

Newton Community Farm
Proposal to Nahanton Park Working Group
Farming and Community Gardening in Nahanton Park lower gardens
12/19/2011

Introduction

NCF proposes to begin implementing the Community Gardening recommendations of the Audubon Society report dated October 2011 by combining farming and community gardening in the marginally used portion of the Lower Gardens of Nahanton Park.

We believe the proposal will be attractive to the City of Newton because it incorporates a low cost, low risk way to demonstrate the feasibility of improving Community Gardening operations along the lines recommended in the Audubon report. If the experiment is successful, Newton will be in a much better position in the future to apply the recommendations to the heavily gardened areas in the Lower Garden and the Upper Garden. Without such a demonstration, it will be extremely difficult to make the recommended operational changes. If they can be implemented, the changes will result in dramatic improvements in the appearance and use of the Community Gardens.

Partnering in the proposed manner will enable NCF to farm additional space, which it would use to improve crop rotation and make more of its produce available to the local community.

Outline Details

Area involved: Area 2 of the lower community gardens (see illustration below)

Term: 5 years, renewable if agreeable

Responsibilities of NCF

Site improvements:

Remove all interior fencing, brush, trees etc.

Contribute up to \$5,000 for fence for rodents, deer, people. Include locking gate.

Prepare entire area for farming and gardening

Stake out ten community garden plots inside the fence

Management: Annual tilling and soil management including soil fertility testing and compost additions

Yearly evaluation: NCF will lead an evaluation of the program at the end of each year of its operation.

Water use: NCF will pay for city water it uses, as measured by a meter.

Responsibilities of City

Advertise plot availability, manage applications and fees, provide fence lock keys to gardeners.

- Improve water supply pressure to lower garden
- Install water spigots inside fence: one for community gardeners, one for NCF
- Dispose of interior fencing, brush, trees etc. removed by NCF
- Remove scrub and trees in corner of Meadow in accordance with Audubon recommendation, which will permit view lines of the fenced area from the road.
- Provide for remainder of fence cost
- Participate in yearly evaluation

Issues to be discussed

Details of fence design to be worked out for cost, appearance and effectiveness.

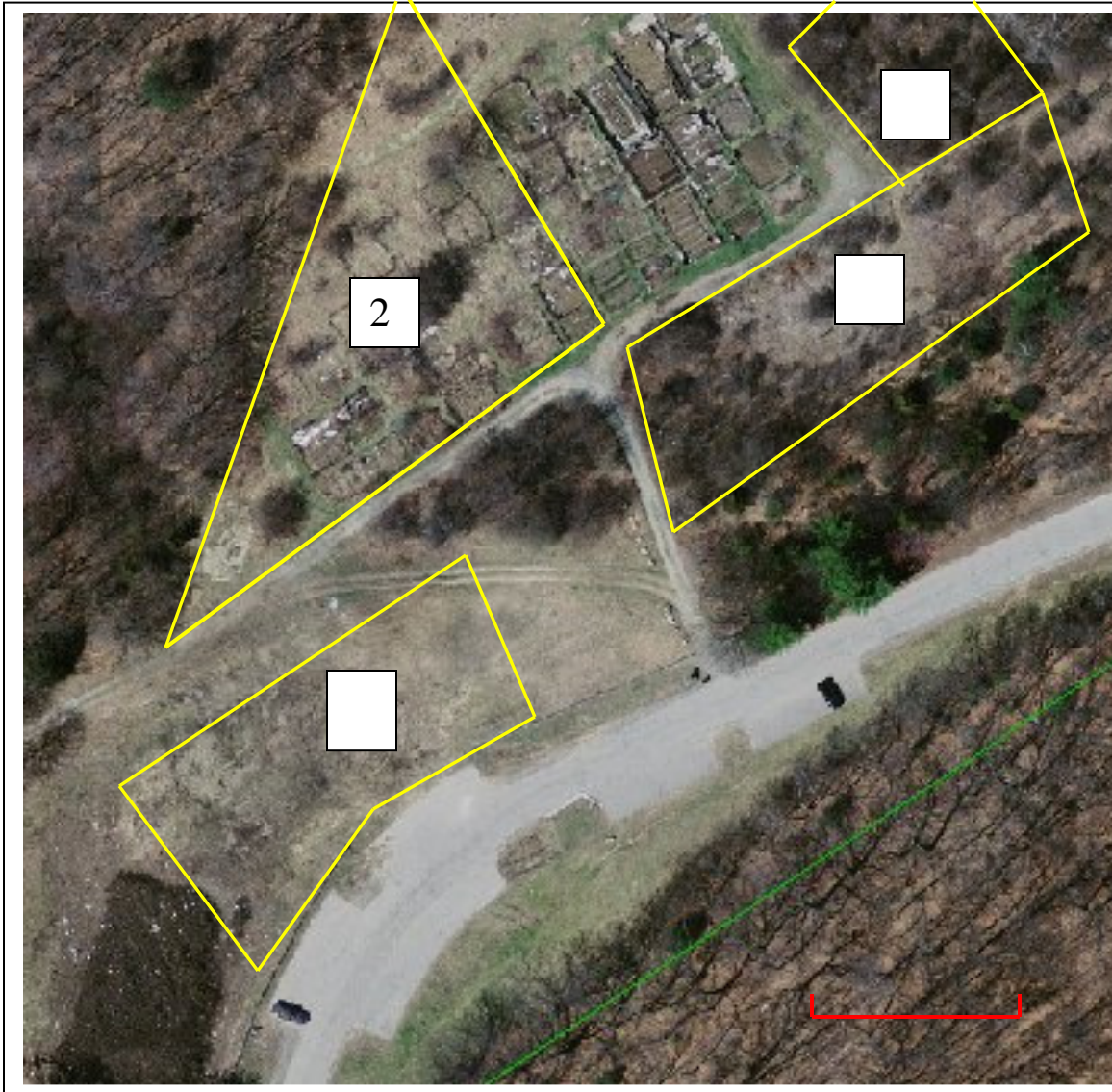
Accommodation of current gardeners within the proposed area. Within the proposed area we have identified two plots that are actively gardened, in which the current gardeners may wish to continue to have the use of their soil. If requested we will relocate as much as 400 sf of soil, to a depth of eight inches, to the community garden plot area within the new fence.

NCF Option to terminate. NCF may terminate the agreement on January 1 of any year of this agreement.

Preliminary proposed rules for the 10 community garden plots

- Community garden rental fees to be determined by the City
- Fixed seasonal dates of opening and closing
- Entire area turned over each year
- No interior fences
- Organic methods
- No permanent structures
- No perennials
- No weeds (neglected plots will be turned over by NCF)
- Gardeners not following rules will not be renewed the following year

NORTH



SOUTH

NAHANTON PARK PROPOSED FARMING AREA

Scale: red line = approx 100'

AREA 2. "MARGINALLY USED COMMUNITY GARDEN AREA"