Priority/Fees

TIER	GROUPS	TURF	GRASS	LIGHTS
1	Newton PRC; Newton Public Schools	\$0	\$0	\$0
2	Newton-based Youth Sports Leagues	\$50	\$0	\$50 *
3	Adult groups and youth leagues with >65% residents; Newton private schools; Newton charitable organizations, Newton public schools PTO's	\$100	\$30	\$50
4	Adult groups and youth leagues with <65% residents; Newton businesses; non-Newton schools; Newton non-profits and charitable organizations	\$150	\$40	\$50
5	Private for-profit camps and clinics not affiliated w/Newton; one-time events/tournaments; other organizations running a business regardless of # of Newton residents associated	\$150	\$50	\$50

* \$35/hr. Highlands Little League

Tennis Court Priority/Fees

TIER	GROUPS	COURT HOUR
1	Newton Contracted Tennis Instructors NCE Tennis Programming	\$5
2	Private school rentals*	\$10
3	Private instruction (including NCE) Private school rentals (possible for future) Private tournament fundraisers	\$15

*PRC rents out tennis courts to the following three private schools:

- Mt. Alvernia High School
- Maimonides School

- Newton Country Day

Private tennis instructors must complete a [Private Lesson Permit Application](#).

Crystal Lake

The City developed “Rules and Regulations for Boating on Crystal Lake” in May, 1929, shortly after [assuming responsibility of this “Great Pond”](#) in April, 1924.

The following rules and regulations were proposed by the Newton Parks & Recreation Commission on October 9, 1990 and accepted by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Fisheries, Wildlife and Environmental Law Enforcement on May 8, 1991, in accordance with M.G.L. c131, sec 45 and 323 CMR5.0. Also see City of Newton Traffic ordinance T-112, approved 10/15/90.

The December 18, 2005 amendments were submitted for review and approval by the Department of Fisheries & Wildlife but were determined not to require the approval of the Department via email of December 27, 2005, James J. Hanlon, Director, Massachusetts Environmental Police.

N.B. The City did not address swimming in its update of the “Rules and Regulations.”

Rules and Regulations for Boating on Crystal Lake (2005)

(As amended by the Newton Parks & Recreation Commission, December 18, 2005)

Use of Crystal Lake for boating and fishing is permitted year-round from dawn to dusk subject to the following rules and regulations:

1. **TYPES OF BOATS:**

- The following boats are permitted:
Car top boats, including canoes, kayaks, rowboats, wind surfers and inflatable boats that have sides, oar locks and a rated carrying capacity of at least 300lbs.

2. **TYPES OF MOTORS:**

- Electric motors not exceeding 3 horsepower or 30lbs of thrust.
- All persons using the above permitted boats must wear a coast guard approved personal flotation device at all times. (see rule 7a below)

3. **THE FOLLOWING ARE PROHIBITED:**

- Jet skis, crew sculls, water skis, snowmobiles, skimobiles, all-terrain vehicles (ATV’s) and hovercrafts. (exception – emergency vehicles)
- Internal combustion engines on or in the water. (exception – emergency vehicles)

4. **ACCESS POINT:**

- All boats must be put into the water by hand carry at the designated area in Cronin’s Cove on Lake Avenue. Boats may not be put in the lake from any other site, except boats belonging to owners of property abutting the lake, which may then be launched from the abutter’s property.

5. **LAUNCHING AND LANDING:**

- Boaters are prohibited from landing their boats on private property along the lake, except that the foregoing restriction shall not apply to private abutters landing boats on their own property.
- No person shall moor a boat in the water and no person shall beach a boat within the boundary of the access point or upon any other public land surrounding the lake (a) after dusk, or (b) in a manner that interferes with the reasonable use and enjoyment of the access point and other public land by others entitled thereto.

- c. No person shall dig up, cut, break, remove, deface, defile or ill-use any fence, sign, stairway, bush, plant, turf, rock, or any other thing belonging to the City of Newton, or have possession of any part thereof.

6. PARKING:

- a. Subject to an amendment to City parking ordinances, boaters may park in the designated spot on Lake Avenue at Cronin Cove for five (5) minutes while loading and unloading boats. At all other times, boaters' cars must be legally parked in appropriate spaces.
- b. The maximum number of boats permitted on the lake in active use at any one time is limited to twenty (20) boats on a first come/first-served basis.

7. SAFETY:

- a. All boats must be equipped with one Coast Guard approved personal flotation device, in good and serviceable condition, for each person on board, which must be worn at all times by each such person on board (M.G.L. c.90B, sec.5A).
- b. Boaters are required to read and obey State boating regulations, which appear on the Department of Fisheries, Wildlife and Environmental Law Enforcement sign posted at Cronin Cove.
- c. No person shall operate a boat or other craft that exceeds the recommended carrying capacity or recommended number of persons on board. Any person operating a boat in the aforesaid manner shall be ordered to remove such boat from the lake.
- d. No person under age 12 shall operate a boat on the lake, unless accompanied by another person (in the same boat) who is at least 12 years of age.
- e. Boating is not permitted inside the buoyed swimming area, the buoyed area surrounding the high voltage aerator or within one hundred fifty (150) feet of the bathing beach. Boaters should be mindful of swimmers who may stray outside of the swimming area.
- f. Swimming from boats is prohibited (boaters are not permitted to jump into the water or swim from their boats).
- g. All boaters use the lake at their own risks.

