

Newsletter

The League of Women Voters' Guide to the November 6th Election

ABOUT THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that promotes informed and active participation in government. The league does not support or oppose specific candidates or political parties. It does, however, take positions and advocate for issues that it has

studied. Membership in the League is open to all women and men.

For information, call 617-964-0014 or visit the Web site at www.lwv.org (click on "local leagues", then find the link to Newton).

ABOUT THE ELECTION

The Newton Municipal General Election is Tuesday, November 6, 2007. The polls will be open from 7:00a.m. until 8:00p.m. The positions on this ballot will be for Alderman-at-Large, (where you can vote for two candidates from each ward), Ward Alderman (where you can vote for one candidate from your ward) and School Committee (where you may vote for one candidate from each ward).

If you are unable to get to the polls on November 6th, you may vote absentee. Call the Election Commission at 617-796-1350 or visit the website at www.ci.newton.ma.us (click on city departments, select Election Commission).

Newton municipal elections are nonpartisan in the sense that candidates are not designated as members of political parties.

ABOUT THIS VOTERS' GUIDE

The League's Voter Service Chairman Sharyn Roberts prepared this guide with the assistance of the President of the Newton League, Susan Rosenbaum, and Board of Directors member, Bonnie Carter, and the Board of the League. It is the compilation of responses to a questionnaire sent to all candidates whose names will appear on the municipal ballot on November 6th.

Responses were limited to 50 words for biographical information and 75 words for each question. The responses were not edited, or subject to spell check by the League, so you are reading the candidates' own words. If the answer exceeded the permissible number of words, it was cut off at exactly the number of words allowed.

ABOUT THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN

The legislative branch of Newton's government is a 24-member Board of Aldermen. There are 16 at-large aldermen and 8 ward aldermen elected every two years. In addition to deliberating legislation, the Board of Aldermen conducts land use proceedings. It also appoints the City Clerk/Clerk of the Board and Comptroller of Accounts and confirms various appointments made by the mayor. The board acts on the budget proposed by the mayor. The aldermen cannot increase the budget, but they can reduce it or they can request that the mayor increase the budget.

public and begin at 7:45 p.m. at City Hall. They are held on the first and third Mondays of each month, except in July and August when meetings are held on the second Monday of each month. Committees of the Board meet at various times, primarily in the evening during the week.

Members of the Board of Aldermen receive a salary set at 10 percent of the Mayor's salary. They are eligible for dental, medical, and life insurance as city employees. At ten years of service, elected officials are also entitled to participate in the city's retirement system which is governed by the state's general laws.

All meetings of the Board of Aldermen are open to the

Questions for the Board of Aldermen candidates

Question #1

What additional sources of revenue would you develop for the city? (Savings can be considered revenue.) (75 words maximum)

Question #2

How would you encourage safe walking and bicycling in the city, especially during the winter? (75 words maximum)

Question #3

What is the most important idea in the 2006 Draft of the Newton Comprehensive Plan? (75 words maximum)

Response to include biographical information, including your campaign website and why you chose to seek this office. (50 words max)

Ward Alderman/Ward 1

SCOTT F. LENNON

Candidate for re-election

Bio: First Elected, 2002. Serve on Finance, Public Safety / Transportation, Community Preservation Committees. Chair, Financial Audit Subcommittee. Professionally, Audit Manager for MA State Auditor Joseph DeNucci. Decided to serve as a way to give something back to a neighborhood that I grew up in.

www.scottlennon.com

Q1 Short term, a top to bottom review of every department is essential. We need to determine a better understanding of the core mission of each department and identify specific efficiencies that could potentially eliminate duplicative job related functions. Long term, we have reviewed and made the decision to shift our pension management. Additionally, discussion is needed on greater participation in PILOT agreements and we need to explore more options for responsible new growth.

Q2 Safer walking and bicycling is a direct result of improvements to overall vehicular traffic management. The increase of vehicles has dramatically changed Newton. It is increasingly difficult to safely balance vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclers. A specific plan that encompasses and promotes the efficiency of all three would enhance the use and potential capability of each. This plan would have to include the snow related response to each mode of travel throughout the city.

Q3 Strengthening of village centers. A case can be made that all components of the overall Plan feed off the vitality of our village centers. A strong village cen-

ter should include: a balance between needed local commerce and housing but should weigh the unique characteristics of each village; increased mobility and accessibility and improvements to parking management. Existing village uses should have more representation & input on decisions directly affecting the center.

Ward Alderman/Ward 2

STEPHEN M. LINSKY

Candidate for re-election

Bio: Raised in Oak Hill Park, attended Memorial School. Presently reside in Newtonville with children attending Newton public schools. I'm an attorney, mediator, and school volunteer. I seek re-election to assure cost-effective construction of a new Newton North high school and appropriate re-development of our village centers. www.ci.newton.ma.us/Aldermen/pix/ward2.htm

Q1 I support provisions in Governor Patrick's Municipal Partnership Act enabling communities such as Newton the ability to derive additional tax revenue without placing it in a competitively disadvantageous position. New growth revenue allowed under Proposition 2 1/2 need to be balanced against increases in density as well as the burdens placed on the city's infrastructure and provision of services to determine net gain. As Alderman, I always try to vet expenditures - not always to my full satisfaction.

Q2 PTOs at some elementary schools are now sponsoring initiatives to encourage safe walking to our schools, reversing the trend toward increased reliance on individual transportation. Not only does this help promote overall safety, but it also helps combat the rise

of childhood obesity and reduce carbon emissions. Through participation with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force, I hope to encourage safer biking and walking opportunities throughout the city, including and especially bike paths.

Q3 The Draft Comprehensive plan embraces many of the concepts known as 'smart growth'. Our village centers afford us the opportunity to better use our infrastructural resources, including and especially access to mass transportation, to promote and accommodate appropriate growth. Village center and air right development opportunities should be studied and advanced.

Ward Alderman/Ward 3

ANTHONY J. SALVUCCI

Candidate for re-election

Bio: Biography & reason for running to provide our children with a good education; to keep our City safe and to provide good municipal services, to speak up for my constituents if they have a problem with City Hall, and to continue to maintain the quality of life that we all enjoy in Newton.

Q1 This question deserves more than 75 words. Newton Citizens deserve specific information of spending proposals before they are asked to pay increased taxes. Similarly, fees and commercial taxes affect our businesses which now pay twice as much in real estate taxes (rent). There are many ways to increase revenue. Before I vote I want to know how the new funds will be used. We need a new system of accountability that relates income to expenses.

Q2 I would like to develop bicycle routes on our major streets and educate bicyclists and pedestrians to obey traffic

laws. I would like to acquire additional sidewalk plows and improve the practice of sidewalk plowing by the City. Also, I would like to see the development of a program to give incentives to homeowners who undertake to clear sidewalks of snow.

Q3 The Historic Preservation section of the Comprehensive Plan is most positive. It proposes that the City educate homeowners to preserve their historic properties. Owners who do so would get awards. It's better to encourage people to preserve their property than to penalize them after they have damaged or destroyed historic homes. I strongly supported using CPA funds to preserve the Durant-Kenrick House and to restore the West Burying Ground in West Newton.

ANATOL ZUKERMAN

Bio: My name is Anatol Zukerman of 17 Noble Street, West Newton. I've lived in Newton for 18 years, married, no children, working as an architect, artist and translator. I'm running for Ward 3 Alderman because I can do much more for our community than the current Alderman Salvucci.

