



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS NEWTON

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Sept. 18, 2014

Hon. Setti D. Warren
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Ave.
Newton, Massachusetts 02459

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Dear Mayor Warren:

The Cochituate and Sudbury Aqueducts running through Newton have for decades been used informally as “linear parks,” off-road trail networks through woods and along parks. They afford residents safe and pleasant passage to work, transit, school and just for cool, sheltered walking, cross-country skiing and jogging.

The MWRA is offering municipalities the opportunity to formally adopt the tops of these vital water supply networks as foot paths. The LWVN urges you to move forward to sign the MWRA permit, so that the city or in a few cases volunteers can legally install signage, create curb cuts at street crossings, and build erosion-controlling box stairs along and over the aqueducts.

Adoption and protection of linear parks and aqueduct trails is already a part of the City’s 2013-19 Recreation & Open Space Plan.* The LWVN in 2006 adopted a Recreation & Open Space position which includes “development of linear open spaces with provision for maintenance.”

Several pedestrian improvements, such as stairs over the Sudbury Aqueduct connecting Stanley Road in Waban with Canterbury Road in Newton Highlands—connecting a neighborhood to the Eliot T stop and school children to their late bus—are on hold awaiting this permit.

Signing the permit will bring the benefits of the trails to more people, and allow those who now only use them in fair weather to do so in more seasons. The LWVN is looking forward to the opening of these trails and the expansion and linking of our vital greenspaces.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Carter
LWVN Steering Committee