

# **Newton Community Report**

## **From the Board of Aldermen**

In September, the Board of Aldermen gathered public comment on, and acted on, a number of important items affecting the city. The Programs & Services and Public Facilities Committees invited the public to comment on the proposed plan for artificial turf (“NewTurf”) for the fields of Newton South High School. The Programs & Services Committee also heard from residents regarding strengthening the City’s Noise Ordinance and a proposal to ban gas-powered leaf blowers. The Zoning and Planning Committee held a public hearing on the Draft Comprehensive Plan for the City of Newton. The Board voted funds for a new fire engine and parking restrictions near Lasell College. Finally, the Board honored Newton resident Dr. Tenley Albright for her achievements in figure skating and medicine.

### **Ban on Gas Powered Leaf Blowers Discussed**

The proposed ban on gasoline-powered leaf blowers in the City of Newton has led to national attention, including a broadcast segment on the National Public Radio program, All Things Considered. The Programs and Services Committee conducted a public meeting on September 19, at which many residents testifying both for and against both the ban and possible changes in the City’s noise ordinance to require quieter equipment or hours of operation. An early show of hands indicated about an equal division of opinion among those attending the meeting. Individual speakers in favor expressed frustration over the noise and pollution generated by the machines, and argued for cleaner, quieter alternatives for lawn work. Opponents, many of whom were in the landscaping business, said that the changes would be detrimental to them as homeowners or their landscaping enterprises, with increased costs likely for their customers. Some members of the Committee indicated that based on the comments received they would be willing to explore alternatives to an outright ban which might still produce a quieter and less dusty result. The Programs and Services Committee is continuing its deliberations on these issues at its meeting on October 3, 2007. For more information on this topic, please visit the Board of Aldermen’s website at: [www.ci.newton.ma.us/Aldermen/noise-and-gas/index.htm](http://www.ci.newton.ma.us/Aldermen/noise-and-gas/index.htm)

### **Public Hearing on the Draft Newton Comprehensive Plan**

The Board’s Zoning and Planning Committee held a public hearing to gather public comment on a draft revised Comprehensive Plan for the City of Newton. The plan was developed by a Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC) made up of residents of Newton appointed by Mayor Cohen in the spring of 2002 and led by citizen and planner Phil Herr. CPAC worked with Newton’s Planning and Development Department to complete the current draft. The document has been submitted to the Board of Aldermen, after review by the Planning and Development Board, as required by City Charter, for the Board’s review, amendment, and adoption to replace the City’s current Plan which has not be updated for a number of years. The draft Plan includes many issues affecting the future of Newton including land use, economic development, open space, and facilities and services. A special meeting of the aldermanic Zoning and Planning Committee has been scheduled for October 29, 2007 to discuss the draft Plan in light of public comments received. To view the draft Plan, please visit the City of Newton’s website at: [www.ci.newton.ma.us/Planning/CPAC/com%20plan%202005/commplan.asp](http://www.ci.newton.ma.us/Planning/CPAC/com%20plan%202005/commplan.asp)

### **NewTurf Discussion at Newton South High School**

The Programs & Services and Public Facilities Committees continued the discussion of installation of synthetic turf at the Newton South High School athletic complex by holding a joint meeting on September 5 for residents to express themselves about the project, for which the Mayor has requested bond funding totaling \$4.1 million. People spoke both in favor and in opposition about potential health issues, environmental impact, area drainage, and installation and long term maintenance costs, as well as the importance of parity for Newton South High School with the upcoming newly built Newton North High School. The Programs and Services Committee and the Public Facilities Committee both plan to

continue the discussion at its meetings on October 17, 2007, both of which will act before the bonding requests go to the Finance Committee of the Board for its fiscal review.

### **Board Approves Purchase of new Fire Engine**

At its meeting on October 1, 2007, the Board of Aldermen approved the Mayor's request to purchase a new fire engine with an Emergency Preamble to allow the purchase to be made forthwith. The new engine will become the first line engine at the Newton Highlands Fire Station, allowing current engine #7 to be put on reserve status. The Fire Department will purchase the engine from Pierce Fire Engines in Wisconsin, and new engine will allow the retirement of Engine #13, a reserve engine which injured Lt. Geary earlier this year and was damaged beyond repair, as well as maintain City compliance with ISO fire safety equipment standards.

### **New Parking Restrictions Approved for Lasell College Area**

At its meeting on October 1, 2007, the Board of Aldermen approved two new parking restrictions that were requested for the Lasell College area on both sides of Forest Avenue and on both sides of portions of Seminary Avenue near Woodland Road.

### **The Board Honors Dr. Tenley Albright with a Testimonial Resolution**

At its October 1, meeting the Board of Aldermen honored Newton resident, Dr. Tenley Albright, who has recently returned to Newton to live, for her accomplishments in figure skating and medicine, with a testimonial resolution reading in part as follows:

Whereas, Tenley Albright was born in Newton Centre, lived on Centre Street, and learned to skate on Newton's Bullough's Pond. At the age of eleven she was suddenly stricken with polio and confined to her bed. She overcame the disease, skating again just four months after the completion of her treatment, and winning the national junior figure skating title at age 13; and

Whereas, Tenley Albright went on to become a figure skating champion, winning both the 1953 United States and North American figure skating championships, she became the first American woman to win the world figure skating championships, and set new standards for women's figure skating, winning Olympic Gold in 1956. She unselfishly celebrated her win in Cortina Italy with the residents of Newton by providing a free figure skating demonstration on Crystal Lake upon her return from Italy; and

Whereas, Tenley Albright focused the drive and discipline she gained in skating to the field of medicine, attending Harvard Medical School in 1956 where she was only one of five women in her class, and has gone on to become an accomplished surgeon, pioneering new techniques for the detection and treatment of cancer, and

Whereas, Tenley Albright has unselfishly devoted herself to sport and medicine in the United States, becoming the first woman to be appointed to the United States Olympic Committee, and serving on the American College of Sports Medicine, the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sport, and the American Cancer Society; \*\* \*

Now Therefore be it Resolved,

That as Tenley Albright celebrates the golden anniversary of her Olympic Gold Medal in figure skating, the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her induction into the Skating Hall of Fame, and her significant accomplishments in medicine, it is only fitting and proper that members of this Honorable Board of Aldermen, representing all the citizens of the City of Newton, pay gratitude and tribute to Dr. Albright for her accomplishments, and wish her continued service and good health and happiness in the years ahead.

The next full Board of Aldermen meeting will take place on October 15, 2007 and begin at 7:45 pm. For a complete list of meetings, please visit the City of Newton webpage, click on Aldermen, and select Calendar and News from the left hand side of the page. Or use the following link:  
[www.ci.newton.ma.us/Aldermen/Aldermen%20Calendar.pdf](http://www.ci.newton.ma.us/Aldermen/Aldermen%20Calendar.pdf)