

Thursday, June 9, 2022

Mayor's Update



The U.S. Open Golf Championship at The Country Club in Brookline, just over the border with Newton in Chestnut Hill, begins with qualifying rounds this Monday, June 13 and runs through Sunday, June 19.

After two years of planning and experience from hosting three U.S. Opens in the past, The Country Club has a plan in place for security and traffic which have been shared with Police Chief John Carmichael, Fire Chief Greg Gentile, DPW Commissioner Jim McGonagle and their staffs.

We expect some delays so we'll need to tap into our "patience reserves." Rt. 9, in particular, is a major route to and from The Country Club.

In addition, seven satellite parking lots for the U.S. Open are in Newton using shuttles to the Club. These lots will be used heavily by staff arriving early in the morning and leaving late in the evening. While the traffic plans do not call for detours here, the Newton intersections & locations that will most be involved are:

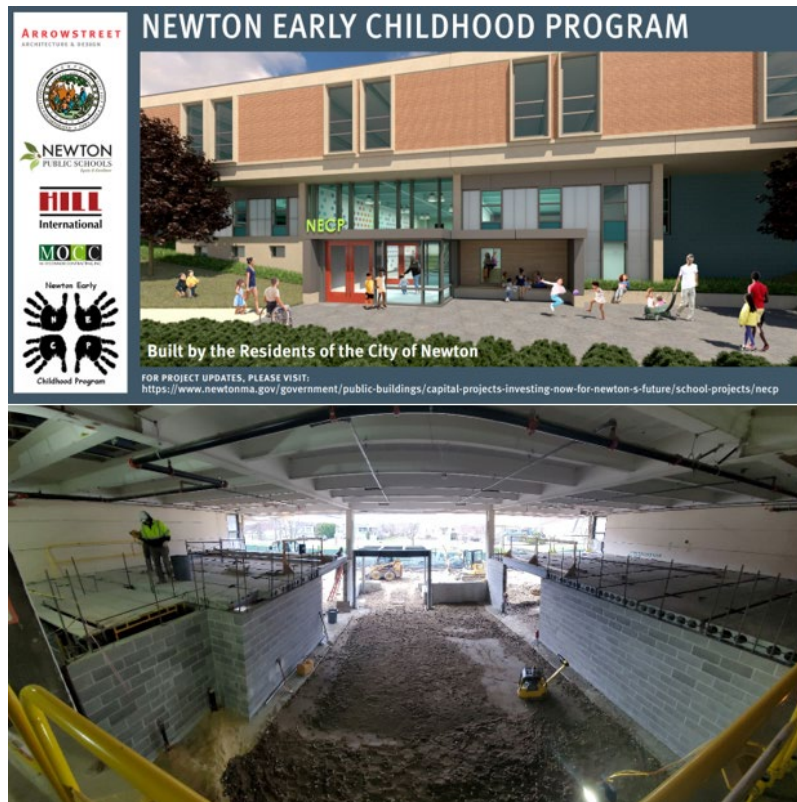
- Centre Street at Colby Road (by BC Law)
 - Centre Street at BC Law Campus Driveway
 - College Road at Comm Ave (by BC)
 - Beacon Street / Hammond Street / College Road intersection (by BC)
 - Hammond Pond Parkway (DCR jurisdiction)
 - Route 9 / Hammond Pond Parkway interchange (MassDOT jurisdiction)
 - Dedham Street / Brookline Street / Carlson Avenue intersection (by UMass Mt. Ida)
 - On Wells Avenue at roughly the 90 Wells Ave. driveway (in Wells Office Park)
-

Moving Forward on New Buildings (and a Pool)

This spring we find ourselves in the busiest period of municipal building design and construction since the early 1950s when the City built many of the elementary schools still in use today in response to the “Baby Boom” following WWII.

A huge thank you to the thousands of resident volunteers, project team members, Commissioner of Public Buildings Josh Morse and staff who help move these projects through the process from inception to completion. We are now up to more than 7,000 residents who have signed up for our project listservs to stay connected and contribute their time to make these new buildings wonderful assets for the entire community.

Newton Early Childhood Program Project



(Photos: Top, a rendering of the new facade, and bottom, the new lobby.)

Construction of a new \$13M home for the Newton Early Childhood Program, NECP, the City's integrated pre-school, is going smoothly and is on schedule and within budget.

