

Thursday, Oct. 20, 2022

## Mayor's Update



### **Moving Forward in Upper Falls, Auburndale**

We just received the great news about two large funding grants from the State to move forward with significant improvements to Pettee Square in Upper Falls, and to take the next steps toward providing affordable housing at the Walker Center in Auburndale.

#### Pettee Square

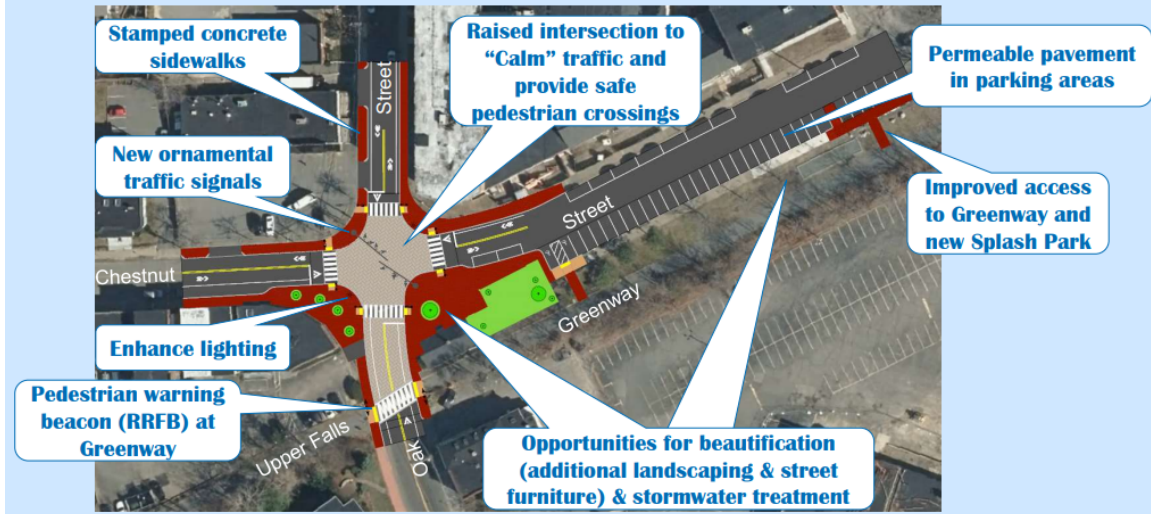
Pettee Square, nestled in the heart of Upper Falls at the intersection of Chestnut and Oak Streets, is at an exciting turning point.

In recent years, the City of Newton completed the Greenway project which transformed an old rail line into a vibrant and beautiful walkway trail. Right next door, almost a billion dollars of private investment from Northland is moving forward for housing, restaurants, shops, offices and a splash park on 22.6 acres at Needham and Oak Streets after approvals from the City Council and our voters.

We also previously completed a community informed design and engineering streetscape plan that will improve the look, function, accessibility and safety of Pettee Square.

Now, Secretary of Housing & Economic Development Mike Kennealy announced that Newton will receive \$2 million from the MassWorks Infrastructure Program to implement these plans. I have also set aside approximately \$1.1 million from ARPA for the City's matching funds.

# Conceptual Improvements



*(Click on the photo for more information about the improvement plans.)*

The work in Pettee Square is exciting. It includes a raised table intersection and cross walks, traffic signal replacements, utility pole relocations, roadway milling and new paving, new concrete sidewalks, new ADA accessible curb cut ramps, upgrades to the drainage system, new pavement marking, lighting upgrades, benches and trees.

This work will improve the safety of the intersection for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians. The area will be fresh and more beautiful and inviting. For bocce ball players, for people walking on the Greenway, for visitors to the Depot Coffee Shop, the Biltmore Bar & Grille and the other stores, this will be a nicer environment.

## Four Affordable Homes in Auburndale

Last October the City purchased a portion of the Walker Center for Ecumenical Exchange when it went up for sale at the intersection of Grove and Hancock Streets in Auburndale for two great purposes. I directed the use of \$2.45 million in ARPA funds as this land is directly adjacent to the Williams Elementary School and its playground/ballfield. The purchase will allow us to eventually expand the playground and have flexibility for future school renovations.

In addition, the purchase also includes four existing homes that will allow us to provide permanently affordable family-sized homes. The four houses (Howard, Hume, Harding West and Harding East) total about 7,400 square feet and currently have 14 bedrooms. The affordable housing will be next to the Williams Elementary School and the playground, in walking distance to three forms of mass transit, and nestled into a wonderful residential neighborhood.

