
Philip Cootey
Community Organizer
22 Phillips Drive
Newburyport MA 01950

7th March 2023

City Council President Heather Shand
City Council
60 Pleasant Street
P.O. Box 550
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dear Council President,

In early December 2011 it was brought to the attention of the public that the Committee on Budget & Finance reviewed Order 311, a gift from the Morrill Foundation that included \$40,000.00 for the development of three pickleball courts in Lower Atkinson Common.

That December a public process was put in place before accepting the gift to inquire of the community their thoughts about pickleball in Lower Atkinson. Despite near unanimous community disapproval the process yielded no material change in the Parks Commissions plans regarding Pickleball on a postage stamp between three youth ball fields.

We read in, ORDR00400 Morrill Foundation Gift Accept that "The City is now considering a Multi-Use Court and asked if the name change was acceptable." We ask the council to intervene immediately and halt any plan to approve pickleball at Lower Atkinson Park because we can do better together.

In the spirit of collaboration, The Friends and Families of Lower Atkinson Community submits our brief, position paper, and petition with 154 signatures to stop cannibalizing our open spaces and find new fields for athletic activities in the city; including pickleball. We'd appreciate the council reading the concerns of their constituents and your guidance as to the appropriate time and place to continue this dialogue.

On behalf of the Friends and Families of Lower Atkinson,

Sincerely,

Philip Cootey

*Council
packet
12/12/22*

Concerned Friends and Families for Atkinson Park

Despite the overwhelming objections to Parks Commission proposals to introduce Pickleball as a primary multi-use court, the Parks Commission is moving forward with the motion for an already overloaded park.

Additional multi-use of the established use of Atkinson Park is not acceptable.

This petition is a statement of support for finding room for more pickleball courts in the City of Newburyport, but not to the detriment of safety and overcrowding at Lower Atkinson

Our positions against this use of Atkinson Park are based on these three points:

- Safety
- Overuse
- Narrowing Field Availability

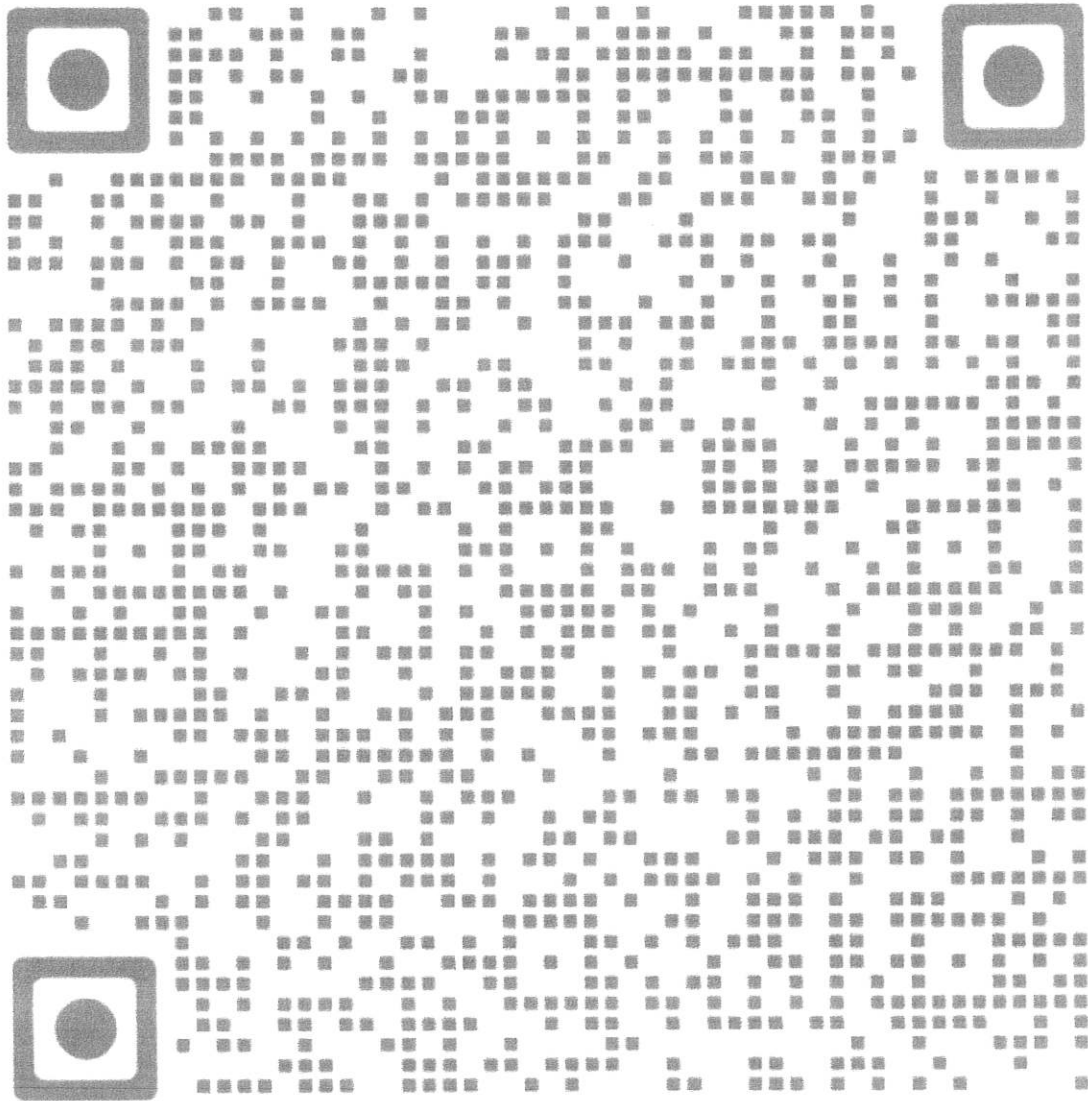
Safety: Atkinson Park is enjoyed by the entire greater Newburyport community. Lower Atkinson, a.k.a Pioneer Park, is predominantly used as a hub of Newburyport youth sports including baseball (Pioneer League, AAU programs), softball, high school softball, basketball, and as a children's playground. There are enough traffic accidents from congestion. Stray fly balls also will be more likely to hit someone. More congestion creates more risk. Do not add another function to the park.