Q1 Use the city's AAA bond rating to borrow money at 10% instead of the current 3%. Reduce the BOA from 24 to 10 aldermen and limit their health insurance to the time of their service. Cap the annual salaries for city employees at \$120,000. Establish a sustainable energy program including wind and solar power. Enhance the city's recycling program. Establish a new growth construction program in accordance with the state's Smart Growth Plan.

Q2 Install sidewalks with landscaped strips and prohibit car parking at the curb on major streets. Install bicycle lanes instead of the parking lanes. Build parking garages to accommodate the displaced parking in village centers. Allow only parking for the handicapped at the curb near retail and public buildings. Improve the snow removal and deposit snow within the landscaped strips between trees. The city should remove the snow from the sidewalks because it owns them.

Q3 The most important idea of NCP is supporting the Massachusetts Smart Growth Plan: sustainable development

near public transportation nodes, creation of mixed-use development zones, protection of land and ecosystems and the excellence in architecture. However, the NCP took 6 years to develop and is not specific enough to provide guidance for the future growth. For this reason it will probably collect dust in the annals of Newton Planning Department. We need a new plan.

Ward Alderman/ Ward 4

JOHN W. HARNEY

Candidate for re-election

Bio: I am a lifelong resident of Newton, running for my third term as Ward 4 Alderman. I will continue to work hard to protect neighborhoods from inappropriate development projects, to try and find effective solutions to parking, traffic and safety problems, and to listen to the concerns of local residents.

Q1 First, I have felt very strongly that the new Newton North High School needs to be funded through a debt exclusion override. Second, we should work very hard to do all we can to assist Governor Patrick in convincing the Legislature to pass a meals tax that local cities and towns could adopt. Finally, we should strongly consider assessing a fee to colleges and universities to cover the cost of municipal services to those institutions.

Q2 The best way to encourage walking and bicycling in the city is to make the roads and sidewalks safer. As Vice Chair of the Public Safety Committee, I have worked hard to implement traffic calming measures around the city. We need to be creative in adopting state of the art traffic calming measures to keep the neighborhoods safer. In the winter, the city must do a better job clearing the roads and especially the sidewalks.

Q3 While it is impossible to single out one idea as the most important, I believe that future development in the City is one of the most important issues that we will be facing. I wholeheartedly agree with the Comprehensive Plan when it states that "development would be guided to reflect the character of existing residential neighborhoods, giving great respect in land management policies and decisions to the well-considered views of those places."

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NEWSLETTER

Editor Ann Grantham 617-964-0333

The LWVN Newsletter is published nine times per year. The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization open to all citizens of voting age. For more information about the League of Women Voters, call 617-964-0014.

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<http://www.lwvn.ma.lwvnet.org>

Ward Alderman/Ward 5

CHRISTINE SNOW SAMUELSON
Candidate for re-election

Bio: Born NHlds, went to Hyde School, two children graduated Newton public schools, successful realtor, alderman 14 yrs, Land Use and Public Safety and Traffic. I want to implement the goals of the comp plan, traffic calming policy and contribute to the large land use requests coming before the BOA.

christinesamuelson.com

Q1 Seek more funding from State and Fed Gov. Allow increased density of housing and commercial space in village ctrs near public trans, or TOD. Promote changes to our zoning ordinances to clarify meaning and streamline process for appropriate development. Save \$'s by increasing recycling. Support new automated trash pickup contract.

Q2 Our road design must reflect all needs and be bike friendly, but design also needs to provide parking, especially near the villages. Share the road is the best solution. I filed legislation to require residents to clear the snow from their sidewalks. This will provide opportunity for people without cars to get around their neighborhood in the winter; elderly, postal carriers and hopefully kids walking to school.

Q3 The ability to increase density of housing and commercial space in village centers is crucial, the tool that will allow this to occur most smoothly is a neighborhood area planning structure. Define an area and set goals with interested residents guided by professionals through a tight process to establish the unique characteristics of the area and how to augment them. This Area Planning concept was not employed in the Newton Center study.

BILL BRANDEL

Bio: Bill Brandel is married and the father of three. He is a recognized software industry analyst, e-Business practitioner, and award-winning journalist, with almost 20 years of experience in the technology industry. He holds a bachelor's degree in journalism from Michigan State University and is pursuing a Masters degree in Education.

Q1 I would follow the cost-efficiency recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission; convene a Red Ribbon Commission to pursue potential expenditure savings and best practices; extend and maximize infrastructure investment by embracing building lifecycle management practices to encourage proactive maintenance to reduce deferred repair and rehabilitation costs; consider debt exclusion for new building initiatives; consider override to help close structural deficit.

Q2 Commit resources to enforcing existing pedestrian traffic laws throughout City, especially as they refer to cross-walks. Properly maintain streets and sidewalks. Promote connecting pathways between neighborhoods disconnected by major roadways and railroad tracks. Promote community shovelling program. Commit resources to responsive clearing of sidewalks crossing City property. Clearly lined streets and bike lanes. Appropriate and well-maintained lighting along all streets and sidewalks.

Q3 That we can pursue the concept of a Newton as a City that can provide effective transportation, intelligent development and commercial tax base, preservation of open spaces and community character. At the same time, this could be accomplished while delivering

a level of safety, services and infrastructure that are in line with Newton residents' values and meet their investment into this City.

Ward Alderman/Ward 6
GEORGE E. MANSFIELD
Candidate for re-election

Bio: 12-term Alderman, current Chair, Land Use Committee 6-term Vice President, 37-year Newton resident, Planning Director, Town of Carlisle, former Newton Schools parent, Board of Directors, Newton Highlands CDC. I still enjoy the opportunity to serve, even as the times become more challenging.

Q1 Since the Blue Ribbon Commission has identified a serious structural deficit in the City budget, increased revenue is a must. Under Proposition 2 1/2, without frequent overrides, the only significant sources of such increased revenue are from new growth, and commercial growth brings with it the least additional expenses in services. We need to attract and allow such growth in a way in which it will not erode Newton's quality of life.

Q2 First, our zoning must include provisions for improved pedestrian and bicycle circulation wherever new development or re-development occurs. Secondly, the design of new development should make it easy and attractive for people to walk, rather than drive from destination to destination. Finally, the police must enforce the ordinances in place that require sidewalks be kept clear of snow in commercial areas, and the Board should re-institute a shoveling ordinance for residential streets.

Q3 The most important idea is that, for the first time in at least 50 years, Newton has a thoughtful plan that can

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

- I would like to join the League of Women Voters of Newton. Enclosed is my check for \$55 payable to LWVN.
- Lifetime membership \$1000**
- I would like to receive materials about the League.
- I would like to be contacted by a League member to talk about LWVN.

**Mail this form (and your check, if joining) to:
 Andrea Kozinetz Holtz at 8 Stony Brae Road,
 Newton Highlands, MA 02461**

My email address may be shared with State and National LWV

guide its development and its future, if that plan is adopted by the Board of Aldermen. Everyone should go to the City web site and read "The Newton That We Want," the first 4 pages of the draft Comprehensive Plan. If you agree that is what you want, let your Aldermen know that.

Ward Alderman/Ward 7

R. LISLE BAKER

Candidate for re-election

Bio: Seeking thirteenth term as Ward 7 Ward Alderman to continue working to preserve and enhance the quality of life in the Ward and in Newton; currently president of the 2006-07 Board of Aldermen; Professor of Law, Suffolk University Law School; educated at Williams College and Harvard Law School.

www.aldermanbaker.org

Q1 The Blue Ribbon Commission on the Municipal Budget, which the Mayor and I jointly appointed, made recommendations from further recycling to enhanced energy efficiency. For example, I wrote the Newton Retirement Board, urging a move to state management of the pension fund investments, which it did. But the Commission warned that while its revenue recommendations might help, they would not close the future structural budget deficit, likely requiring additional taxation for the Newton we want.