The new pre-school will be substantially complete in November at the reincarnated former Horace Mann Elementary School at 687 Watertown St.

Electrical, plumbing, and heating, ventilation and air conditioning system installation is well underway. The foundation systems, lateral bracing, and structural work is wrapping up, and our new roof is installed.

Our site is also starting to take shape with the recent placement of new driveway and parking lot.

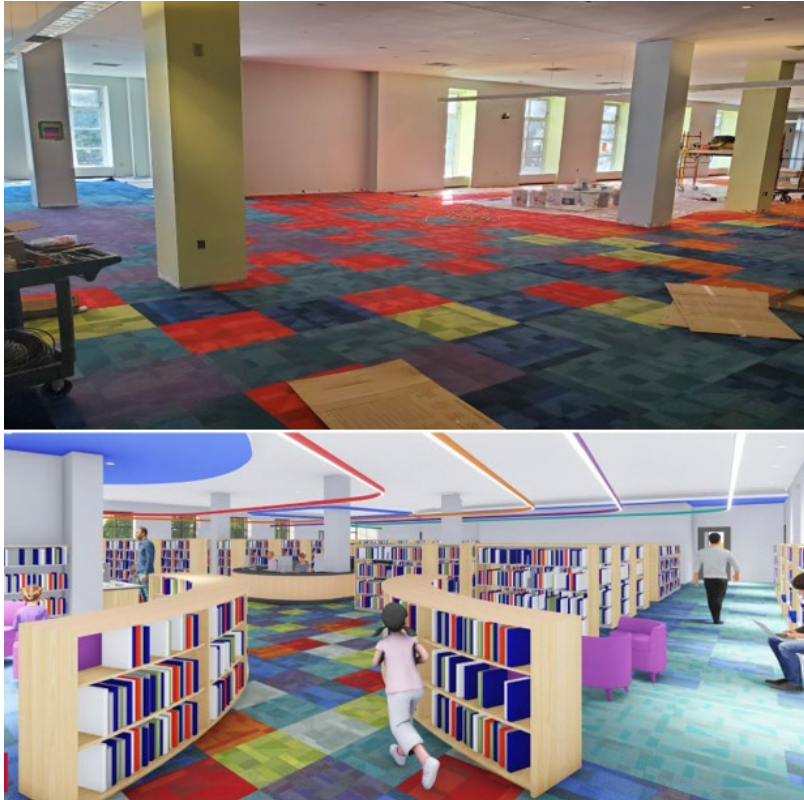


Work will accelerate this summer with interior finish trades converging upon the building to transform these spaces into a fun, warm, welcoming facility for our youngest students and incredible NECP staff.

We've still got plenty of work left to do on the site surrounding the school, but it won't be long before we're installing the new universally accessible playground, landscaping, and removing our tree protection around the wonderful mature trees we preserved throughout the project.

Find more information about plans for NECP [here](#).

[Library Children's Room Expansion Project](#)



Construction of the \$2M expansion of the Library's Children's Room is substantially complete. At this point, we are focused on installing the furnishings, fixtures, and equipment.

Thanks go to library patrons and staff for their patience during construction as we work hard to create something very special.

Stay tuned for the official ribbon cutting and grand opening!

Find more information about plans for the Children's Room [here](#).

[Lincoln-Eliot Elementary School Building Project](#)



(Photo: Above, rendering of the view from the first floor of a new Lincoln-Eliot, and below, the existing auditorium at 150 Jackson Road.)

Construction of a new, \$50M Lincoln-Eliot Elementary School, including a renovated auditorium, is slated to begin in the summer of 2023 and be complete for students to move in for the 2025-2026 school year.

The Design Review Committee recently voted to move plans forward and the site plan review and approval process with the City Council's Public Facilities Committee will begin next week.



Community outreach, communication, and collaboration has been ongoing and will continue through the approval and construction process. The Lincoln-Eliot community, including the neighbors, have been engaged, and they've helped refine the plans.

The building floor plans are moving forward, informed by Massachusetts School Building Authority, MSBA, space guidelines and with programmatic adjacencies in mind. Traffic flows and parking are still very much a work in progress, and, like all our projects, this will be an area that we continue to work on as we refine the design.

This summer we are moving into the design development phase where we transition the conceptual design into detailed designs.

Find more information about plans for Lincoln-Eliot [here](#).