Overuse: The park is already multi-use: Baseball, Softball, Basketball, and a Children's playground. Teams find themselves warming up anywhere they can prior to and between games, with the basketball court becoming a de facto space. Families frequent the courts for viewing of multiple games and for younger siblings to play. Neighbors are already pressed by night games, dense traffic, noise, and foul balls in their yards and personal spaces. There is no room for another use.

Narrowing Field Availability: Newburyport already lacks youth fields for the volume of participation that we have between the 5-12 age groups for baseball and softball. The loss of fields to the Senior Center (2), the dilapidation of fields (Lower Nock) and shared status of other fields has created a capacity crisis for playing baseball and softball. The ball leagues are growing while we are losing fields, it's unimaginable that we would lose more space.

Noise, safety, overuse and competition for space is a problem that all athletics of all age groups struggle within this city. We want to help the pickleball community to find a place to play in our parks as one park community supporting athletics for all age groups but not at the expense of the safety and neighborhood accord at Lower Atkinson.

Please sign below in objection to new utilizations of the park beyond the established use for baseball, basketball, softball, and a children's park.



Petition QR Code

Lower Atkinson Parks Position

Concerned Families for Atkinson Park

Despite the overwhelming objections to Parks Commission proposals to introduce Pickleball as a primary multi-use court use and the continuous and constant protest against these plans by neighbors of and families who use the park, the Parks Commission is moving forward with their proposal. Concerned friends and families of Lower Atkinson have attended multiple commission meetings to no avail. This problem is not getting solved in committee.

This petition from Concerned Families for Atkinson Park is to indicate to the City of Newburyport our position that Pickleball is not an appropriate multi-use of the established use of Atkinson Park. We feel after all the time, donations, effort, materials, labor, of volunteers and with the proximity and love we have for this park that we should have a say in its future. We, the Families and Neighbors of Lower Atkinson Park. are its stewards, and have been for some time, the city will recognize us.

This petition is also a statement of support for finding room for more pickleball courts in the City of Newburyport, but not to the detriment of a place to play for kids.

