



CITY OF NEWBURYPORT
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
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February 11, 2021

To: Newburyport Community Preservation Committee

Re: 2021 CPC Grant Application of the Newburyport Preservation Trust

Dear Chairman Dissette and Community Preservation Committee Members,

The Newburyport Historical Commission (NHC) strongly supports the project and related CPC grant application of the Newburyport Preservation Trust to create and install two interpretive signs in the Garrison Gardens section of Atwood Park.

Since the proposed signs would be located directly across from the 18th century house which is the birthplace of William Lloyd Garrison, we believe that they will perform a valuable service by educating the public about this man, Newburyport's most notable native son, and the historic context into which he entered life and developed his talents and personality. Although the home is in private hands, we consider it a valuable historic resource for our city, and worthy of the attention which the new signs would provide. They will provide, for both the citizens of Newburyport and our many visitors, a better sense of Garrison's enormous accomplishments as an abolitionist and suffragist, a man who persisted in his pursuit of social justice regardless of the unpopularity of these views at the time and the personal dangers he faced as a result.

We also believe that it is important to show that modest houses like 3-5 School Street are important to conserve, as they remind us that not all our historic structures were grand mansions; many were humble dwellings from which people can, and did, go on to accomplish great things. We need these modest historical homes to complement the grander homes of the wealthy; they are vital to providing a more complete picture of our shared past.

We believe this project is consistent with key goals of the city's Master Plan and the purposes of the Community Preservation Act. This is an opportunity to enhance our understanding of the past by connecting a physical structure and locale with a person: a real person of humble beginnings who went on to play such an important role in our national history.

The NHC enthusiastically supports this project and we hope the CPC will be able to support it as well.

Sincerely,

Glenn Richards, Chair
Newburyport Historical Commission