Q2 Small actions can help. For example, I worked to get a school crossing guard back on Waverley Avenue, as well as a stop sign near the Ward School. I worked with Bigelow School parents and staff to update parking controls and plowing routes nearby. I got faulty street lights repaired near a crosswalk on Hammond Street, as well helped get a new lighted and plowed walkway to the T station at Middlesex Road.

Q3 The draft Plan recognizes that Newton is a fully developed community having a valued structure of neighborhood character and cohesion, which involves consideration of "neighborhood as well as Citywide impacts." The Plan also recognizes that implementing land use, housing, transportation and other intentions should "be done with sensitivity to variations in places across

the City," with a framework within which place-centered planning can take place, and then the City-wide plan should be updated in response.

Ward Alderman/Ward 8

CHERYL LIPOF LAPPIN

Candidate for re-election

Bio: As Ward 8 Alderman since 2002, I have worked to make our city more fiscally responsible, to preserve open space and to promote responsible development. I am a resident of Newton for over 40 years and a Marketing Consultant. My husband Fred and I have two children.

Q1 The Public Facilities committee, of which I am a member, has been instrumental in implementing energy conservation measures including replacing all of our streetlights with energy efficient lights. This action will save the city at least \$750,000 a year going forward and will reduce the city's impact on the environment. We can reduce costs further with energy conservation in public buildings and encouraging energy efficiency and sustainable practices in new building projects.

Q2 There are three ways to address pedestrian and bicycle safety in the winter. First, we should revise the outdated sidewalk-plowing plan for the city that has proven to be inadequate. Second, we must work harder to make sure that our streets are cleared efficiently and in a timely manner. And third, we should encourage citizens to shovel the sidewalks in front of their homes and publicize the City's list of volunteers who will shovel for people who are unable to clear their own sidewalks.

Q3 Two issues in the Draft Comprehensive Plan that I feel go hand in hand are reducing Newton's overall energy consumption and maintaining our public buildings. Deferred maintenance of city buildings over many years has produced inadequate buildings and higher energy and maintenance costs. With a combination of a proactive building maintenance program and energy efficient practices, we can preserve our infrastructure, reduce our negative effect on the environment and save immediate and long term costs for the city.

Alderman-at-Large/Ward 1

AL CECCHINELLI

Bio: I am a graduate of the Newton school system. I have an A.O.S. and B.O.S. from Johnson and Wales and a Juris Doctorate from New England School of Law. I am an attorney. I was a chef and an educator, having taught at Johnson and Wales and Newton North.

NewtonVote4Al.com

Q1 The first thing that I will do is help to get the North project under control and work with each dept. head to help trim the budgets. I will get local employees covered by the state health insurance plan, make sure that city automobiles are not taken home by city workers and install meters for parking in the villages that do not have them. There will be NO OVERRIDE.

Q2 I will start by ensuring that current rules and regulations are being enforced by Newton Police. Pedestrians not crossing in marked crossing areas are very dangerous and it is not fair to motorists. Cyclists also must follow the rules of the road. I also believe that helmets should be required for all cyclists. Bike inspections to check for reflectors, brakes and a bell or horn may be a good idea.

Q3 Page 4, paragraph 6, Investing Capital Funds, "...investment in capital facilities should give priority to building onto what we have, fixing first...". This is only a draft and the City has already disregarded it when it comes to the North High School. We should stick to our plan and fix it first. The building has an additional twenty years of use left. So fix it.

ALLAN L. CICCONE, JR.

Bio: I am 42 years old, father of four children and employed as a police officer. I was also a small business owner in the city previously. My wanting to run for this seat is to make a difference, to go the extra mile for the residents of Newton. www.allancicconejr.com

Q1 Obviously we have to look at every department and see if we are running the departments with the proper amount of personnel and not just filling up positions. I would like to encourage and make easier the process of permitting commercial property owners to add square footage to their existing build-

ings. We enhance the business districts, the landlords are able to rent more space and the city gets more tax revenue.

Q2 As more traffic comes into the city on a regular basis it is becoming a real safety issue, especially during the rush hours. I think a combined effort between the motorists, walkers/bikers and the care of the city streets could make a difference. In the winter the sidewalks and streets can be a real hazard. We need to have the sidewalks clean and the streets plowed curb to curb for all to be safe.

Q3 Again I have to go back to our business districts. We have a great diversity with our different business districts throughout the city. Our villages are strong because of the diverse representation each one provides but still needs more. To keep this strength we must continue to push for more improvements in all the 13 villages in the city and to have each one represented in a fair manner.

CARLETON P. MERRILL
Candidate for re-election

Bio: I am a life long resident of Newton. Graduated from Newton High School prior to entering the service in World War II. Saw foreign service in the Pacific Theater as a member of the U.S. Army Air Force. The strength within our community are the many volunteers. My service as a member of the Board of Aldermen is that as a volunteer serving its community.

Q1 Create constancy of purpose for improvement of service. The operation of city government is a business where quality must come first and with a good degree of quality will come savings that will benefit the tax payers. We are blessed with dedicated and loyal employees, at all levels, but together we must strive to look for savings and reduce the cost of government. Use the report of the Blue Ribbon Commission as an important guide.

Q2 Clear cross-walk markings at all intersections as well as clear marking for bicycling. However, during winter months with ice and snow the bicycling routes could present a hazardous condition.

Q3 Under the Section relating to "IMPLEMENTATION" it is noted that "there should be an identified group that would provide planning guidance on an ongoing basis. Included in that group should be Aldermen, City staff, appointed officials and other citizens." While the Newton Comprehensive Plan offers much in terms of goals for the future, nothing will be planned unless there is a dedicated force working to reach many of the objectives that the Plan outlines.

JANET STERMAN

Bio: Originally from Buffalo, NY. Graduate of Boston University. Resident of Newton since 1987. Living on Church Street since 1987, previously lived Newtonville and Auburndale. Sales professional since 1982. Own and operate Newton Wellesley Mortgage since 2005. Member of Newton Kiwanis, League of Women Voters, Newton Conservators, The Green Decade.

I feel I can effectively communicate the needs of our community to our city governance. Interested in seeing the Newton improve and flourish.

www.janetsterman.org

Q1 I am a big proponent for growth and increased tax revenue. I believe Newton must have a stronger economic development effort. With all of the great minds in this city, we can put together an equally savvy group to working to make Newton a development-friendly city. If we must reform our zoning laws (and possibly our city charter) to accomplish this, I am willing to put in the work needed to get this done.

Q2 Safety begins with education. On top of educating our residents on the great sports of walking and bicycling in Newton, we need a better way of marketing these great ideas and great sports. Education and marketing...

Q3 With no doubt, implementation is the most important idea in the Draft Comprehensive Plan. We need to become doers and not talkers! Let's take some risks, move forward, and continue to build history in Newton. Staffing resources for long range planning, keep-

ing current, and never losing site of the goals. We need to remain flexible towards revising goals as we move along. Growth should be about the journey as well as the destination.

Alderman-at-Large/ Ward 2
SUSAN S. ALBRIGHT
Candidate for re-election

Bio: I am a lifelong Newton resident, dedicated to community service. I direct a staff of 10 in the creation of software, TUSK, a comprehensive knowledge management system for the Tufts Health Sciences Schools - in use at 4 U.S., 4 African and 1 Indian medical schools.