8. FISHING:

- a. All persons who fish from boats on Crystal Lake must have a valid fishing license as required.
- b. Scuba fishing and spear fishing are prohibited.
- c. Ice fishing or any other activity on the lake is prohibited at any time when the ice is determined by the City of Newton Safety Officer and Parks and Recreation Department to be unsafe for skating and is prohibited at all times in the area planned for skating.

9. MISCELLANEOUS:

- a. No person shall throw, drop or place any wastepaper, rubbish or refuse in or on Crystal Lake or upon any public land bordering thereon.
- b. No person shall throw any stone or any other missile, or have possession of or discharge any destructive weapon, firearm, firecracker, torpedo or firework in or on Crystal Lake or upon any public or private land bordering thereon.
- c. No person shall, in or on Crystal Lake or upon any public land bordering thereon, engage in disorderly conduct, gambling, use of illegal drugs, or use of obscene or indecent language.
- d. No person shall, in or on Crystal Lake or upon any public land bordering thereon, have possession of or drink any alcoholic beverage.
- e. No person shall throw or place a lighted match, cigar, cigarette or other burning substance in or on Crystal Lake or upon any public land bordering thereon, nor shall any person make a fire upon the ground or in a grill upon any public land bordering Crystal Lake, nor shall any person make a fire in a grill on a boat.

10. ENFORCEMENT:

- a. No person shall refuse or neglect to obey any of these rules when directed to do so by any official authorized to enforce these rules as specified in Rule 9b.
- b. The City of Newton Police and Newton Parks and Recreation Officials shall enforce these rules and regulations. Violations are subject to a \$50 fine to be paid to the City of Newton (M.G.L. c.90b, sec.12.14).
- c. The Director of the Division of Law Enforcement of the Department of fisheries, Wildlife and Environmental Law Enforcement: Environmental Police Officers and State Police are authorized to enforce applicable state laws, which may also include \$50 fine for violations (M.G.L. c.90b, sec.12.14).
- d. These rules have been established taking into account the population density of the City and close proximity of Crystal Lake to major thoroughfares and Newton Center. These rules also reflect the desire of the City to deal equitably with

abutters and non-abutters and to preserve the ecological balance of Crystal Lake by preventing the over-utilization of this cherished natural resource. These rules will be reviewed annually in April at a formal Parks and Recreation meeting, and as deemed necessary by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

11. **PRIOR RULES:** Rule 15, “Boating” and Rule 16 “Fishing” of the “Rules and Regulations for the Government and the Use of Crystal Lake” (City of Newton Playground Commission – 1929), to the extent they are inconsistent with the foregoing, are hereby amended and superseded by these rules. Except as specifically set forth herein, these rules are not intended to displace or supplant existing law.

Rules and Regulations for the Government and Use of Crystal Lake (May 15, 1929)

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

PLAYGROUND COMMISSION

RULES AND REGULATIONS

For The Government and Use of

CRYSTAL LAKE

GENERAL RULES

Rule 1. No person shall enter or leave Crystal Lake except at beaches where the City owns the land or at such other places as the Playground Commission may specially designate, providing, however, that all inhabitants of the Commonwealth shall have equal rights with the citizens of Newton, subject to the payment of such charges as are fixed under these rules. Exception is made for shuttles, their guests and servants on their own respective beaches.

Rule 2. No person shall in or on Crystal Lake, or upon any land bordering thereon, solicit the acquaintance of, or annoy another person; or utter any profane, threatening, abusive or indecent language, or loud outcry; or solicit any subscription or contribution; or have possession of or drink any intoxicating liquor; or play any game of chance; or have possession of any instrument of gambling, or do any obscene or indecent act; or preach, read, or make an oration or harangue, or any political or other address; or move in a military or civic parade, drill or procession; or lie down upon a bench or boat or go to sleep thereon; or play any musical instrument except by written authority from the Playground Commission.

Rule 3. No person shall dig up, cut, break, remove, deface, file or ill-use any building, structure, fence, sign, bush, plant, tree, rock, or any other thing belonging to the City of Newton, or have possession of any part thereof.

Rule 4. No person shall throw any stone or any other missile, or have possession of or discharge any destructive weapon, firearm, firecracker, torpedo or fireworks, or make a fire or throw or place upon the ground a lighted match, cigar, cigarette, or other burning substance; or post, paint, or affix any sign, notice, placard or advertising device; or, except with written authority from said Playground Commission engage in business, sell or dispose for sale, or give away any goods, wares, or circulars; or set a trap or snare or injure or have possession of any wild animal or bird; or injure or destroy any bird's nest or eggs; or chop or place and suffer to remain any piece of paper or other refuse, except in the receptacles designated therefor.

Rule 5. No person shall throw, drop or place in the water or on the beach any waste paper, rubbish or refuse.

Rule 6. No person shall ride or drive any animal or vehicle on the city reservation or the beach of the lake; or bring dogs on the lake except on leash.

Rule 7. No person shall refuse or neglect to obey any reasonable direction of a playground official or police officer.

BATHING

Rule 8. All bathing in Crystal Lake will be limited to ticket holders. These will be issued to applicants by the Playground Department at City Hall, West Newton, during the month of May. The tickets are good only for the summer of the year in which they are issued and are subject to observance of all the rules pertaining to bathing in Crystal Lake.