Our positions against this use of Atkinson Park are based on these three points:

- Safety
- Overuse
- Narrowing Field Availability

Safety: Atkinson Park is enjoyed by the entire greater Newburyport community. Lower Atkinson, a.k.a Pioneer Park, sees predominant use as a hub of Newburyport youth sports including baseball (Pioneer League, AAU programs), softball, high school softball, basketball, and as a children's playground. There are enough issues with congestion. Do not add another function to the park.

- 24 Traffic Related Incidents over the past three years including six car crashes
- The park's condensed layout lends to risk of injury by fly balls leaving the field of play into common areas.
 - The basketball court is within 140 ft of home plate from Hawkes field, a home run is 200 ft.
 - It's 215 ft from home plate to the promenade, a home run is 200ft.
 - The promenade leading to the court is within 25 ft of home plate for Founders Field
- Adding more people to the already dense population of usage increases the risk of severe injuries
- There are many children in Lower Atkinson. All coaches for organized sports in this park are CORI'd

Overuse: The park is already multi-use: Baseball, Softball, Basketball, and a Children's playground. Teams find themselves warming up anywhere they can prior to and between games, with the basketball court becoming a de facto space. Families frequent the courts for viewing of multiple games and for younger siblings to play.

The entire complex sits on 239,368.69 sq ft. There are enough usages of this park as is.

- The Park is in the lowest of averages for square feet per ballfield **in the county**. There is no room for another use by any recognized field standard
- Based on Parks Dept proposal, new drawing's show loss of on-street parking along Merrimack St. The park is losing a net 7 spots resulting in closer proximity parking.
- The Pioneer League has enjoyed 20% increase in participation in recent years across all age divisions for both baseball and softball leagues
 - 270 Total Games and 670 members, games in May, June, and July resulting in *14k people in the park every week* just for baseball alone
 - Adding another sport to the park is the opposite direction of where the current growth projections indicate the need is for Lower Atkinson
- Neighbors are already generously engaged with youth athletics to mitigate noise including limiting hours operating the field lights for years. It is a delicate balance where the current "off hours" are essential in maintaining that balance.

Narrowing Field Availability: Newburyport already lacks youth fields for the volume of participation that we have between the 5-12 age groups for baseball and softball. The loss of fields to the Senior Center (2), the dilapidation of fields (Lower Nock) and shared status of other fields has created a capacity crisis for playing baseball and softball. The ball leagues are growing while we are losing fields, it's unimaginable that we would lose more space.

The creation of a multi-use court focused on Pickleball will make conditions worse. There is already no room to put everyone who wants to play, never mind practice.

- Eaton field is not an option for this league (wrong dimensions).
- There is only one junior-youth mound and one mid-youth mound in the entire city for all the teams from 5 to 12 years old.
- The Woodmen park field is restricted to T-Ball as the field is shared with Soccer. It is too dangerous to share with older baseball teams without expanding field space, backstops and fences.
- Coaches are practicing in parking lots, paying out of pocket for tunnel time, holding practices in their backyards. There is nowhere to practice.


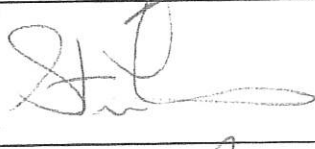
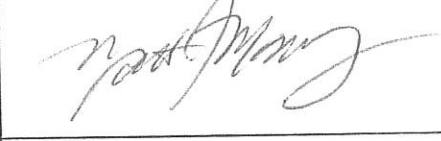
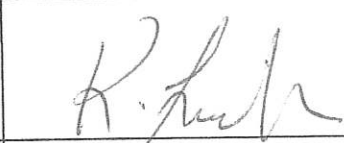