Q1 I voted to make our street lights energy efficient which will produce a large cost saving. I also favor seeking additional savings through energy efficient municipal buildings. I hope to explore payments in lieu of taxes from our many tax exempt institutions. I am proud of their presence but as good neighbors, hope they will help Newton provide them needed services. I believe in smart growth for the city to bring in new tax revenue.

Q2 A member of my staff bikes to work in Boston and tells of his many near misses. We should create bike lanes along the city's east/west and north/south corridors and identify them with signs and road markings. Publicity might bring out more bikers which might actually make the bike lanes safer. For pedestrians we should continue to find ways to add raised crosswalks in our most dangerous roads to slow down the traffic.

Q3 The following are essential to successful implementation of the Plan: to rewrite Newton's zoning laws to align them with the plan and throw out confusing language which is difficult if not impossible to interpret; to strengthen and make permanent the planning process in Newton without relying so heavily on volunteers so that the Plan is a beginning not an end; to seek out public private partnerships to implement many of the goals within the plan.

MARCIA T. JOHNSON
Candidate for re-election

Bio: As an alderman in my fifth term, I will continue working to preserve the diversity and quality of our neighborhoods, and increase affordable housing units. I also want to maintain close oversight of the NNHS project and its impact on the neighbors.

www.marciajohnson.org

Q1 In addition to the recommendations made by the Blue Ribbon Commission, I encourage the State Legislature to pass the Municipal Partnership Act. This would allow Newton to join the state's insurance plan where the rate of increase in premiums is about half of what we currently experience. We could gain revenue from taxing telephone companies' poles and wires. We could consider implementing a modest meals and hotel tax.

Q2 We all need to look out for each other, not just ourselves. Bicyclists and motorists must obey traffic laws. Pedestrians must walk facing traffic and use cross walks. Residents should keep all of their sidewalks safe by shoveling and spreading sand. The high schools should institute a community service requirement for all juniors and seniors. From this program, student volunteers could be available to clear sidewalks for those who are unable to do so themselves.

Q3 Since housing is becoming so expensive in Newton, I think the recommendation to refine our zoning ordinances is absolutely critical and doable without any additional cost to the City. In the plan there are five suggestions that would protect existing housing stock and increase development of affordable housing. I particularly like allowing increased density in our village centers and commercial districts as well as when the number of affordable units exceeds our current 15% requirement.

Alderman-at-Large/ Ward 3
 LESLIE A BURG
Candidate for re-election

Bio: Emeritus Professor, Northeastern University, Doctorate: Boston University, Reading/Learning Disabilities

Post Doctoral work: MIT, Linguistics; BU Applied psycholinguistics.

Former Director of Tutor Training: United South End Settlements, and S.N.A.P.

Author: Consultant – numerous public school systems, social/ educational agencies, parent groups.

Newton resident: 37 years, widowed, grown son, a NNHS graduate.

www.leslieburg.org

Q1 Increase energy efficiency: Employ an Energy Services Company to assess municipal building needs and implement necessary changes, saving \$2 million in energy costs, while incorporating sustainable technology.

Encourage appropriate commercial/ mixed-use development to increase new growth revenue and provide tax relief to residential property owners.

Increase recycling = \$200,000

Increase PILOT contributions by building relationships with tax-exempt institutions.

Consider the use of general and debt exclusion overrides in conversations with the Newton community.

Q2 Support walk Boston's "Safe Routes to School" initiative, and Representative Kay Khan's bill ensuring a specific percentage of the federal funds Massachusetts receives for highway safety projects is used for bicycle/ pedestrian safety improvements including infrastructure.

Provide bike lanes, clearly marked crosswalks, traffic calming mechanisms....

Adopt SRTS curriculum to teach safe walking/bicycling

Revisit Newton's snow removal ordinance requiring property owners to clear sidewalks. Provide city assistance for those unable to.

Support Newton's Bicycle/ Pedestrian Task Force.

Q3 The most important, overarching concept embodied in the 2006 Draft Comprehensive Plan suggests that as a community we can shape change to make Newton the kind of place we want it to be. It presents a vision for Newton's future development and provides a modern set of tools to help us achieve it. Significantly, the Plan speaks to the wholeness of our city, while embracing the special character of its different neighborhoods.

TED HESS-MAHAN
Candidate for re-election

Bio: Seeking re-election to third term as Alderman-at-Large, Ward 3, Chair, Zoning Task Force, Vice Chair Programs & Services, Former member of PTO Council and Human Rights Commission and past President of CAN-DO, Seventeen years practicing law, Suffolk University Law School, JD, Tufts University, BA, Age 47, married, 3 children

www.tedhess-mahan.org

Q1 In July, Governor Patrick signed the Municipal Partnership Act, which allows communities to raise additional revenues by ending the Telecommunications Property Tax exemption and passing local meals and hotel revenue legislation. It also lets municipalities save on employee benefits by allowing them to participate in the State's health-care system. Newton should increase revenues by taking advantage of this new law and enacting additional laws that promote planned business and mixed-use development along its economic corridors.

Q2 Newton should aggressively pursue state and federal funding to enhance bicycle and pedestrian pathways, provide bicycle access as part of roadway improvement projects, and reform our development and transportation guidelines to give priority to bicycle and pedestrian access. We should also broaden ordinances to require all property owners to clear snow off sidewalks and strengthen the enforcement of existing laws. More bicycle racks are needed in village centers, commercial areas, and at all public facilities.

Q3 All the big ideas in the Comprehensive Plan – planning how

much and where to grow, investing capital, excellence-in-design, promoting the City's rich diversity of places – are important. If forced to pick one specific idea, I'd choose a comprehensive review and revision of Newton's development regulations, with an emphasis on zoning, traffic and parking regulations that put the kinds of growth we want where we want them and promotes alternatives to single occupant automobile transportation.

GREER TAN SWISTON

Bio: I'm Greer Tan Swiston, wife to my best friend, Rob and mother to Parker and Kayla. A Newton homeowner, working professional and parent, I have always been an active community volunteer. To serve on the Board of Alderman would simply be yet another opportunity to further serve Newton.

www.greertanswiston.org

Q1 - Promote successful businesses by simplifying paperwork and facilitating opportunities.

- Restructure zoning to recognize and legalize housing situations, like accessory apartments in SR1 neighborhoods, where renting both relieves financial burden for homeowners and provides housing that is naturally more affordable.

- Streamline and optimize operational and personnel costs like benefits and pension plans, especially for elected officials.

- Restore our maintenance budget which will ultimately decrease our capital replacement costs in the long run.

Q2 Newton is a unique blend of urban and suburban. Our reliance on sidewalks is one of the ways we are urban and so we should consider adopting some more urban policies about sidewalk accessibility and pedestrian traffic. For instance, I support the reinstatement of some variation of the sidewalk snow removal ordinance. I would also give more attention and credence to the recommendations from the Newton Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force.

Q3 The most important idea, next to simply the idea of having the plan at all, is the idea that one is never actually

done with the plan. Adopting the Comprehensive Plan means also adopting a process for adapting the plan on an ongoing basis. The idea of putting early action efforts into play despite the present lack of adoption of the whole Comprehensive Plan is practical and helps demonstrate the adaptive nature of plans.

Alderman-at-Large/ Ward 4

LEONARD J. GENTILE

Candidate for re-election

No response received by deadline.