Rule 9. Each bather is restricted to one hour's use of the dressing room and the bathing facilities in Crystal Lake, per day. A shower bath must be taken before entering the waters of the lake.

Rule 10. Bathing during the day until six o'clock in the afternoon is restricted to children of both sexes eighteen years of age or younger, and to parents and guardians or other older people having young people in their charge.

Rule 11. After six o'clock in the afternoon until dark, older people holding season tickets may bathe, subject to the same rules governing the use of the bathhouse for dressing, showers before entering the waters of the lake and the time limit of one hour each day.

Rule 12. All persons bathing in the lake shall use the bathing facilities provided by the City of Newton. A charge of fifty cents (50c.) will be made to non-residents for the use of such bathing facilities each time they bathe in the lake. For exceptions read Rule 13.

Rule 13. No person shall bathe in this lake except in proper costume and at a place designated therefor, or bathe at any other seasons or hours than are posted at the designated bathing beach; or bathe on days or during hours not designated for his or her sex and no persons may loiter on or near the bathing beach. Exception is made as to loitering when parents or guardians accompany their children or when nurses or maids or other older persons come in charge of children.

SKATING

Rule 14. No person shall skate on the ice except at a place or places designated therefor by ropes and lanterns; or skate on any other days or hours than are posted at the skating reservation, or cut ice, or fish through the ice, or deposit snow on any part of the reservation for skating, or within fifty yards of this reservation; or skate in the reservation when the signs are up forbidding skating; or play hockey in any area not specially marked for this game; or refuse or neglect to obey the posted rules and regulations governing winter sports; or refuse or neglect to obey any reasonable directions of playground directors or police officers.

BOATING

Rule 15. No person shall have charge of, row a boat, paddle a canoe, run or drive a boat or canoe, propelled by steam, naphtha, gasoline, electric or other motor or engine, or by sail, unless he shall have first obtained written permission therefor from the Newton Playground Commission; or drive the same at a speed exceeding eight miles an hour; or in such a manner as to endanger or annoy others.

FISHING

Rule 16. No fishing is allowed on Crystal Lake from December 1st to June 30th. From July 1st to November 30th, fishing is allowed but is subject to existing rules and regulations of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts pertaining to fishing.

Any person violating any of the above rules, shall for each offense, be punished by a fine of not more than twenty dollars. (Revised Laws, Chapter 243.)

CITY OF NEWTON PLAYGROUND COMMISSION

Signed, ALBERT P. CARTER, Chairman

CHARLES F. JOHNSON, Jr.

THOMAS J. LYONS

RALPH COOLIDGE HENRY

E. RAY SPEARE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Department of Public Works

State House, Boston.

May 15, 1929.

Voted, That the Department of Public Works approves the accompanying rules and regulations for the government and use of Crystal Lake, Newton, as formulated by the Playground Commission of the City of Newton, insofar as said rules and regulations govern fishing, boating, bathing, skating and other recreational activities in or on Crystal Lake in said City, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 243 of the Acts of 1924.

Signed, F. E. LYMAN
Commissioner.

Relationships with Other Boards, Commissions and *Ad Hoc* Committees

In addition to working with a variety of boards and commissions as necessary, PR Commissioners maintain regular voting positions with the Urban Tree Commission, Newton Farm Commission (required PR member), Community Preservation Commission (required PR member) and Newton Commonwealth Golf Course. Commissioners also participate in committees and working groups assembled to research and make recommendations for improvements, e.g., Fields Committee, and Off-Leash Area Working Group.

Planning Department

The Planning Department conducts current and long-range comprehensive planning. It provides land use analysis, develops both the Newton Open Space Plan (every five years) and the Master or Comprehensive Plan for the City. It also develops and provides census, customer satisfaction, and survey information. The Planning Department provides staff support for the Conservation Commission and Historical Commissions and helps to administer their state and local regulations, policies and procedures. It provides staff support for the Land Use and Land Re-Use (of public property) Committees of the City Council. It provides review of proposed signage for compliance with the city's sign ordinance and coordinates administrative site plan review for construction. The Planning Department's landscape engineer also assists in designing improvements to parks and recreation areas. The Planning Department coordinates the submission of grant applications for state and federal funds for park improvements and administers the Community Block Grant Development program.

Conservation Commission

The Conservation Commission administers [Wetlands Regulations](#) (310 CMR 10.00) and the City of Newton [Floodplain Ordinance](#) (NRO § 22-22) to preserve and protect Newton's wetlands and floodplains and is enabled to acquire properties for the preservation of open space and wildlife protection, to maintain all Conservation Areas in a sound manner, to make the areas accessible to the public and to educate the public about open space issues. NRO§ 22-21 enables this commission to conduct research into the city's natural resources and to prepare conservation and passive outdoor recreation plans and charges it with advising the Planning Department on natural resources.

Besides [designated conservation areas](#), the Conservation Commission must be consulted for any proposed modifications to all Parks and Recreation lands containing or abutting the Charles River, streams and wetlands. Conservation Lands are generally available for passive recreational use and often border park lands.

Urban Tree Commission

The Newton [Urban Tree Commission](#) ensures that the canopy of green created by the city's trees is maintained, preserved and extended. This includes setting direction, developing policies, overseeing practices, and guiding outcomes related to the city's management of its urban forest.