Horace Mann Elementary School Building Project



(Photo: Rendering of the new addition at Horace Mann.)

We are hard at work moving through the feasibility phase of the \$15M Horace Mann Elementary School Building Project.

The above images are just a few of the many options we've studied so far, and there will be many more studied as we move forward. The Horace Mann School Building Committee, Design Review Committee, and community are hard at work reviewing options and providing feedback. The Horace Mann staff has been engaged, most recently through a visioning session, and they will continue to be part of the team that helps make this project incredible.

This project will align classroom sizes with MSBA guidelines, create breakout areas, special education spaces, support spaces, and will include an

approximately 20,000- square-foot addition and interior space modifications and improvements. There will also be site and landscaping improvements.

The Designer Selection Committee recently recommended, and, I supported, NV5 to be the Owner's Project Manager (OPM) for the Horace Mann project. They bring a tremendous amount of experience specific to Newton and this type of project to the table. This summer we will continue to refine the interior and exterior concepts to work towards a preferred conceptual option by this fall with plans for work to be complete in August 2026.

Find more information about plans for Horace Mann [here](#).

Countryside School Building Project

The \$55M Countryside Elementary School Building Project, which has been accepted into the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) project pipeline based on need and urgency, is slated to be completed by the summer of 2027. We are currently working through the Designer Selection Process with the MSBA. Our partnership with the MSBA can help fund approximately 40% of eligible project costs.



(Photo: The existing Countryside School.)

Dore and Whittier Associates is now formally on board as the Owner's Project Manager (OPM) and a few weeks ago they had the opportunity to introduce their project team to the Countryside School Building Committee and community. The Countryside School Building Committee has been established for quite some time now and meetings are underway.

The next major milestone will be the MSBA Designer Selection Panel submittal reviews and interviews scheduled for August of this summer. We have already begun the process of seeking proposals for the site survey and components of the

existing conditions analysis to make the most of the time we have while we await the arrival of our design team.

By the fall, we expect to have our entire project team assembled, and we'll be focused on existing conditions analysis, educational program review, and our school enrollment study process.

Find more information about plans for Countryside [here](#).

Franklin School Building Project

Next on the list of school projects is the \$55M Franklin School Building Project which is now slated to be completed in the summer of 2029, although we're looking for funding opportunities to accelerate this schedule.

We've assembled the Franklin School Building Committee, FRSBC, and we've held several meetings to date.

I supported the Designer Selection Committee's recommendation to select HMFH Architects as the design firm for the project. HMFH is now on board and will introduce their team and showcase their experience to the FRSBC and community at a Zoom meeting this evening at 6:00 p.m. Tune in at https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_5ZYbOBtzT72nbVD6rAG5RA.



(Photo: Some examples of previous projects completed by HMFH Architects.)

HMFH will be working with the entire project team to begin prefeasibility, school program, and enrollment analysis, and the needs assessment phase of the project this summer.

Find more information about plans for Franklin [here](#).

[Newton Center for Active Living Project - NewCAL](#)



(Photo: Rendering of the new senior center and design elements from the current building that will be preserved in the new one.)

We are moving forward to build a new senior center at the site of the current one at 345 Walnut Street, in Newtonville.

Over the past few months, we have continued to work with the community, Design Review Committee (DRC), the Development Review team, and the Newton Historical Commission to help move this project forward with the goal of starting the site plan review and approval process.

This summer we will be moving forward with the design development phase of the project where conceptual plans will start to become more defined. Very soon we'll start to take everyone on a 3D tour of the interior of the building as we breathe life into this incredible project.

We are on track to break ground next summer, with completion of the project anticipated in the summer of 2025.

Some residents have filed a legal challenge. The complaint has been reviewed by our Law Department. We're confident that we are in full compliance with the law.

Get the latest information on NewCAL [here](#).

[Gath Pool Project at Albemarle](#)



(Photo: Renderings of the new Gath Pool.)

We're currently working through the feasibility and programmatic phase of the \$6M Gath Pool project.

The Parks, Recreation, and Culture Department is taking the lead at this stage as we continue to work with the community and project stakeholders to create an incredible family friendly, accessible pool facility and splash pad. At the same time, we're also making sure the plans support competitive and recreational lap swimmers.

We have been busy working with the Community Preservation Committee, Design Review Committee, Parks and Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission, community members, and focus groups to help wrap up the feasibility phase of this project.