AMY MAH SANGIOLO

Candidate for re-election

Bio: Amy Sangiolo is married and mother of three, an attorney (NY and DC), graduate of Juilliard (Pre-College), Barnard College and Rutgers Law School, At-Large Board member of Springwell, Honorary Member of the Commonwealth's Asian American Commission; Founder of the Asian American Democrats of Massachusetts and Vice President of the BOA.

Q1 Follow recommendations of the Finance and Management Committee and the Blue Ribbon Commission: realize savings by increasing recycling and energy efficiencies, move pension fund into the state system, lobbying the State to allow for the exemption health insurance from collective bargaining; increase revenue by encouraging responsible development that does not overburden our existing infrastructure, engage institutions in PILOT arrangements, promote public/private partnerships and consider debt exclusion and override initiatives giving voters a choice.

Q2 Commit resources to upgrading and properly maintaining our streets and sidewalks. I suggest better coordination of snow removal operations on streets and sidewalks. Often, plows block crosswalks with mountains of snow and/or inadvertently place snow on shoveled sidewalks and sidewalk plows shovel the snow back onto the street. I would make crosswalk placement a priority and make them more prominent similar to Washington Street in

Wellesley. Adequate lighting, bike lane striping and signage is also essential.

Q3 That we can have responsible land development, effective transportation, increase affordable housing, and increase economic development without sacrificing preservation and conservation of open space, our natural and historic resources and our quality of life.

Alderman-at-Large/ Ward 5

BRIAN E. YATES

Candidate for re-election

Bio: Chair, Zoning and Planning Committee. Member, Public Facilities and Community Preservation Committees. Master of Urban Affairs, Boston University. BA, English, 1971, Boston College. Graduate, Newton Public Schools (South, Meadowbrook, Emerson). Founding President, Friends of Hemlock Gorge. I want to preserve the villages and environment of Newton.

www.BrianYates.org

Q1 Put municipal employees under Group Insurance Commission to hold down the rate of increase in health care costs. Get power from state to tax all property of utilities in Newton for \$1.2 million per year in increased revenues. Increase revenues from existing hotel taxes by promoting Newton as the place to stay for our own attractions and as the Gateway to Greater Boston and Historic Middlesex County (Lexington/Concord, Lowell, etc.) Ask our legislators to lead efforts to give us these powers.

Q2 Preserve remaining village schools and branch libraries in easily walkable locations. Revitalize village business districts to enable residents to meet many of their retail within walking distance of their homes. Develop outreach program so that library books can be available at community centers where branch libraries/schools were closed. Use aqueduct paths for bike trails. Re-establish safe trail along river to enable bikers to by-pass part of Quinobequin Road where overgrown vegetation makes biking and walking unsafe.

Q3 "Planning for and with History" is the most important idea in the Comprehensive Plan. As a member of the Historic Preservation Sub-

Committee of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, I am proud to have helped develop this positive approach to preserving the structures, villages, and landscapes of our city. Awards to owners who preserve their historic properties would encourage others to follow their examples. Revitalization of public properties like the Burying Grounds also set a proper tone. (I was pleased to find the grave of my ancestor who fought at Lexington-Concord in the restored South Burying Ground.)

PAUL EDWARD COLETTI
Candidate for re-election

No response received by deadline.

Alderman-at-Large/Ward 6
KENNETH R. L. PARKER
Candidate for re-election

Bio: I have served as an Alderman for sixteen years, during which time I have worked for excellence in our schools, improved financial management, open space preservation, tree protection, recycling expansion, improved services, fixing infrastructure, senior and affordable housing, equitable treatment of City employees. . . for more please see

www.kenparker.org.

Q1 In 2005, I organized the Finance & Management Working Group which identified more than \$10 million in annual new revenue and savings, including improving energy efficiency of City buildings lowering heating costs, expanding our recycling program to increase participation lowering trash disposal costs, asking tax-exempt institutions to make voluntary PILOT payments to help pay for the services they receive, and moving our pension fund to the state system where the returns are higher.

Q2 Vehicular congestion puts bicyclists and pedestrians at risk year-round, so I support smart-growth planning principles that limit the number of cars being added to our city streets. I believe that we need better snow clearing, particularly of sidewalks and we need to stop the practice of piling snow on street corners, blocking access to sidewalks. We should also step up enforcement of the

ordinance prohibiting dumping of snow and ice on city sidewalks and streets.

Q3 Environmental sustainability. If we allow dense development that generates significant new traffic and puts strains on our infrastructure and resources, we will change the character of Newton forever. The Comprehensive Plan gives us a roadmap for preserving the residential character of our neighborhoods in the face of development pressure. Unfortunately, there are some who would ignore these principles and allow dense new development and 14-story towers in Newton under the so-called "PMBD" zoning amendment.

VICTORIA L. DANBERG
Candidate for re-election

Bio: MBA, Management and Finance, 30 great years in Newton; Vice-Chair, Long Range Planning, Zoning and Planning Committee, Public Safety and Transportation Committee, Real Property Re-Use, Newton Centre Task Force. Interests: Historic preservation, wholesale energy, public education, affordable housing, planned development, open space, public health (especially children).

Q1 Join many surrounding communities that have reduced electrical rates substantially through wholesale purchase of electricity (improved rates for both City and citizens). Move City pension plan funds to Commonwealth PRIT (Our underperformance has cost the City over \$30million in the last 10 years.) Improve energy efficiency in public buildings (est. savings \$2million/year in five years). Increase recycling, PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Tax), examine health insurance. Examine opportunities for vibrant, appropriate commercial development.

Q2 Add more raised crosswalks on busy corners. Create more corner sidewalk bump-outs to reduce distance across streets. Increase number of sidewalk miles plowed by City along school routes. Encourage (more strongly) residents to shovel their sidewalks. Codify and clarify new development requirements regarding pedestrian access and circulation to and within developments. Stripe bike lanes where possible.

Q3 Making certain that area scale (neighborhood planning) is funded, complements effort citywide, is atten-

tive to the Comprehensive Plan and lines of communication are open. (Greater neighborhood input earlier on regarding the Boylston St. development would have reduced conflict and anxiety. The process would have benefitted by greater communication with Brookline.) Improving connections citywide across topical areas, i.e. when we discuss open space we are mindful of historic preservation.

Alderman-at-Large/Ward 7
VERNE W. VANCE
Candidate for re-election

Bio: Retired attorney. President Emeritus and Chairman, Long Range Planning Committee, Board of Aldermen. Former president, Board of Aldermen, and former chairman, Newton School Committee. I seek reelection to continue my work in developing a long-term plan to address the financial, land-use and other needs of the city.

www.vernevance.org.

Q1 Improving pension-fund performance by transferring management of the fund to the state's PRIT program.

Improving energy efficiency of municipal and school buildings.

Exploring avenues for health-insurance savings through such means as changing state law to permit Newton to join the state's Group Insurance Commission program.

Modifying the zoning to encourage modest increases in commercial development at appropriate locations to generate increased property taxes.

Adopting automated trash collection and other measures to maximize recycling.

Q2 Traffic speeds on certain streets must be more effectively controlled by traffic-calming measures such as raised crosswalks and street-design modifications. Bicycle lanes should be added to more streets, where feasible, and appropriately delineated. Walking routes to schools and elsewhere should be reviewed to ensure that safe sidewalks and crossings exist throughout. Further consideration should be given to an ordinance requiring homeowners to remove the snow from the sidewalks in front of their houses.