Newton Farm Commission

The City of Newton oversees the [Newton Community Farm](#) in conjunction with the [Newton Farm Commission](#).

The mission of the farm is to nurture a community that teaches and models sustainable agricultural and environmental practices on the historic Angino Farm. The farm strives to benefit the community by:

- Providing locally grown produce through their Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, farm stand, Newton Farmers' Markets, and donations to local food pantries;
- Educating the public about sustainable practices for agriculture, land use, and stewardship of other natural resources through hands-on classes, workshops, internships, and drop-in farm hours;
- Preserving Newton's last working farm as a historic site and valuable open space.
- Aiding gardening enthusiasts through an annual spring Seedling Sale.
- Donating a portion of the food grown to people in need through local organizations such as the Newton Food Pantry, The Second Step, and Boston Area Gleaners.

Community Preservation Committee

The [Community Preservation Committee](#) studies the needs, possibilities and resources of the city regarding community preservation and makes recommendations to the city council for funding of projects that involve:

- open space;
- historic resources;
- land for recreational use; and
- community housing.

In general, these funds are not used for maintenance. They augment - but do not replace - operating funds, and are, as far as possible, used along with other funding.

Following is an alphabetical listing of CPA-funded projects, starting in 2001, involving PRC lands:

- Albemarle Community Commons - 2003 - \$88,435
- Bowen Field Irrigation - 2003 - \$56,800
- City Hall and War Memorial Historic Landscape Preservation Plan - 2005 - \$40,000
- Cheesecake Brook Greenway Master Plan (managed by DPW) - 2006 - \$25,000
- Crystal Lake, 20 Rogers Street (managed by others; land purchase, including supplement) - 2007 - \$3,278,213
- Crescent Street Feasibility Study and Design (managed by Public Buildings Dept.) playground only) - 2017 - ~\$200,000
- Farlow and Chaffin Parks Historic Landscape Report - 2005 - \$50,850
 - Farlow Park Design and Feasibility Study (pond only) - 2008 - \$40,000
 - Farlow Park and Bridge (design and construction) - 2013-2018 - \$476,780
- Flowed Meadow/Auburndale Park Pedestrian Improvements (managed by Planning Dept.) - 2001 - \$40,000
- Forte Park (Phase II Only) - 2003 - \$250,000
- Gath Pool Enhancements (Phases I, II and III) - 2005 - \$122,475
- Newton Centre Playground Access and Rehabilitation Plan - 2005 - \$60,000
- Newton Highlands Playground and Upper Falls Playground Master Plan(s) - 2006 - \$276,500
 - Newton Highlands Playground Design - 2015 - \$200,000
 - Newton Highlands Playground Construction - 2017 - \$2,500,000
- Stearns and Pellegrini Playgrounds Master Plan(s), (managed by Planning Dept.) - 2004 - \$24,500 Upper Falls Playground Master Plan (included above with Newton Highlands Playground)
- West Newton Exploratory Drilling for Well - 2004 - \$8,500
- Waban Hill Reservoir Acquisition, Master Plan, Phase I “Design and Construction” (renamed as Heartbreak Hill Park at Waban Hill Reservoir), (2015 acquisition from State: \$404,800 included in total) - 2015-2019 - \$980,000
 - Waban Hill Reservoir (renamed as Heartbreak Hill at Waban Hill Reservoir), Master Plan - 2017 - \$30,000 (included in total \$980K above)
 - Waban Hill Reservoir, Phase I Design and Construction - 2018-2019 - \$325,000 (included in total \$980K above)
- Washington Park Historic Lighting - 2005 - \$131,000
- Wellington Park Improvements (managed by DPW) - 2005 - \$64,000
- West Newton Common Irrigation - 2004 - \$69,968

Newton Commonwealth Golf Course

This 18-hole [public golf course](#) is owned by the City. The Newton Commonwealth Foundation (“Foundation”) was formed by the City to oversee the course’s daily operations. The Commissioner and one other member of the PRC are members of the Foundation board. The land is protected in perpetuity by a Conservation Restriction.

Every three years, the Foundation generates a Request for Proposal for a golf management company to bid on the three-year contract. The minimum bid for upcoming seasons, 2022, 2023 and 2024, is \$400,000. The monies received are used for capital improvements of the course, clubhouse, and maintenance building.

The course is open year-round, weather permitting. In the winter season (December, January, February, and March), all gates are open for resident’s winter recreation activities.

Related Special Acts, Statutes and Ordinances

Special Acts:

Acts, 1924, c. 243 An Act Relative to the Control of Crystal Lake in the City of Newton

Acts 1969, c. 631 An Act Relative to the Membership of the Recreation Commission of the City of Newton

Acts 1982, c. 426 An Act Abolishing the Parks Commission and establishing the Parks and Recreation Commission in the City of Newton

Statutes:

[MGL c. 40 §§15, 15A](#) (relating to land transfer procedures) - *Policy Guidelines below*

[MGL c. 44B](#) Community Preservation Act

[MGL c. 45](#) Public Parks, Playgrounds, and the Public Domain

[MGL c. 87](#) Public Shade Trees

[MGL c. 30A, § 18-25](#) Open Meeting Law

[MGL c. 268A](#) Conflict of Interest

Newton Ordinances:

[NRO, 2017 c. 21](#) Parks, Recreation and Culture; Public Grounds and Trees

[NRO, 2017 c. 3, Article II](#) (Dogs Off-Leash Program - scroll down to Chapter 3 - page 5)

