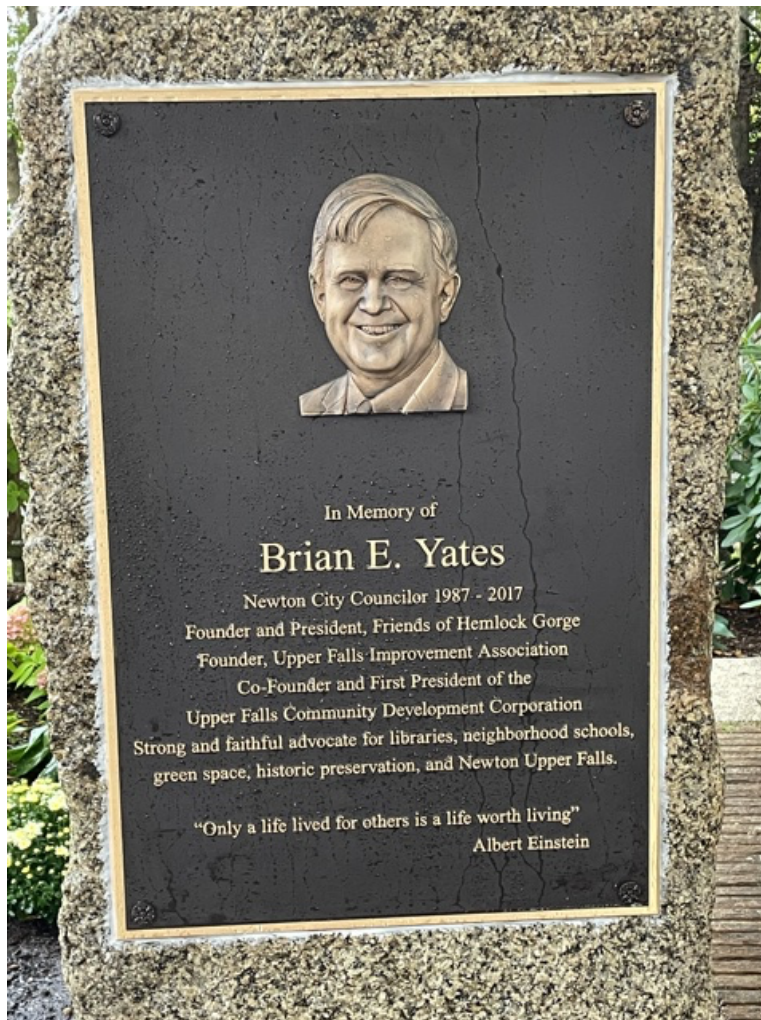


# Newton Upper Falls Area Council 2021 Annual Report



## NEWTON UPPER FALLS AREA COUNCIL



January 29, 2022

City Council  
Newton City Hall  
1000 Commonwealth Ave  
Newton MA 02459

Dear Honorable Members of the City Council:

Pursuant to Section 9-10 of the City Charter, the Newton Upper Falls Area Council is pleased to provide you with this Annual Report of its activities for the calendar year 2021.

Sincerely,



Anil Adyanthaya  
President

## **About the Newton Upper Falls Area Council**

2012 was the inaugural year of the Newton Upper Falls Area Council. Newton Upper Falls was the second of Newton's villages, following Newton Highlands, to take advantage of the Newton city charter's provision allowing for the creation of an area council "to encourage citizen involvement in government at the neighborhood level by permitting limited self-government." Following a petition drive and a public hearing before the Programs and Services Committee, the Board of Aldermen approved the creation of the Newton Upper Falls Area Council on March 21, 2011. Since then, Area Councils have been established in Waban and Newtonville.

The nine members of the Area Council were elected during the city elections in November 2021 and were sworn in in January 2022. The nine members of the 2022-23 Area Council are in alphabetical order:

Anil Adyanthaya (Tamarac Road)  
Kathaleen Brearley (Rockland Place)  
Patty Connolly (Rockland Place)  
Julie Irish (Columbia Avenue)  
Marie Jackson (Spring Street)  
Matt Lai (Cottage Street)  
Jack Neville (High Street)  
Jeff Riklin (Champa Street)  
Jay Werb (Williams Street)

Ward Five City Councilor Bill Humphrey is an ex officio member of the Area Council. Ward Five At-Large City Councilors Deb Crossley and Andreae Downs provided much appreciated support for our work.

Carol Stapleton, Manager with the Parks & Recreation Department, while not an official member of the Area Council, attends every meeting and has provided invaluable organizational guidance and other assistance to the Area Council.

We were sad to announce the retirement of two of our original Area Councilors, Susan Huffman and Nina Kochs. Both contributed a great deal to the Area Council and will be missed.

At a subsequent Area Council meeting in 2022, the following officers were elected by a vote of the Area Council:

President – Anil Adyanthaya  
Vice President – Jeff Riklin  
Secretary – Kathaleen Brearley  
Treasurer – Jay Werb

The Area Council addresses all issues in full session and currently has no subcommittees.

### **Work of the Area Council**

Due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, some events typically sponsored and managed by the Area Council, such as the John Rice Upper Falls Soup Social, were cancelled. We were very happy, however, to hold Newton Upper Falls Village Day in September. This year's event was the largest in our history of holding the event.

Our monthly meetings continue to be conducted via Zoom.

Despite the challenges created by the pandemic, the Area Council still continued to serve the residents of Newton Upper Falls as best it could:

- Worked with Northland to establish a communication channel for receiving updates on the project
- Continued working with the City on the proposed renovation of Pettee Square, including the possible creation of a pocket part next to the Upper Falls Greenway
- Communicated information about the City's proposed zoning redesign to the village and participated in the Planning Department's visioning project for village centers
- Hosted representatives from Nuestra LLC, a cannabis retailer looking to open a shop on Chestnut Street
- Dedicated a memorial for City Councilor Brian Yates in recognition of his service to Upper Falls and the City of Newton. This memorial is located in Pettee Square next to the Depot Coffee Shoppe.
- Co-sponsored Multi-Area Council debates for both the City Council Special Election in March and the General City Election in November.
- Promoted Upper Falls businesses during the economic slowdown caused by the pandemic.
- Communicated with the Transportation Department and the Traffic Council about traffic issues of concern in the city, such as handicap accessibility and safety issues at different intersections.
- Monitored and advocated for improvements and developments to the Upper Falls Greenway.
- Monitored and advocated for improvements to Braceland Park.
- Discussed and brainstormed on projects to preserve Upper Falls history.

- Maintained existing communication channels such as Facebook and the Upper Falls News (the latter thanks to the excellent work of Editor-in-Chief Margaret Alexander). The Google Group for Upper Falls residents has not been heavily used, but we will try again in 2022.

### **Area Council Finances**

The Area Council does not receive any direct funding from the city and has to rely on donations and its own fundraising efforts. The Newton Upper Falls Community Development Corporation has been a significant benefactor, underwriting many of the projects described above. At year end, the Area Council had a gross amount of \$5,598.66 in its bank account at Village Bank, which was \$1,809.92 more than we ended with in 2020.

[http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/neighborhood/upper\\_falls/default.asp](http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/neighborhood/upper_falls/default.asp)