Q3 The most important idea in the Draft Comprehensive Plan is the emphasis on process rather than inflexible rules as the basis for achieving such goals as excellence in place-making. The Plan suggests comprehensively studying each village center to clarify a vision for the village while mustering public and private resources to achieve that vision. Standing squarely behind all the goals of the Plan is its emphasis on excellence – an emphasis that I strongly support.

SYDRA SCHNIPPER

Candidate for re-election

Bio: For 22 years, I have been privileged to serve Newton. Retired as the Mathematics Coordinator of BHS, I am chair of Public Facilities, Solid Waste Commission and a member of Finance bringing experience, commitment and leadership. A parent, grandparent and honoree in Who's Who in American Teachers and American Women.

www.SydraSchnipper.com

Q1 As chair of Public Facilities, I have played a key role in implementing several cost saving measures. An RFQ for an ESCO, proposal for new Solid Waste Contract, expanding recycling and replacing street lights. As we explore other cost savings in health insurance, reduction in energy use and "smart" development, we must acknowledge a structural deficit in our operating budget. Citizens of Newton deserve the opportunity to vote to increase our tax base.

Q2 Improving and maintaining our sidewalks and roadways will help citizens walk and bike safely. Planning for bike routes as we redesign streets and bike paths where feasible, we can encourage citizens to pursue bicycling. In the 1990's we instituted a policy requiring snow removal for all sidewalks. This was rescinded due to citizens' concerns; it is time to have that discussion again.

Q3 I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the citizens who devoted countless hours in drafting the Comprehensive Plan. "Reducing Solid Waste," "Promoting economic development without endangering the residential quality

of life," "Pursuing housing that will be located in relationship to transportation, schools, services and jobs," and "Sufficient housing development to meet housing goals and appropriate development to meet our fiscal needs" are but a few of their key recommendations.

JEFF SEIDEMAN

Bio: I'm a public relations consultant and teacher and have been active in community affairs in Newton for a number of years. I'm presently president of the Newton Taxpayers Association, a non-partisan fiscal watchdog group. My wife and I and our two daughters have lived in Newton for 15 years.

www.jeffseideman.org.

Q1 My platform calls for better fiscal planning and protecting capital assets. Newton has consistently failed to engage in effective and honest long range planning. Equally true is the fact that its leaders have consistently under funded maintenance. The net effect of these two failures is tens of millions of dollars in additional expenses. The solution to this problem is new leadership with the wisdom and courage to make hard choices for the benefit of all Newtonites.

Q2 The city needs to implement better and more effective snow plowing operations, most likely by recruiting and encouraging individuals to participate. The first order of business would be the main streets leading to schools and where children walk and ride. Throughout the year it is up to the children and their parents to make sure they walk and ride safely. Many school programs teach these skills.

Q3 Unfortunately, the Draft Comprehensive Plan is such a collection of conflicting goals and ideas, it is hard to see how it could possibly be implemented in any meaningful way. For example, one of its tenets is to fix before building new, yet we are in the process of tearing down a 35-year-old, \$90 million school and building an expensive new one. A complete violation of the comprehensive plan. Our problem is a failure of leadership, not planning.

**Alderman-at-Large/Ward 8
MITCHELL L. FISCHMAN**

Candidate for re-election

Bio: Having served three terms, I enjoy constituent services and have extensive development and transportation experience; Vice-Chair, Land Use Committee; Member, Public Safety and Traffic Committee; Past Chair, EDC; BA, University of Pennsylvania; MBA and Masters in Urban Planning; Vice President, Daylor Consulting Group; resident of Newton for 33 years, married, with two children.

Q1 Negotiate payments with tax exempt organizations; at 25% of normal rate- yielding additional \$1.5 million. Management of pension fund transfer to state investment trust could improve performance and save \$30 million over ten years. Increases in recycling program could save additional \$200,000. Reduction in the city's health insurance premiums if city joins the state health insurance plan but requires collective bargaining agreement changes. Other new revenues: sale/lease of excess city land and leasing cell towers on city buildings.

Q2 Sidewalks must be well lit, safe and passable. In winter, owner enforcement is needed for snow removal or the city should extend cleaning program beyond school blue zones or public building areas. Bicyclists like to be on roads in safe designated curb-lane areas. Similar programs to Winchester Street's bicycle lane needs to be developed on major streets. There is a serious flaw with Walnut Street not having a bicycle lane, with the city opting instead for more additional parking.

Q3 A high priority would be to support "place-centered" planning efforts, particularly in areas like Newton Centre, also including mixed-use approaches with residential development. The focal point of the Newton Centre effort has been to bring more supportive residential because of proximity to the T-Station and to support the existing local businesses. This concept meets smart-growth objectives which is a major focus of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan.

JOHN FREEDMAN

Bio: Serving on the Board of Alderman is one more way that I can give back to Newton, which has been great to my family. I've been active with several Newton organizations. I'm also a physician, an MBA, a healthcare consultant, and a Newton parent of three boys.

www.JohnFreedman.org

Q1 Newton has major capital needs and we must secure additional sources of revenue and savings wherever possible. Every legitimate opportunity should be examined. Revenues: hotel and meals taxes, private-public partnerships, PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) from large tax-exempt institutions, appropriate commercial development, etc. Savings: increased recycling, and energy efficiency of public facilities. Finally, we should take advantage of our AAA bond rating to borrow long-term funds at favorable rates.

Q2 First, the sidewalks near our schools must be properly plowed. This is a basic issue of our children's safety. I'd continue sidewalk improvement and replacement, which will reduce falls and make plowing easier in the winter. We should encourage bicyclists to take advantage of more bike-friendly streets like Beacon Street and Commonwealth Avenue, which can serve as bicycle thoroughfares. As streets undergo routine maintenance, wherever possible add markings or lanes to enhance bike safety and access.

Q3 Here are two. Intriguing and exciting are the proposals for alternative transportation, such as activating the rail corridor behind Needham Street, improving transit connections at Newton Corner, and making creative use of the Aqueduct rights of way. These are long-term projects that could have a major benefit to traffic and development in Newton. However, just as important is the Comprehensive Plan's underlying concept: that growth and development must be considered from an all-encompassing perspective.

TOM SHEFF

Bio: I was born and raised in Newton and I attended the Newton Public School System. After graduating Newton South, I graduated from Clark University with a BA in Government and minored in Math. The reason why I am running for alderman is very simple... I love Newton.

www.tomsheff.org 617-795-7076

Q1 The BRC created a terrific game-plan on areas where we can save money. We can save money by listening to the recommendations of ESCO's, fixing water meters and promoting Pilot programs. We can increase revenues by promoting smart growth, investigating the possibility of a municipal electric company and building a comprehensive development over the Mass Turnpike. I'd like to add that in the development over the pike, the city would have room for a dog park.

Q2 I would encourage safe walking and bicycling in Newton by educating/promoting the fact that bicycling and walking is good for the environment (less air pollution), healthy (more exercise) and it cuts back on traffic. I would also like to increase public transportation in Newton which would cut back on traffic and make it safer to bicycle and walk. In the winter, I would make sure that streets and sidewalks get properly plowed/shoveled.

Q3 The most important idea in the 2006 Newton Comprehensive Plan is the plan itself. This plan illustrates a perfect outline of how a city should be run from a citizen's point of view. It is absolutely essential that we use these plans and any other documents to help guide us into the future. The next most important theory in the plan is implementation. If we don't implement these concepts in Newton, they just remain ideas.