[NRO, 2017 c. 7, Article VIII](#) Community Preservation Committee

Sign Ordinance

Excerpted from [Newton, MA Chapter 30: Zoning Ordinance](#)

5.2.9. Signs in Open Space/Recreation and Public Use Districts

In Open Space/Recreation and Public Use districts, no sign shall be erected, displayed or maintained except as provided below:

1. Those signs specifically exempt from prohibition, including the display of placards for the expression of political, religious, or public service ideas, so long as the placards remain in the physical possession of a person.
2. Regulatory signs as may be erected by the City, county, state, or their agencies.
3. Signs for the identification of public buildings or public premises, or allowed uses in open space/ recreation and public use districts, or valid nonconforming uses existing in open space/ recreation and public use districts. These identification signs shall not exceed 20 square feet in area.
4. The City Council may permit free-standing signs, public information bulletin boards and exceptions to the maximum area requirement of 20 square feet for signs set out above, as provided for in Sec. 5.2.13. In no event shall any free-standing sign exceed 35 square feet in area in an Open Space/Recreation or Public Use district.

(Ord. No. 51, 02/03/75; Ord. No. 158, 10/18/76; Ord. No. V-90, 09/03/96)

Policy Guidelines for Consideration of: Land Use Changes, Inter-Departmental Relinquishments of Custody, and Declaration of Surplus Parks and Recreation Commission Lands in Accordance with MGL c. 40 §§15, 15A

1. The Parks & Recreation Commission (“the Commission”) supports the long-term preservation of open space in the City of Newton for the benefit of current and future generations of Newton citizens. Open space used for park, recreation and playground purposes should be diverted to other uses only as a last resort after all other reasonable options have been found deficient.
 - a. In considering the transfer of land for a proposed new use, the Commission will analyze the short and long-term need for the new use in balance with the public trust served by the existing public open space use.
 - b. The Commission will ensure that the intrinsic long-term public values of park and playground open space are weighed explicitly and substantially in the balance and are not overridden by the expediency that publicly owned park and playground open space does not require purchase or eminent domain. The consideration of intrinsic public values will include an estimation of the costs necessary to provide equivalents to the existing park and playground open space. The fact that using park, recreation or playground open space for a new use would be less expensive is not by itself sufficient to warrant the transfer of the land or to reject another potential alternative.
 - c. The Commission will not divert park and playground open space to other uses unless there has been a compelling showing that there is no feasible and prudent alternative, including both publicly and privately owned potential sites, as well as potential sites that are not currently in open space use.

2. In assessing the balance between the proposed and existing uses, the following questions will be addressed by the Commission in considering any request for transferring land or declaring it surplus:
 - a. What will be the impact of the loss of an open space parcel on the total publicly owned open space in the city?
 - b. What will be the impact on the distribution of publicly owned open space throughout the city?
 - c. What will be the impact on the city regarding the existing specific uses of the parcel? What is the level of use? Can these uses be diverted to other available sites, and are these sites in reasonable proximity, or will new sites need to be found?
 - d. What will be the costs of these alternatives?
 - e. Does the parcel possess unique features that cannot be duplicated at other sites?
 - f. What will be the impact of the loss of the open space on the adjacent abutters and surrounding neighborhood?
 - g. Are there legal constraints arising from: bequests, the use of federal or state funds to acquire or improve the land, or other restrictions placed when the land was transferred to public ownership by the city or from another city department to Parks, Recreation & Culture?
 - h. What compensatory open space is being offered for the land? If other compensation (funds, facilities, substitute services) are to be provided, are they a full and sufficient replacement?

3. The Commission recognizes that other issues may arise with regard to the transfer of land and will give them due consideration.

Policy & Procedures for Approving Alterations of Parks and Recreation Land by Private Persons or Organizations (10/18/93)

Policy

All petitions for construction of any type of structure of physical alteration to parks or recreation land must be deemed by the Parks & Recreation Commission (“Commission”) to be in the long-term interest of the City of Newton and meet all requirements and procedures outlined by the Commission.

Conditions and Procedures

Prior to any meeting at which a written proposal for a structure of physical alteration is to be presented and considered, the Park, Recreation & Culture Department (PRC) will mail notices to all abutters, neighborhood groups and current users holding permits of the facility in questions. A notice of such action will also be posted at the site.

There will be at least two meetings to decide on any proposal. The first meeting will be for proposal presentation, discussion and public comment. The petitioner must submit the proposal to the Planning Department for administrative site plan review, as well as the Design Review Committee. Depending on its nature, the petitioner will be required to submit the proposal to the Traffic Commission, Law Department, Conservation Commission, Engineering Department, and/or other public agencies. These agencies will be given a reasonable time period in which to report their findings to the PRC Commissioner, prior to any decision being made by the Commission concerning the project. The Commission will be the last agency to make a decision.

Prior to any decision being made, in addition to the original proposal in writing, the petitioner must provide the Commission with requested financial information about his/her organization and details of all use and caretaking arrangements for the structure and or physical alteration.

For whatever its purpose, the petitioner must demonstrate in writing the need to erect the structure. If the structure is to be used to generate revenue, the petitioner must show that other suitable avenues for fund raising have been researched or attempted.

In making its decision, the Commission must take into consideration the potential adverse effects that the proposal will have on the environmental and economic parameters surrounding it.