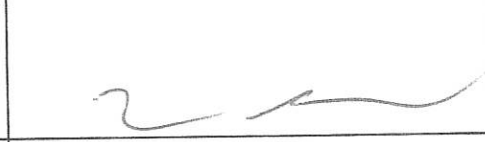
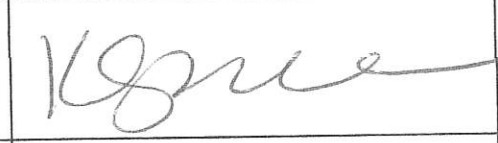
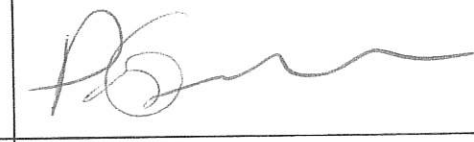
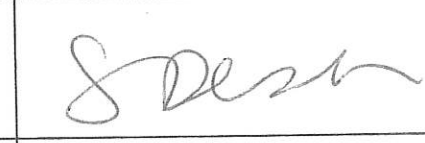
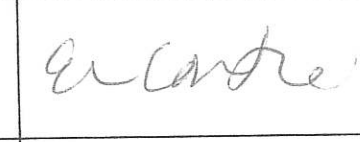
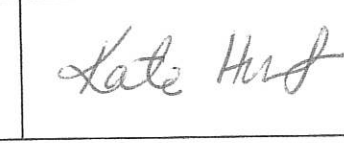
Conclusion

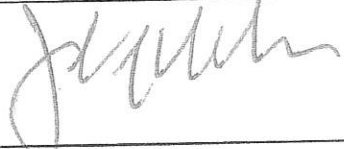




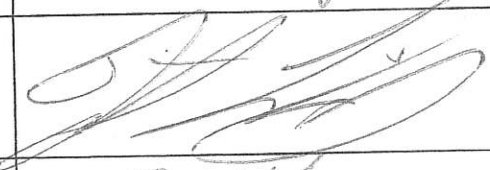


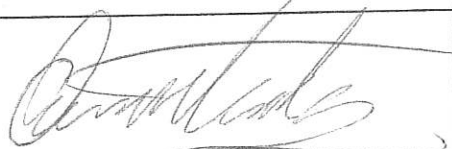
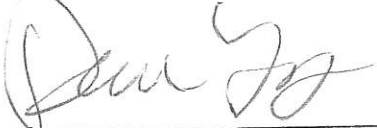
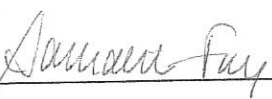
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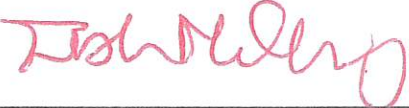

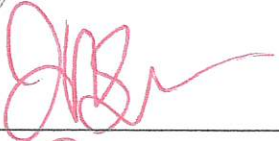

While appreciative of the generosity of the Morrill Charitable Foundation, the park is too small, overcrowded, and dangerous for another additional sport. There is no room when we expect weekly traffic to grow by the thousands.

We protest any further development of pickleball in Lower Atkinson in the face of dissent from the community connected to Lower Atkinson Park. We find no validity in the public process as our participation has had no effect on the outcome, despite a majority of those involved against.

Emily Webber 4 DeLoSt. Newburyport, MA	Emily Webber
Sandy Gray 14 Leeth St., Nbpt, MA	Sandy G
Jaime Fisher 17 Laramie Ln. Nbpt. MA	Ji
Andrew Cowles 9 Bounheav Ter Nbpt MA	ac
Brian Roach 41 Knights Ln Newburyport MA 0	BR
JEFFREY MATTHESON 13 HART RD Newburyport MA	JM
Danielle Murphy 2 Richardson path	Dan
Nieve Morrissey 22 Milk Street, Newburyport MA	nieve
Kristen Morrissey 22 Milk St NBPT 01950	K. Morrissey
SARAH TODD 13 Virginia Lane, Nbpt	Sarah Todd
Emily Sheehan 1 Rawson Hill Rd. Nbpt MA 01950	Emily Sheehan




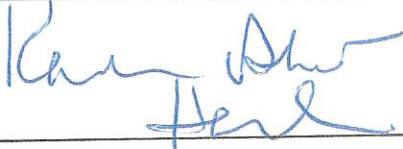

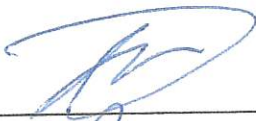
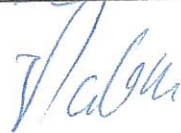
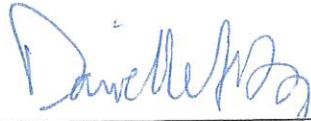