We're currently working with BH+A, our project architect, and Parks, Recreation, and the Culture staff to refine our project design and construction schedule. We anticipate that we will move into the site plan review and approval process this fall. We have a sense of urgency as the current pool has significant leaks, and almost all the pool support systems have reached the end of their useful life.

Find more information about the Gath Pool plans [here](#).

Comprehensive Police HQ Facility Renovation and Upgrade Project

The Police Headquarters Facility Project has been kicked off with \$500K to complete the needs assessment and feasibility design phases.

This project will include ample collaboration with police officers throughout the Newton Police ranks. While the project has not been fully defined yet, we do know that it will include upgrades to building systems, finishes, the envelope, interior programmatic and space improvements, site security, accessibility improvements, and the creation of an on-site training space. This work will complement the \$1.4M currently being invested in the HVAC project and the communications and data system upgrades.



We have partnered with Kaestle Boos Associates, a design firm with strong police facility design experience, to help move through the various phases of this project. We are currently working with members throughout the ranks of the Newton Police Department to complete our programmatic analysis and existing conditions phase of design. The feasibility design phase will continue throughout the summer and into the fall.

Saying Goodbye to Fossil Fuels

(Photo: This equipment that helps support our fully electric heating and cooling systems at the new NECP, will allows us to operate with no fossil fuel consumption onsite.)



As part of our citywide comprehensive plan to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, the following projects are all being designed and constructed to not consume any fossil fuel on site for their heating and cooling systems:

- Newton Early Childhood Program
- Lincoln-Eliot Elementary School
- Newton Center for Active Living
- Countryside Elementary School
- Franklin Elementary School
- Horace Mann Elementary School Addition

This follows recent building electrification projects such as the Auburndale Community Library and the Oak Hill Middle School addition.

Happy to join the Rotary Club of Newton and City Councilor Andrea Kelley yesterday morning to unload a truck full of medical supplies donated from Rotarians across the region. The crutches, exam tables, walkers, adjustable beds, and boxes & boxes of supplies and more will be shipped to Ukraine where the war continues to take a heavy toll on soldiers and civilians.



COVID-19 Case Data

Our COVID-19 data this week again shows continued improvement with 141 confirmed new cases over the past seven days from June 1 to 8. This compares to 185 confirmed cases over the previous seven days, and 281 two weeks ago. (Note that these numbers may be directionally correct, but do not include most of the people who are testing positive with at home rapid antigen tests.) Our cumulative total number of confirmed cases in Newton is now 15,207.

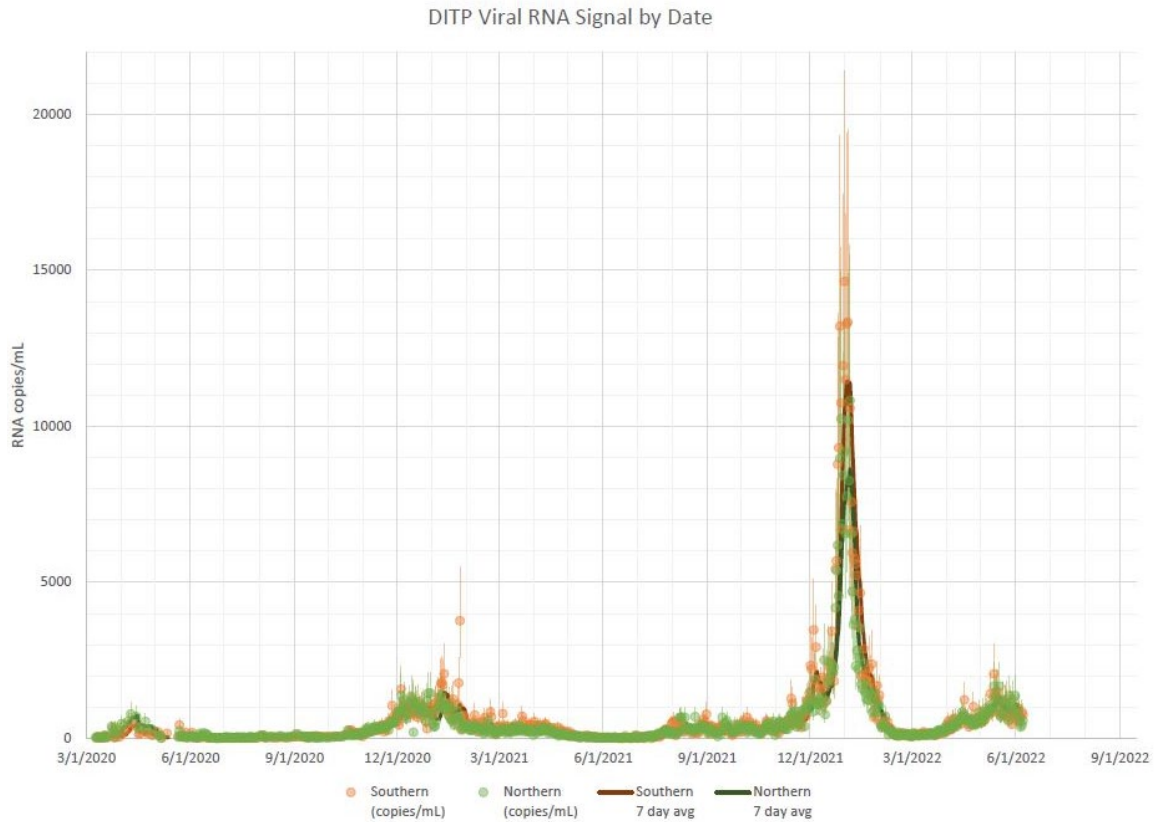
As of Tuesday, June 7, Newton-Wellesley Hospital is caring for a total of 18 patients who have tested positive for COVID-19, one of whom is in the ICU. Approximately half of these hospitalized patients are admitted primarily for COVID-19 symptoms. The hospital reports that over the past week the volume of COVID-19 patients has been as high as 25 and as low as 18 patients per day and that the overall trend has been a slight decline in the number of patients hospitalized with COVID-19.