A written plan of action must be submitted with the proposal stating alternative plans for use or removal, should said structure no longer be used by the petitioner.

The petitioner will provide the Commission with an itemized estimate of the cost of construction, expected revenue raised and what the proceeds will be used for.

The petitioner may also be subject to other unforeseen conditions or procedures deemed appropriate by the Commission.

Any structure built on Parks and Recreation land will be owned by the City, upon completion, and under direct control of the Commission.

Any construction will be supervised and inspected by the City of Newton to make sure private persons or organizations have complied with plan presented. The City of Newton will oversee all facets involved in the construction process.

Budget Information for the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department

Operating Budget Process

1. Meet with staff for their input on the budget as to what is needed for programs, buildings, materials, supplies
2. Discuss monies/begin to establish budget
3. Receive allocation from Executive Department
4. Meet with Executive Department

5. Meet with Parks & Recreation Commission
6. Appear before Programs and Services Committee (substance committee)
7. Appear before Finance Committee and City Councilors as a whole

Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Budget Process

1. Staff input
2. Department assembles all requests/projects and submits to Executive Board
3. Meeting with Executive Department - Possible tours and site visits
4. Executive recommendations on basic dollar levels and or projects
5. Establish CIP Program, 6-year Capital Spending Program
6. Mayor docket CIP items
7. Department appears before the Programs and Services Committee
8. Department appears before the Finance Committee
9. Department appears before the City Councilors

CIP Goals

The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) shall be updated annually based upon changes in the City's capital needs and financing availability in order to: identify needed improvements and/or additions to the City's equipment and infrastructure; schedule projects in priority order over the ensuing five-year period; and ensure adherence to City financial policy and City Charter requirements.

CIP Policies

Capital projects shall be undertaken in order to satisfy documented needs and/or demands of the City. The Capital Improvement Program shall be a realistic multi-year plan of capital spending, based upon revenues and other financial resources, which may reasonably be anticipated over the term of the plan. All capital project proposals shall be thoroughly evaluated in terms of their estimated impact upon the annual operating budget of the City. The City will maintain its existing capital investments to minimize future maintenance and replacement costs.

Capital improvements shall meet one of the following criteria:

- Enhance protection of public health and/or safety
- Ensure compliance with state and/or federal law or administrative regulations
- Reduce and/or stabilize operating budget costs
- Prolong the functional life of a capital asset of the City by 10 years or more
- Encourage further expansion of the City's real estate tax base, employment or housing
- Improve the ability of the City to deliver services

Definition of Capital Projects.

A Capital Project is a physical public betterment or improvement involving facilities, and, or equipment, with a substantial useful life and a cost of \$75,000 or more. Items classified as capital projects include:

- New public buildings (including equipment needed to furnish such buildings)
- Significant alterations, additions or improvements to existing public building
- Land improvements, acquisition, and development
- Equipment replacement and/or refurbishing
- Street reconstruction and major resurfacing
- Pedestrian walkway construction and major rehabilitation
- Water main construction and rehabilitation
- Sanitary sewer and storm drain construction and rehabilitation
- Long range planning studies

CIP Financing Sources

In order to be a meaningful and useful management tool, the Capital Improvement Program must be based upon a realistic financing plan. The financing plan for the Capital Improvement Plan continues the City's established policy of pay-as-go financing, combined with prudent use of available debt financing capacity. This policy has allowed the City to obtain and maintain the only AAA credit rating of a City in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Financing sources included in the Capital Improvement Plan are divided into two categories Tax-Supported and Non-Tax Supported

Tax-Supported Funding Sources

- General Obligation Bonds: The annual debt service is included in the Operating Budget;
- Free Cash: Unreserved fund balance, certified by the Mass. Department of Revenue, as of the end of the last fiscal year;
- Operating Budget (General Fund): Annual departmental budgets supported primarily by property taxes, local revenue and state aid;
- Other: Available funds such as Overlay Surplus and Capital Stabilization.

Non-Tax-Supported Funding Sources

- State and Federal Grants: Project specific or block grants from federal, state, or other governmental agencies;
- Parking Meter Receipts: Curb and parking lot parking meter fees (less appropriation of these funds in the operating budget to partially offset street lighting costs);
- Water and Sewer Revenue: Fees and charges paid by water/sewer customers, which are used to support the Operating Budget (Special Revenue Fund) and generate a Water/Sewer Fund Balance (surplus available for water/sewer purposes);
- Community Development Block Grant: Federal aid received by formula, spending must be targeted to project types and/or neighborhoods;
- Other: City trust funds (Kennard Park, Library, etc.) or funds designated for specific purposes such as Sale of Surplus Property, etc.

APPENDIX

Newton's Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP)

The [OSRP](#) is an important municipal planning document. It provides an inventory of all existing areas of recreational use and open space (City owned and privately owned) and a list of goals and priorities for municipal actions regarding land acquisitions, recreational facility and open space improvements, and accessibility improvements. Each OSRP must be reviewed and approved by the state Department of Conservation Services, a part of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and is valid for 7 years once approved.

Parkland Accessibility Inventory

Parks + Open Space maintains an extensive [inventory](#) including general facility notes, site furnishings, trails and paths, play areas, game areas, boat docks, fishing facilities, community gardens, parking, ramps, site access/path of travel/entrances, stairs and doors, rest rooms, floors, drinking fountains, telephones, signs/signals/switches, swimming pool/lake/beach, shower rooms, picnicking, and off-leash dog areas.

