

Friends of Albemarle  
c/o Cedar Pruitt, President  
2 Wyoming Road  
Newton MA 02460

June 6, 2022

To the Community Preservation Committee,

Thank you for considering an investment in the citywide asset and community resource that is Gath Pool. We advocate for moving forward rapidly with this needed project which impacts all of Newton.

Our nonprofit organization, Friends of Albemarle, which we launched in January 2021 and established our 501(c)3 status with Gath Pool restoration as the leading priority, represents all 8 wards of the city. We now surpass 450 members and continue to represent Newton broadly, featuring a roster of multiple elected officials including more than half of City Council, with members eager to champion Gath Pool as an indisputably city-wide asset.

Gath Pool has a significant impact on the daily life and health of our community and is failing. If we don't address this issue now, the time may come when we can't use it at all.

We have met approximately monthly with Newton Parks and Recreation, working on solutions for Gath Pool as well as the athletic fields, and heard from many community members over the past two years. The support of the CPC is crucial to replacing this 55+-year-old pool so that Newton can retain an outdoor pool that serves the community.

This community resource plays a vital role in keeping users cool, healthy and engaged, especially our most at-risk populations, and especially as we look ahead to hotter summers. From our youngest toddlers learning to swim—a crucial life-saving skill—to our seniors who use the pool as a therapeutic and community space, this pool matters so much to so many in Newton.

In addition, Newton's top-ranked championship swim team, the Newton Bluefish, would be unable to compete in the summer without the use of Gath Pool. A two-day regional competition for the Summer Suburban League has been held at Gath Pool for decades and is a summer highlight for many families from numerous surrounding towns.

We would be remiss if we didn't point out that the Gath Pool is a pulse point of Newton. Friendships are made, connections formed, and community built all summer long. It provides a safe and healthy outdoor recreation option for our community teens, not to mention jobs for many of them. As a low-cost facility that serves all members of our community, Gath Pool is an

equitable feature of our town and a great equalizer, especially for those who don't have their own pools, or the ability to join private clubs.

We believe that Newton should have robust swim facilities that include all-day use of the Gath outdoor pool during the late spring, summer and early fall, as a renovation could potentially extend the season of the pool. A functional bathhouse will be an asset for the entire park all year round, from concession stands to bathroom facilities during sporting events.

Given the age of the pool and its state of disrepair, it is a race against time to keep this vital community asset afloat. With careful planning and your financial help, it is a race we can win.

Sincerely,  
Friends of Albemarle  
<https://friendsofalbemarle.org>  
450+ Newton residents

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