The data about Newton from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's two-week tracking period from May 22 to June 4 also shows another week of improvement. Our incidence rate in Newton, which measures the number of cases per 100,000 population, is now at 30.1 compared to 43.1 last week. Our positivity rate is 6.5% of the 6,493 tests performed on Newton residents, compared to 7.4% (8,132 tests) last week.

Again this week we lost no one in Newton who died with COVID-19. Our cumulative number of family, friends and neighbors in Newton who died with this virus remains at 202.

The latest MWRA wastewater tracking data from Tuesday, June 7 has the north system results taking a sharp turn downward over the past couple of weeks and the south system showing a leveling off. Newton straddles both the north and south systems. Click [here](#) to see all the data.

MWRA COVID-19 Wastewater Data



Newton Public Schools

The Newton Public Schools had 109 cases among students and 37 among staff from May 26 to June 1. (Over the previous seven days, there were 161 cases among students and 34 among staff.)

Summer Reading for Readers of All Ages

Calling all kids, tweens and teens. Join the Newton Free Library's *Read Beyond the Beaten Path* (June 13 to August 31) summer reading program; it's fun, free and maintains reading skills.



Register on [Beanstack](#), our online summer reading platform, to keep track of time spent reading alone or with others, to share book reviews, and to complete special adventure challenges.

Readers will be entered in a weekly drawing for prizes now through the end of August. Find registration, programming and book suggestions at newtonfreelibrary.net/summer.

Why should kids and teens have all the fun? Join the Library's Adult Summer Reading Challenge.

This summer the Newton Free Library is sponsoring its first ever Adult Summer Reading Challenge (June 13 to September 5). Our Librarians are challenging adults to read 5 books in 5 different "challenge" categories for a chance to win gift cards to local businesses.

Pick up a Summer Reading Challenge packet at our Circulation Desk, starting June 13, and learn more at newtonfreelibrary.net/adultchallenge.

Not sure what to read? Register to join us on Zoom for "Discover Your Next Favorite Book" on [Tuesday, June 14, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.](#) or on [Thursday, June 16, 11:00 a.m. - noon.](#)

To the Class of 2022 – Congratulations

During the uncharted waters of the lingering pandemic that changed so much of your high school experience, we have witnessed your strength and resilience.

From that second Thursday in March 2020 when the doors to Newton North and Newton South High Schools closed for what we all hoped would be just a couple weeks, to today, you have learned to live with uncertainty.

I know your high school years have been challenging. You faced real pain and disappointment, disruption and loss.

And yet ...

Your performances brought the house down even when the audience was masked.

You showed us all that we can understand our differences and embrace them.