A Garden City Guide to Fences on Public Property (1999)

Approved by the Newton Landscape Advisory Council, April 10, 1999 and provided as information to the Commission.

Why this Guide?

A variety of considerations influence decisions about fencing on public spaces in Newton. They include:

- Preserving the open, natural character of public property
- A need to protect citizens from hazards
- A desire to discourage access
- An attempt to screen an unsightly structure
- The appropriateness of the fence material for the site
- The cost of buying and installing the fence
- The durability and reparability of the materials

The purpose of this Guide is to summarize the city's policies and standards regarding selection and placement of fences. It is also intended to explain to users of public spaces how decisions about fences are made and how they can play a part in those decisions. This Guide is prepared for the benefit of city employees and members of city commissions and boards who are responsible for decisions about purchasing, installing or maintaining city fences.

Fence Decisions

The decision to erect or remove a fence has an important effect on the public and there should therefore be ample opportunity for the public to participate in the decision-making process. Neighborhood associations, abutters and other concerned groups should be notified of the plan and be given time to assess and comment on it.

The city's Public Safety Officer or the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department may determine that danger to the public requires immediate action at a given site. Following emergency measures, notice to neighbors and other concerned parties will be provided to explain the reasons for the action and the steps necessary to have it reconsidered.

Any citizen or group can request that a fence be installed, removed or replaced by contacting the PRC Department. The final decision on putting up or taking down a fence on Newton's public land will be made by a city department, usually the PRC Department.

When to Use Fences

As a matter of policy in Newton, we want to preserve open, natural vistas and fences should generally be thought of as a solution of last resort. A fence is desirable when there is a clear reason to believe that normal caution or supervision will not be enough to avoid danger for adults and children. A fence may also be needed to prevent misuse or damage to a site, especially if such incursions have already occurred.

Kinds of Fences

First consideration should be given to using plant material rather than hard fencing. Shrubs, hedges, or rows of small trees can create an effective barrier. They look better and provide environmental benefits. If some hard fencing is required, shrubs can supplement and improve its appearance. Landscape boulders can also be an aesthetic, environmentally friendly way to substitute for conventional fencing.

The hard fencing of choice in Newton parks, playgrounds and athletic fields is *black vinyl-clad chain link*. It calls least attention to itself, it seems almost to disappear in the landscape, and it is durable. Galvanized chain link fencing is somewhat less expensive, but much less attractive than black vinyl-clad chain link. It can be an alternative where aesthetics is not an issue or when a quick, temporary solution is needed. The standard gauge for chain link fences is 2" x 2', but for tot-lots and areas where smaller children play, a smaller gauge 1" x 1" is recommended to discourage climbing and avoid injury.

One major caution about chain link: In Newton, chain link fences should never be installed with twisted wires along the top. They can cause injuries and snag clothing. Most chain link now comes without these protruding twists, but fences with twists can be installed upside down with no loss of effectiveness.

Wooden fences are very expensive to buy and maintain, and they are the least durable. But they are appropriate on historic sites such as the Jackson Homestead.

For historic cemeteries, *cast iron fences* are traditional although cast aluminum alternatives are now available. Aluminum is somewhat less expensive than iron, but both are very durable and easily maintained.

Another traditional New England fence is *granite pillars and wooden rails*. Newton has a few of these and they are easily maintained. They form an open barrier and are appropriate for sites where an unimpeded view of a landscape is desirable.

Stockade fences are rare on Newton public property, but when they are used to screen something unsightly from public view, they should be installed with metal support posts. The metal posts better maintain the vertical posture of the fence and are more durable than wooden posts. For wooden pasture or split rail fences, typically used on dead-end streets, metal posts are again preferable.

How High?

The general rule of fencing is to install the lowest possible fence appropriate for the site.

On athletic fields, courts and pools, fence heights are set either by law or by organizations like the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association. If there is sufficient open space around a soccer field or basketball court, fences may not be needed. To permit multiple uses of athletic fields, movable fences should be considered for seasonal sports.

Wherever fencing around children's playgrounds is required, it should always be a minimum of four feet.

Fencing around municipal parking lots of more than five stalls must be screened by a barrier at least three feet high. (See Zoning Ordinance 30-19 for details.)

In parks and conservation areas intended primarily for passive use, low, open fences to define the area and identify points of pedestrian access should be the rule.

Gates

In the spirit of open access to most public spaces in Newton, gates are not common. A simple opening through a perimeter fence is typical. When required, gates should be constructed of a material compatible with the adjacent fence. Latches or locking devices should be secure and durable.

Maintenance

No matter which city department originally installed them, the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department has responsibility for maintaining all fences on city property. If a citizen has a question about an existing fence or wants to report damage to a fence, he or she should call the PRC Department.

Resources

For help with questions of design and the choice of plantings, call the Open Space Director (617-796-1500). For all other matters call the Commissioner, or the Superintendent of Maintenance in the Parks and Recreation Department (796-1500)

[Naming of Parklands and Structures \(Approved November 1994\) - ON HOLD UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE](#)

PROCEDURE

1. A written request by individuals, city-wide/neighborhood groups, or organizations submitted to Parks & Recreation Commission. The request would provide historical and supportive information as appropriate to justify the recommendation.