MYRA TATTENBAUM

Bio: Newton League of Women Voters, Newton School Committee, Newton Board of Aldermen, Parks/Recreation Commission, Board NewTV, Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee, Retired development executive. I enjoyed my role in helping guide Newton. I would like, once again, to contribute my time, experience and organizational ability in shaping the city's future.

Q1 Encourage Newton to join the state's health plan providing the same benefits with lower costs. Provide incentives to recycle, reducing dumping costs. Continue with energy savings such as changing to more energy efficient street lighting. Ensure adequate maintenance funds reducing the costs of deferred repairs. Promote well-planned development to provide increased revenues. Foster arrangements with private schools and hospitals to provide Payments In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT).

Q2 By providing well maintained sidewalks and curb cuts, pedestrians and carriages can have an unobstructed walkway, separated from vehicular traffic. Requiring sidewalk snow removal allows walkers safe routes to walk in all seasons. The Bicycle Task Force is working on establishing bike lanes throughout Newton. Theoretically bike lanes will provide safe paths for bicycles. Again, with proper snow removal, the bike lanes should be as safe as the car lanes all year around.

Q3 The most important idea is that we are looking ahead and planning for change. Although Newton is a built up city, we can expect a small amount of growth over future years. What kind of a city do we want in five years and in ten? By thinking about it now and planning its direction, we can ensure that Newton will be as wonderful a place to live in later years as it is now.

If you would like to receive an

AUDIO VERSION OF THE NEWSLETTER

contact Sue Rosenbloom at dsr2@rcn.com or 617-332-6873.

School Committee

The Newton School committee oversees the Newton Public Schools. It is made up of one representative from each of the city's eight wards. Voters from the entire city elect the entire committee every two years. The mayor is a member of the School Committee ex officio.

The School Committee meets on the second and fourth Mondays of the month from September through June. It is responsible for recommending the school budget to the mayor, hiring the superintendent, approving system-wide policies and establishing the overall philosophy of the system.

There are term limits to service on the School Committee. Each member may serve only four consecutive terms of two years. He or she may, however, run for election again after waiting a two-year period.

Members of the School Committee receive a salary set at the rate of 5 percent of the Mayor's salary. They are eligible for medical, dental, and life insurance as city employees. At ten years of service, elected officials are also entitled to participate in the city's retirement system which is governed by the state's general laws.

The superintendent of schools directs the educational activities of the fifteen elementary schools, four middle schools, and two senior high schools and carries out the policies and philosophies of the School Committee.

Questions for the School Committee Candidates

Question Q1

What specific steps would you take to address the overcrowding at the elementary and middle schools, in light of the recent Long-Term Facilities Study? (75 words maximum)

Question Q2

How do we ensure equity in class size while maintaining neighborhood schools? (75 words maximum)

Question Q3

What is your vision for the Newton public schools? (75 words maximum)

School Committee/ Ward 1

GAIL E. GLICK

Candidate for re-election

Bio: 19-year Newton resident; married; son attends NNHS; 3-term Newton School Committee, Ward 1; Chair, Contract Negotiation Team; practicing labor lawyer; former public school teacher; curriculum developer; education researcher; policy analyst; Wellesley College faculty adjunct. Passionate about achieving excellence in our schools; bring skills and experiences uniquely suited to this effort.

Q1 The Facilities Study focused not only on overcrowding but also (and most especially) the physical condition of our school buildings. Any long-range planning must address both issues. Predicting the degree of overcrowding and at which sites is a chancy exercise – whatever the statistical formula employed or anecdotal information collected. Sound decision-making requires that we first plot a pathway that leads us through a process that is deliberative, far-sighted and receptive to community input.

Q2 This is a challenge considering how deeply we value both goals. Any attempt to reach some balance between them will depend on individual family priorities and how expansive a definition of “the neighborhood school” we are willing to accept. Given the unpredictability of population pressures in a given district, the only realistic assurance we can offer is that every effort will be made to maintain neighborhood schools to the extent that demographics permit.

Q3 Providing effective, inspiring educational experiences that develop the academic, intellectual, creative, technological, and social skills necessary to participate in a diverse, democratic society and to work in a knowledge-based economy; fostering a climate of high expectations for all students supported by programs/services that meet the needs of various learning styles, interests and abilities; adopting curricula that promote inquiry, stimulate curiosity, and instill habits for lifelong learning; and, nurturing open communication and collaboration with the community.

GEOFFREY N. EPSTEIN

Bio: 17-year Newton resident; Parent of Bigelow 7th grader; Physicist, engineer, teacher; President, RGB Software; Ph.D. Physics, post-docs at Oxford, MIT; Past assistant professor of physics, BU. I will bring a stronger math and science perspective to the School Committee to prepare our kids well for the future.

www.geoffepstein.net

Q1 We should respond to short term overcrowding with modulars, but longer term we need an additional school. We could bring online the Carr School and/or the Ed Center facility or explore the possibility of leasing or buying the Aquinas property. Because of the importance of these investments, we need to find ways to improve our projections of student enrollment, on which these decisions depend.

Q2 Ensuring equitable class sizes in a system of neighborhood schools requires that schools have some space for flexible planning. We need to continue to protect our teachers and staff from budget cuts by putting the financing of capital

projects on a sound footing. We should provide parents more flexible choice at the K entry level so they can choose from a number of nearby schools and go with the lowest class size if they wish.

Q3 We invest in programs as well as buildings. We do strategic planning as a matter of course. Our students receive a first rate education especially in math and science and world languages. Each classroom is fully equipped with all of the educational tools necessary for our teachers to be most effective and to adjust instruction for each student to accommodate their individual learning style. Our students graduate having maximized their academic and social potential.

School Committee/ Ward 2

REENIE MURPHY

Candidate for re-election

Bio: I've been a Newtonville resident for 16 years and am a Newton North/Day parent. I hold a BA from Canisius College, MBA from Suffolk University and worked as a financial analyst. Priorities for office include public communication improvements, addressing facilities needs, and commitment to long range financial and strategic planning.

Q1 It's premature to have an exact plan for overcrowding and there are pros and cons for every solution. One of the most important parts of the decision making process is letting the public weigh in - that is scheduled for later this fall. We added modulars last year, but they are expensive. Redistricting is an option, but can be a painful process. Long term we are lucky to have the Carr School already in existence.

Q2 Despite the efforts to alleviate overcrowding and a commitment to keep class sizes low, there will always be cases when a particular grade in a particular school gets caught with less than optimal numbers. These large cohorts need relief in both the short term (extra adult support in the classroom) and the long term (additional classrooms for some portion of the elementary or middle school experience).

Q3 We have a strong administrative team in the NPS and also have sound advice from outside of the system (Blue Ribbon Commission, Gibson Management Study, the upcoming Strategic Planning effort). It is time to start acting on some of the recommendations. Placing a higher value on the maintenance of our building stock, further investments in technology and staff development are necessary if the desired outcome is students who're highly qualified competitors in the global market.

School Committee/Ward 3

KURT KUSIAK

Bio: I am a partner at Sally & Fitch LLP in Boston. Newton Resident for 10 years and father of 2 children now attending Peirce Elementary School. I am running for School Committee because I am committed to improving the Newton Public Schools.

More bio at www.sally-fitch.com/Bio/KurtKusiak.asp

Q1 We need to push forward with plans to (1) renovate the Carr School and make it into an elementary school, and (2) potentially purchase Aquinas College order to have space to use while other elementary schools are being enlarged. Requests for MSBA funds must include requests to add classroom space (beyond the modulars recently acquired) to overcrowded schools. An override, as recommended by the BRC, will probably be necessary to pay for some of the construction.