<p>Tim DeGaves Tim@Swinirep.com 12 Moulton # Newburyport, MA</p>	
<p>Steven Linters 21 Cushing Ave NBPT, MA 01450</p>	
<p>Matt Morrissey 23 Milk St Newburyport, MA 01952</p>	
<p>Kric Lisauskas 15 Cuffgette St Nbpt-Ma 01950</p>	
<p>Jackie Savintra 30 Chestnut St Newburyport Ma 01950</p>	
<p>Ping Johnson 2 Arthur Welton Newburyport, MA 01980</p>	
<p>Kelly Garbarino 34 Storeybrook Dr NBPT</p>	
<p>Payton Garbarino 34 Storeybrook Dr NBPT</p>	
<p>Shanna Desch 3 Knight Lane NBPT</p>	
<p>Erin Contrino 10 Forrester</p>	
<p>Kate Hurley 2 William Hall Drive</p>	

JOHN WEBBER 4 DREW ST. NBPT.	
CHARLES HAASER 8 FOX ROW DR., NBPT	
Sean Hayden 4 WILLIAMSON AVE	
Matt Muzera 1 RAILROAD ST NBPT	
Sheena Muzera 1 RAILROAD ST NBPT	
Justin Lindenmayer 16 PLUMMER AVE NBPT	
Joseph Hill 538 SPILLER ST	
Sonia Linton's 21 CUSHING AVE. NEWBURYPORT, MA 01950	
Owen Cooley 22 PHILLIPS DR. NEWBURYPORT MA 01950	
Dew Jay 5 WASHINGTON ST NEWBURYPORT MA 01950	
Samantha Fay 5 WASHINGTON ST. NEWBURYPORT MA 01950	

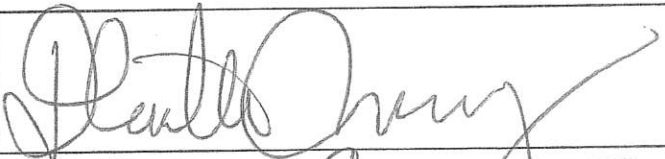

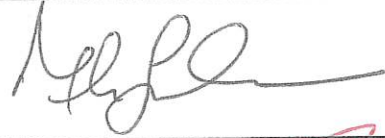
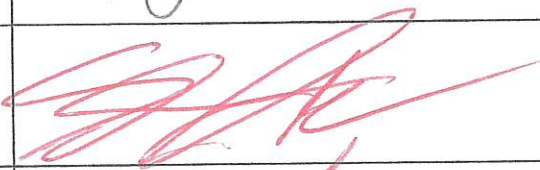
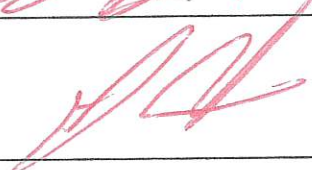

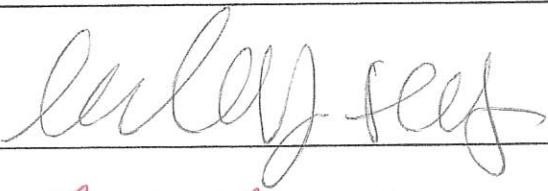

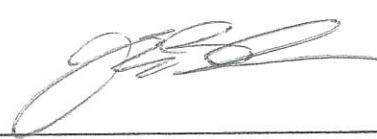
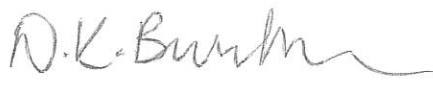

<p>Frank Weishaart 293 High St Newburyport, MA</p>	
<p>Melissa O'Brien 5 Walnut Street NBPT MA 01950</p>	<p>M O'Brien</p>
<p>Tom Murdy 9-1/2 Harrison St.</p>	
<p>Tish Malloy 18 Market Square #1 Newburyport MA 01950</p>	
<p>Jemson Smith 18 Mkt Sq #1 NBPT MA 01950</p>	
<p>JOANNE BLASER 1 TYNG ST NBPT 01950</p>	
<p>Andy Mastrot 3 PAULTON St. NBPT 01950</p>	

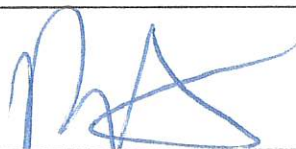
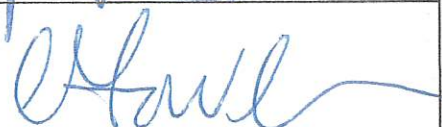