2. Acknowledgment by the Parks & Recreation Commission in writing to particular group requesting the naming.
3. The request would be placed on the Parks & Recreation regular agenda or a special meeting would be held. If there is a special meeting, a minimum of a 48 hours notice to the public is required. A notice sent to abutters/interested parties of facility area indicating that a request is being presented and discussed by Parks & Recreation Commission.
4. After the proposal is officially submitted to the Parks & Recreation Commission for consideration, there will be minimum of 30 days before an official vote will be taken at Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. During this time a public notice should be made to local papers and interested parties and abutters.
5. The official vote for approval will need 5 affirmative votes of the commission membership.

GENERAL POLICY FOR NAMING PARK FACILITY AND AREA:

1. An individual considered must have made major contribution and unselfish efforts to community/Parks & Recreation or have been involved with the particular facility or activity.
2. An individual considered may have made major donation in acquiring the property.
3. No official in office will be considered until such person has left office.
4. In naming sites, consideration shall also be given to geographical location, historic or geologic features.

RENAMING OF AREA/FACILITY:

State Law governs re-naming of Park/Facilities/Area; [MGL c. 85 § 3](#) states in pertinent part

“...When the name of any public way, ... or of any public park, is changed by the board or officer having jurisdiction thereof, if the name changed has been in use for twenty-five (25) years or more, there shall be a right of appeal from such action to the [Massachusetts Highway Department]. Such appeal shall be taken within thirty days after such change and shall be by petition of at least twenty-five inhabitants of the town in which such change has been made, requesting the reversal of such action. ...upon the filing of such petition, a public hearing shall be given by said department, after such public notice as it shall determine, and unless the department shall approve of such change, the same shall be of no effect.”

History of Newton Parks and Recreation Commission

In 1882, Newton established its first standing committee on parks, which submitted a report two years later. Expanding on a previous proposal for a series of parks between Chestnut Hill and West Newton, it recommended the acquisition of almost 400 acres extending from Valentine to Centre Streets, between Beacon Street and Bullough's Pond, for a single "Central Park." Although much of the survey work was completed the project was not developed. In 1885, plans were drawn for Newton's first public park on land given by John Farlow in Newton Corner; five years later the Newton Centre Improvement Association provided funds for the city's first public playground.¹

For many years, it was the responsibility of the Street Department to supervise and manage Newton's parks and playgrounds along with tree planting and maintenance; but this eventually required more effort than the Street Department could manage. In

1908, the Forestry Department was created with the charge of the maintenance, care and management of parks and playgrounds as well as the planting and care of the city's trees.^{2,3}

As the playground movement gained momentum nationally around the turn of the 20th century, the demand for active recreation facilities grew. Tree and forest maintenance, which were taken very seriously, were also recognized to be substantially different than playground management.⁴ Consequently, the Playground Commission was established in 1912, with William C. Brewer as its first chair. Ernst Hermann, who was appointed as the first Superintendent of Playgrounds, served until the summer of 1939. Shortly after his retirement, the name of the Playground Department was changed to the Recreation Department and the Recreation Commission was increased from 5 to 6 members, so that a Recreation Commissioner (F. Ewing Wilson) could be appointed. The new Commissioner was charged with the "maintenance, care and management of playgrounds" and could exercise the powers of the Commission except for that of eminent domain.⁴ C. Evan Johnson served as Commissioner from 1948-1961 and was succeeded by John B. Penney (1961-1974).

Subsequent PRC commissioners:

- Russell J. Halloran - July 1974 to June 2000
- Fran L. Towle - June 2000 to December 2009
- Robert J. DeRubeis - December 2009 - February 2020
- Nicole Banks - March 2020 to Present

In 1969, the Massachusetts Legislature passed an act empowering Newton to establish a Recreation Commission consisting of a Recreation Commissioner and one resident from each of the wards of the city.⁵ As before, the powers of the Commission, except eminent domain, could be exercised by the Recreation Commissioner, who was appointed by the Mayor. In 1982, stewardship over both parks and playgrounds was combined for the first time since 1912 as the Park Commission was abolished by the state legislature and the Recreation Commission became the Parks & Recreation Commission. The legislature conferred upon it all the rights, powers, duties and obligations of a park commission as set forth in Chapter 45 of the General Laws. In addition to this, the City Ordinances (§21-47) charged the Parks & Recreation Commission with advising the mayor and board of aldermen on matters pertaining to sports, recreation, parks, open space and the preservation of scenic beauty. The ordinance further charged the Commission with rendering its decisions concerning parks and recreation programs and the use of lands under its jurisdiction in accordance with written guidelines or policies, which shall preserve and enhance access to parks and recreation opportunities for Newton citizens. In 1994, Section 21-46 of the City Ordinances was modified to provide the guidance that appointments by the mayor shall strive to balance the concerns of parks and open space preservation with the concerns of recreation, and four alternate members were added to the Commission.

1. See "Images of America: Newton", Thelma Fleischman, Newton Historical Society, Arcadia Press, Charleston, SC, 1999.
2. Jean H. Husher, *Newton Tab*, February 10, 2000.
3. City of Newton, Public Documents 1913. Document 12, Report of the Playground Commission.
4. City of Newton, Public Documents, 1939-40. Report of the Recreation Department.
5. Acts of the Massachusetts Legislature, 1969, ch. 631