With the news that we will receive \$235,000 from the Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development, we can take the next step toward

creating this opportunity with an analysis of how best the affordable units can be designed and financed.

Thank you Gov. Baker, Secretary Kennealy and Undersecretary Maddox with support from State Senator Cindy Creem and State Representatives Kay Khan and Ruth Balser.

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### **Goodbye to Lt. Apotheker and Congratulations to Lt. Henrickson**

Newton Police Lt. Amanda Henrickson, a 13-year veteran of our department, will become the first woman in NPD history to lead a bureau when she takes over as commander of the Community Services Bureau at the end of this month.

She'll be filling some very large shoes.

Lt. Bruce Apotheker is retiring after 39 years with the Newton Police Department, 17 of those as Commander of the Community Service Bureau. Anyone who knows Bruce has heard his warm, "Hello friend," when he sees you. He knows Newtonians across every village, and Newtonians know him.

A trailblazer himself as the first Jewish Bureau Commander in the department, Bruce is deeply committed to Newton where he lives and raised his family. Bruce is the trusted voice of NPD as the department spokesperson conducting hundreds of television and media interviews. He has also spent his career working on human rights issues, serving as the Police representative on the Newton Human Rights Commission, our Civil Rights Officer and heading the bureau responsible for investigating domestic violence, civil rights and incidents involving juveniles.

I'm grateful to Bruce for his years of dedicated service to our City, and I know Chief John Carmichael joins me in wishing him well in his next chapter.

As she takes over the Police Bureau responsible for community outreach (yes, that includes Officer Leo), Lt. Henrickson is excited to take on the many responsibilities required in her new role.



She and her older brother, Jason Schlegel, grew up in Central

Massachusetts with a Mom who worked in education and a Dad who worked in

business. She and her brother decided on a career in law enforcement, and they graduated from the Worcester Police Academy together in 2009 with plans to join that City's police force. Instead, the Worcester Police Department had no jobs for the new graduates, and she and her brother were hired in Newton. Officer Schlegel works in our Traffic Bureau.

"We've found a wonderful community here at the Newton Police Department," she said.

Chief Carmichael calls Amanda an exceptional leader within the department. In addition, she is deeply involved in Massachusetts Women in Law Enforcement and is an advocate and mentor for other female officers within NPD. It's a role she takes seriously.

"I'm happy that women in our department are being given the opportunity to serve in different types of leadership positions. I hope that younger women see and surpass us," Lt. Henrickson said.

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*It's that time of year for flu shots. My thanks to Newton Public Health Manager Shin-Yi Lao for making it so easy for me. Looking for an appointment for a flu shot or COVID-19 booster? Click [here](#).*



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## Leaf Season

The leaves are falling and many of us are putting our leaves and yard waste curbside. Our DPW team will be collecting this year through Friday, Dec. 9. As a reminder, yard waste is collected on the same day as trash and recycling, and needs to be curbside by 7:00 a.m. on your scheduled day (or after 4:00 p.m. on the day before). (To keep our worker's safe, make sure no individual bag weighs more than 50 pounds.)

Unlike trash and recycling, yard waste pickup is weather dependent. Sorry, routes and pick-up



times can change without prior notification. But, try using our *Recycle Right Newton* App to find out about collection schedule changes. Download the free app in the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#).

If you put yard waste out and it is not collected that day, leave it at the curb and it will be collected on the following day or on a subsequent day as soon as possible.

Did you know that state law bans the disposal of yard waste in trash? View our yard waste collection [guidelines](#). Placing yard waste in the blue or green cart may result in rejection.

Newton's yard waste is hauled to one of three commercial composting facilities in Massachusetts. Last year, we collected 33,300 cubic yards of yard waste – approximately 6,254 tons.

### Help Us Keep Storm Drains Clear

Storm drains blocked by leaves swept into the streets can cause flooding and create safety issues for motorists and pedestrians.

Make sure leaves from your yard are bagged, mulched or composted and not raked into the street unless they will be collected concurrently you or by your landscaper.

Please consider removing leaves from storm drains near your home if feasible; you may also call Newton Customer Service (617) 796-1000 (M-F 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) or the Newton Utilities Division 617-796-1640 (M-F 7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.) to request a storm drain be cleared.