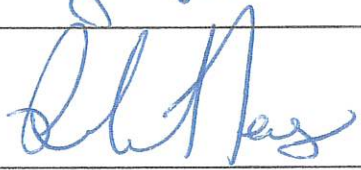

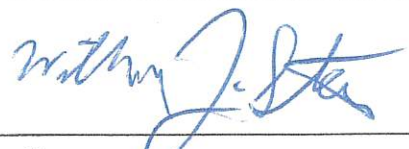
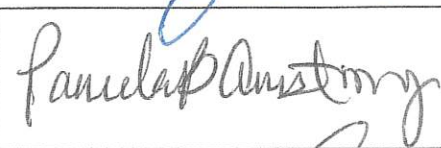
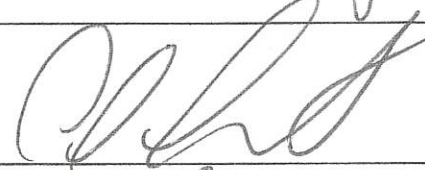
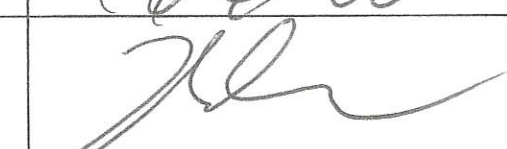

Janice Mockley	Christie Dr. Newburyport, MA
Ray Arcand	8 Parker Street, NBPT
Kris Arcand	8 Parker Street, NBPT
Ed Nystrom	35 Pine Hill Rd NBPT
Catherine Campbell	16 Bradbury Ln NBPT
Wayne Campbell	16 Bradbury Ln NBPT
Alison Salerno	4 Elizabeth Ln. Salisbury, MA 01952
E Schmitt	16 STOREY BROOKE NBPT
Em Schmitt	16 Storeybrooke Dr. Newburyport, MA 01950
John	55 MILK ST NEWBURYPORT, MA
Lisa Wersha	293 High St




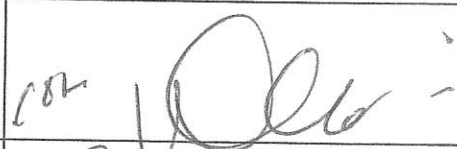

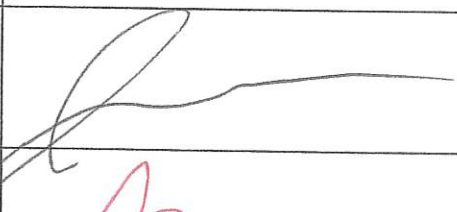
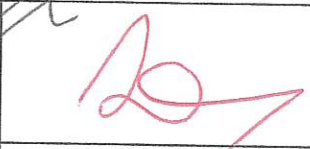

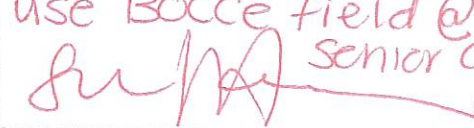
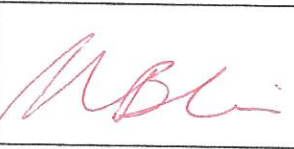
nextdoor.com
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Matt Fumeo 4 Carleton Dr. NBPT, ma 01905	
Brian Keefer 16 Duffg Dr. Newburyport	
Mara Lacava 19 Lavalley Lane Nbpt	Ma 2
MATT LACAVA 19 LAVALLEY LANE NBPT	
Karen Damon Hamel 490B Merrimac St. NBPT.	
Kateryn Fumeo 4 Carleton NBPT	
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PAUL HASS 1 PLANT ST NBPT PAULH18@GMAIL.COM	
DANIELLE HASS 1 PLANT ST NBPT DHASS17@GMAIL.COM	
D Tynny R.	
Morgan Boselli 33 Turkey Hill Rd	MBoselli