With determination you fought against climate change.

You spoke up about the madness of gun violence.

You stood for racial justice with inspiring resolve.

You proved that just being together is a gift in itself.

We have confidence that the Class of 2022 will lead the way toward a better future.

Warmly,

Ruthanne

P.S. Join us for **Mental Health: Supporting Each Other for Parents, Caregivers and Teens** next Wednesday, June 15 at 6:30 p.m. at the Newton North High School Cafeteria. Led by Samaritans, Inc., families will explore feelings and how to express them, practice honest talk and active listening, and learn how to access resources and support. This workshop is intended to bring parents, caregivers and their teens together. Find more info and register by clicking [here](#).



P.P.S. Head to Newton Highlands on Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for **Village Day** with a family road race, face painting, vendors, live music and plenty of food on Lincoln Street between Walnut and

Bowdoin. At 1:00 p.m. we'll also be dedicating the John O'Hara Square and unveiling the Officer English Garden plaque to commemorate two men who left an indelible mark on this community.

P.P.P.S. **Celebrate Juneteenth**, the day in 1895 when enslaved people in Texas learned from Union soldiers that they were free.

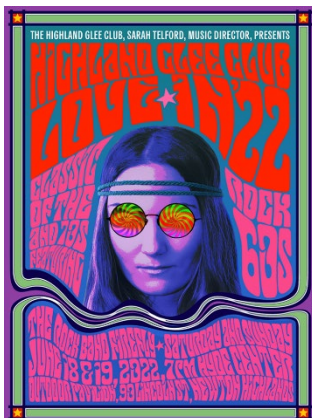
- The **Lincoln-Eliot FORJ** (Families Organizing for Racial Justice) along with FORJ friends from Bigelow, Ward and Underwood will host the 2nd Annual Juneteenth Celebration after



school at the Lincoln-Eliot backyard from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. Enjoy Mr. Hani's Ice Cream Truck, dancing, crafts and more.

- Join Newton North High School FORJ for a **Juneteenth celebration** with performers, DJs, kids activities, vendors including Black owned businesses, food trucks and more on Sunday, June 17 from noon to 4:00 p.m. on the Walnut side of Newton North High School. Find more information [here](#).
- Come to **The Legacy of Juneteenth: Access to Education that Empowers Us All** for an interactive discussion on Tuesday, June 21, from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. The event is sponsored by the Newton Free Library. The discussion will be led by [Jesse Tauriac](#), Assistant Vice President & Chief Diversity Officer at Lasell University and is part of the Overdue: Confronting Race and Racism in Newton series. Register for this program [here](#).

P.P.P.P.S. Join Newton's City Forester Marc Welch online next Wednesday, June 15, from 7:00 to 8:15 p.m. to learn about our **street trees and their future**. Sign up [here](#).



P.P.P.P.P.S. Enjoy the [Highland Glee Club](#) Love-In! The glee club will be joined by the rock band Firefly to perform two free, outdoor concerts on Saturday and Sunday, June 18 and 19, 7:00 p.m. at the Hyde Center Pavilion, 90 Lincoln Street in Newton Highlands. They'll be performing **great rock hits of the 60s**.

P.P.P.P.P.P.S. Dig, learn, grow. Discover boundless connections between our food, each other, and the natural world at **summer classes for children 8 to 12 at Newton's working farm.** Scholarships are available. Click [here](#) for more information and to register. Questions? Contact Matt Durham, Director of Education by email at education@newtoncommunityfarm.org, or call 617-916-9655.



P.P.P.P.P.P.S. Stop by the **Newton Children's Business Fair** this Saturday, June 11, from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Union Church in Waban, 14 Collins Road. Hear from 6-14 year olds at more than 20 booths about their business ideas, purchase their products, and support these budding young entrepreneurs.

P.P.P.P.P.P.P.S. Interested in local news? A nonpartisan group of Newton residents are establishing **an independent, nonprofit online news site** called the Newton Beacon. Learn more at NewtonBeacon.org or attend a community meeting on Thursday, June 16 from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Durant-Kenrick House, 286 Waverley Ave. Share your ideas about what you would like to read in the Beacon.

P.P.P.P.P.P.P.P.S. Join us on **Flag Day** in the War Memorial Circle at City Hall, 1000 Comm Ave. as we honor the flag with the Newton Elks next Tuesday, June 14 at 6:00 p.m.