Q2 Maintaining equality in class sizes clearly depends on (1) where new families move into Newton (which we have no control over), (2) how quickly we can add needed space to the overcrowded elementary schools (see Question #1 above) , and (3) obtaining the necessary funds through an override and new growth to hire new teachers when necessary. Redistricting would be my last choice, especially in the elementary schools, but may end up being necessary.

Q3 I would like to see a school system where we have a consistent budget and the procedures in place to truly live up to NPS's stated goal of seeing ALL students perform to their highest potential,

regardless of their inherent abilities or backgrounds. MCAS achievement should be a floor, not a goal, and we need to have programs in place not only to lift up struggling students but to let gifted students realize their promise.

School Committee/Ward 4

JONATHAN L. YEO

Candidate for re-election

Bio: Elected November 2005. Williams School PTO 1996-2004, PTO Co-President, two years. Co-President Newton PTO Council 2004-2005. B.A., Wesleyan University; MPP, Harvard University. Director Water Supply Protection Massachusetts DCR, responsible for a 170 person unit protecting the Quabbin-Wachusett Reservoir system serving Newton and 2.2 million with high-quality drinking water. Jonathan and wife Gail have two children.

Q1 Several steps are needed: 1) Analyze Fall '07 enrollments, prepare projections, and decide if any necessary interim additions are needed for Fall '08 (i.e. modulars or classroom changes); 2) Work with MSBA to obtain funding for at least one school replacement which might be larger than existing school; 3) complete public process around Facilities Study; 4) convene group to analyze future middle school crunch and options; 5) reopen Carr School and/or buy Aquinas.

Q2 Due to the addition of 18 teachers and lower-than projected enrollment, class sizes in the elementary schools this fall are quite low - 62% at 20 or below and only 3% above 25. It remains good policy to keep a few reserve positions available for late deployment to the most needy situations. Multiple years of very large class sizes should be avoided for an advancing grade level. Redistricting may be necessary in long-term problem areas.

Q3 My vision for the Newton Public Schools is to provide an outstanding public education that prepares its graduates for college, the ever-evolving work world, and to be active citizens. With highly qualified and well-trained teachers and staff, the schools will use the latest curriculum, teaching methods

and technology to reach and challenge every student in the system. Over the long-term all school buildings will be renovated. Newton should remain proud of its schools.

School Committee/Ward 5

SUSAN R. HEYMAN

Candidate for re-election

Bio: I am running for School Committee because I believe that a good education is the most sacred obligation that one generation owes to the next. As a twelve year veteran on the committee and with past experience as a PTO President and City-wide PTO Council President, I have the history, knowledge and skills to grapple with today's issues.

Q1 In the short-term we need to: make internal reconfigurations in buildings where it is possible to gain classroom space and add modulars if needed. Redistricting options must be assessed if they can create stability over time. The long-term solution which will include renovations/additions to buildings and replacement of obsolete buildings must add excess capacity so that we can manage through the inevitable periods of expansion and contraction at all levels.

Q2 Children do not arrive in each school district in neat little groupings of 19-22 per classroom at each grade. We must continuously refine projections to accurately assess and plan for growth. More important, we need space in each school and adequate funding to deploy reserve teachers if needed for unexpected spikes. The steps outlined in the first answer will help us insure equitable class sizes while bringing our buildings up to modern standards.

Q3 We all strive for the basic building blocks of excellent schools: good teachers, small classes, and adequate facilities. This year we are beginning a community-wide strategic planning process which will create a shared vision for the future. In that way, we can move forward in a deliberate way to make the vision a reality. Often we get mired in the problems of the day. This will give us the opportunity to think "big".

School Committee/Ward 6

CLAIRE SOKOLOFF

Candidate for re-election

Bio: I have lived in Newton for over 20 years and have three children who have gone through the Newton Public Schools. I received a B.A. from Brown University and a Ph.D from Yale in Organizational Behavior. I worked for many years as a strategy and creativity consultant. My priority is to help the Newton Public Schools build on its strengths to provide an excellent education for our children.

Q1 The Long Range Facilities sub-committee and the entire School Committee are continuing to work with the City, the School Department, the architects and the public to design a system-wide solution for Newton's current and future educational and space needs. The solution will likely include renovating existing buildings and constructing new ones, with an eye toward current and projected school enrollments.

Q2 The School Committee establishes class size guidelines for our neighborhood schools which the School Department uses to allocate resources as equitably as possible. Equity is comprised of more than simply comparing the number of students across classrooms in a given grade. There are multiple considerations for determining whether a classroom will operate successfully--e.g. who is teaching the class, what are the needs and learning styles of the individual students, as well as the resources available to that classroom. The School Department works hard to ensure that each classroom provides students with a successful education.

Q3 The Superintendent is leading a Vision and Strategic Planning process that taps into the hopes and aspirations of our City's students, parents and educators. This vision will reflect our proud heritage, our enduring strengths and our hopes for the future. The vision will give us a framework for making decisions about priorities for the school system and how we want to allocate resources.

School Committee/Ward 7

MARC C. LAREDO

Candidate for re-election

Bio: Married with three children (two at Newton North and one not yet of school age). Attorney, Laredo & Smith, LLP. Attended Cabot, Bigelow, and Newton North. Graduate of Cornell University and University of Pennsylvania Law School. Running for re-election to maintain and continue to improve our excellent public school system.

Q1 The Long-Term Facilities Study assessed the condition of our schools. This year, the School Committee will use that study to develop a plan for meeting the long-term needs of our school buildings, including needed renovations and, if necessary, construction of new buildings. As part of that process, we will carefully evaluate the size of our student population, both at individual schools and throughout the system.

Q2 There are numerous benefits to having a system of neighborhood elementary schools: community building, children able to walk to school, and relatively small schools. Each year, the superintendent allocates teachers throughout the system to make individual class sizes equitable. Still, even a few new students moving into a neighborhood over the course of a summer can change this delicate balance.

Q3 We have embarked on a long-range planning process that will define where we want to be as a public school system and how to get there. This is an exciting venture that will allow our community to examine what we value most in a public education, what skills we expect our students to have, and what resources will be necessary to achieve these goals.

School Committee/ Ward 8

DORI F. ZALEZNIK

Candidate for re-election

Bio: I seek a fourth and final term to continue advocating for quality education and for long-range planning both for curriculum and our aging facilities. I have two sons at Newton South, am a graduate of Yale College and Harvard Medical School, and am an Infectious Diseases physician and medical editor.

Q1 We have outlined a carefully considered process for selecting an option from the long-range facilities study, including dialogue with the public. We will be choosing a roadmap for planned improvements to all of our facilities, likely to take at least a decade. In the

meantime, we must continue to address short-term needs. The eight modular classrooms this year have improved crowding at most schools. Redistricting is key, but not sufficient, for any long-term solution.

Q2 We can neither ensure equity nor a maximum class size number, which is why we have class size guidelines but some larger classes. We study projections, watch move-ins over the summer, and assign reserve teachers where possible when class sizes rise. We also attempt to reduce class sizes after a cohort of students have larger classes for one year. When enrollments grow over multiple years, we have limited options such as redistricting or adding classrooms.

Q3 I am a strong supporter of the Superintendent's strategic planning effort. This process gives us all (community members and educators) an opportunity to craft a vision for the next 13 years. I expect to add my vision to those of others to choose areas in which Newton can excel, challenge our assumptions, and learn about best practices in this country and internationally so that we can equip all of our students for 2020 and beyond.

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