### Tired of Raking? Try “Leaf-Cycling”

Leaves left untouched on lawns and in yards won't break down over a winter. But, there is an alternative to raking – it's called leaf-cycling and all you need is a lawn mower.

Raise the mower deck to the highest setting and mow over the leaves, crossing over them once or twice. Up to 6-inches of leaves can be “mowed” at a time, depending on the type of mower you have. Push mowers can handle smaller amounts but are still effective.

The resulting leaf mulch on the surface of the lawn will only last for a few days. The tiny pieces of leaves will sift down through the grass and provide future weed control and essential nutrients, which in turn may save you money and time. Come spring, you won't notice the leaf bits, and your lawn may be healthier and greener.

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## The O'Haras

For more than 22 years, in person and virtually, the O'Hara family has been the heart and soul of Paddy's Road Race, a wonderful West Newton tradition that exemplifies all that is good about our community.

The race brings together athletes young and old of all abilities to raise money for

Newton Athletes Unlimited, an incredible program that offers recreational programs to individuals with disabilities (with a shout out to Mark Kelly and Karen Peirce in Newton's Parks, Recreation and Culture Department).

*(Two wonderful brothers, Karl O'Hara and the late John O'Hara in 2017. Photo Credit: Boston Globe)*

This year marks a special milestone – the O'Haras have raised more than \$1 million for Newton Athletes Unlimited.

To Karl and the entire O'Hara family, you have my heartfelt gratitude. Your efforts are truly life changing for so many remarkable athletes.



Warmly,

Ruthanne

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P.S. Questions, concerns, or comments about the **proposed override**? The first of many Town Hall meetings (this one being virtual) to hear from voters and answer questions is tonight, Thursday, Oct. 20, starting at 7:00 p.m. Find the zoom link for tonight [here](#). Busy tonight but want to come another time? Find the full calendar of meetings through the end of 2022 [here](#). Rather just read more? Find information about the override and answers to common questions [here](#). Finally, and for many, most importantly, find out how much the override proposals would cost you using the override calculator [here](#).

P.P.S. Proper **medication disposal** reduces the risk of accidental poisoning and the misuse of addictive medications and keeps these potentially harmful substances out of the waste stream. Newton has three permanent drug take-back kiosks: out front of City Hall, inside at Police Headquarters which is open 24/7 (1321 Washington St., West Newton) and in the West

Lobby at Newton-Wellesley Hospital. Drop unneeded or expired medication day or night at any of these locations. Please note that these kiosks are for solid medication only (no liquids, no needles). Click [here](#) for a guide to dispose safely of “sharps” – needles used to inject medication into people or pets. The Newton Police Department is also partnering with the Drug Enforcement Administration for a **Drug Take-Back Day** on Saturday, Oct. 29, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the rear parking lot of police headquarters.



P.P.P.S. Join UMass Political Science professors for **insights into the midterm elections** on Wednesday, Nov. 2, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. The professors, Raymond La Raja and Jesse Rhodes, are associate directors of UMass Poll, a team of researchers with extensive academic and professional experience in local, state and national politics. The virtual discussion is part of the UMass Amherst Mount Ida Campus Faculty Speaker Series and is open & free to the public. Find more info and a zoom link [here](#).

P.P.P.P.S. Interested in accessibility? Review the draft of the updated **Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan** to identify projects that will improve accessibility in Newton. Provide feedback at a virtual meeting on Thursday, Oct. 27, at 6:00 p.m. Register [here](#). Contact Newton’s ADA Coordinator Jini Fairley at [jfairley@newtonma.gov](mailto:jfairley@newtonma.gov) with questions or to request a reasonable accommodation.

P.P.P.P.P.S. Hear directly from Massachusetts climate leaders and innovators about efforts to curb climate change at Congressman Jake Auchincloss’ **Climate Summit** in Needham on Thursday, Nov. 10 from 8:30 a.m. to noon. RSVP [here](#) by Tuesday, Nov. 1, to attend and receive a confirmation email with event details and location.



P.P.P.P.P.S. Decorate a pumpkin, go on a scavenger hunt, make a fall craft, learn about chickens, and more **at Newton Community Farm's outdoor Fall Family Party**. Costumes optional! Saturday, Oct. 29, 10:00 a.m. to Noon at the Farm, 303 Nahanton Street (\$12 per child, no charge for adult caregivers). Tickets are on sale now and must be purchased in advance at [newtoncommunityfarm.org](http://newtoncommunityfarm.org).



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