Christie Beapalant	11 Fawcett St. Newburyport 01950
Courtney Metcalfe	12 Hines Way Newburyport MA
Ed Hill	28 Winter St Newburyport MA
Carol Hill	6 Woodman Way unit 217 Newburyport, ma.
Dianne Eiserman	13 Elizabeth Lane Newburyport, ma. 01950
AMSSA SINDO	2 LANCASTER RD Newburyport ma
TOD RUBEN	16 HOPE AVE Newburyport MA
Sandy Wood	23 Scotland Hts. Newbury, MA 01951
Mark Doyle + LISA Doyle	20 Keeler Way NBPT MA - 01950
Brian Murphy & Danielle Murphy Murphy43@gmail.com	7 Richardson path NBPT
JOE MOAKLEY	5A Christie Dr NBPT

Danielle murphy 7 Richardson path	
Katie Routhier 8 Monn Road	
Michael Lukacs 3 Frost St.	
Stephen Mills 4 Lavelley Ln	
Jan Hahnmeister 8 Cushing Ave	
Steph Mills 4 Lavelley Ln	
Emily Fay 5 Washington St	
Tom O'Dowd 25 OLIVE ST.	
James Burnham 20 Moseley Ave Newburyport, MA 01950	
Dorothy Burnham 20 Moseley Ave NBPT	
Danielle Thalman 2 Henderson Circle	

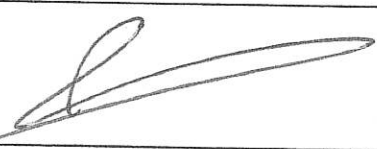
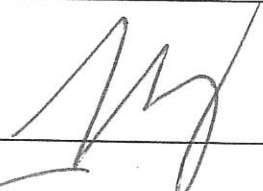

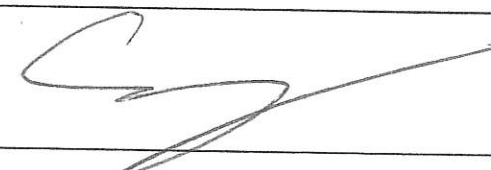


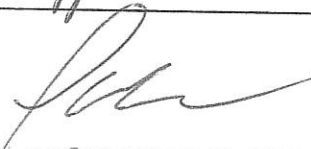
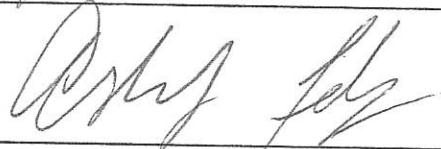


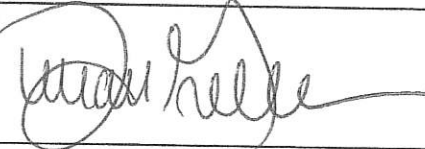
Pete Robbins 15 Summit Pl.	
Christine Fowler 5A Garrison Circle Newburyport MA 01950	
Karina Moltz 15 Summit Pl.	
Jen Groskin + DANIEL SORLING 11 MYRTLE AVE	
ROBERT FAGAN 110 STATE ST. 01950	
Katharine Pentling 11 Barker St.	
WILLIAM STARE 38 CHARLES ST.	
Pamela Armstrong 5 Buck St.	
Adam Armstrong 5 Buck St.	
Martin Desch 3 Knights Ln	
John Rumers 11 Chain Bridge Dr.	

Jessica Rumore rumore.jessica2417@gmail.com	no Rumor
Carolyn Genegeben Cgenegeben@gmail.com	
Nathan Saddler nathan.saddler@yahoo.com	
Steven Genegeben SDG135@ALUMNI.PSU.EDU	
Anna Malenchini MIKE BOLTON amalenchini@gmail.com	
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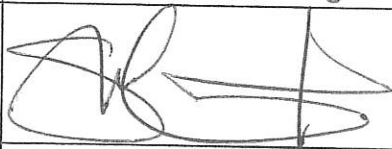

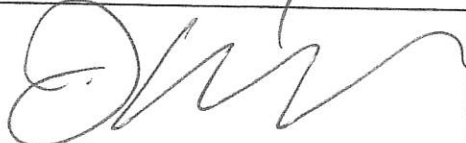
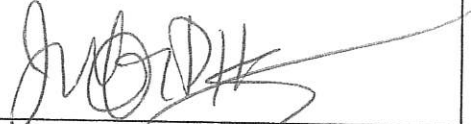
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erin continue 10 Forrester Street	erin continue
Corey continue 10 Forrester Street	Corey continue
150 Broad St Newburyport x	
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Hent Street ?

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