



Jillian Wilson-Martin <jwmartin@natickma.org>

 **Where have all the flowers gone?** 

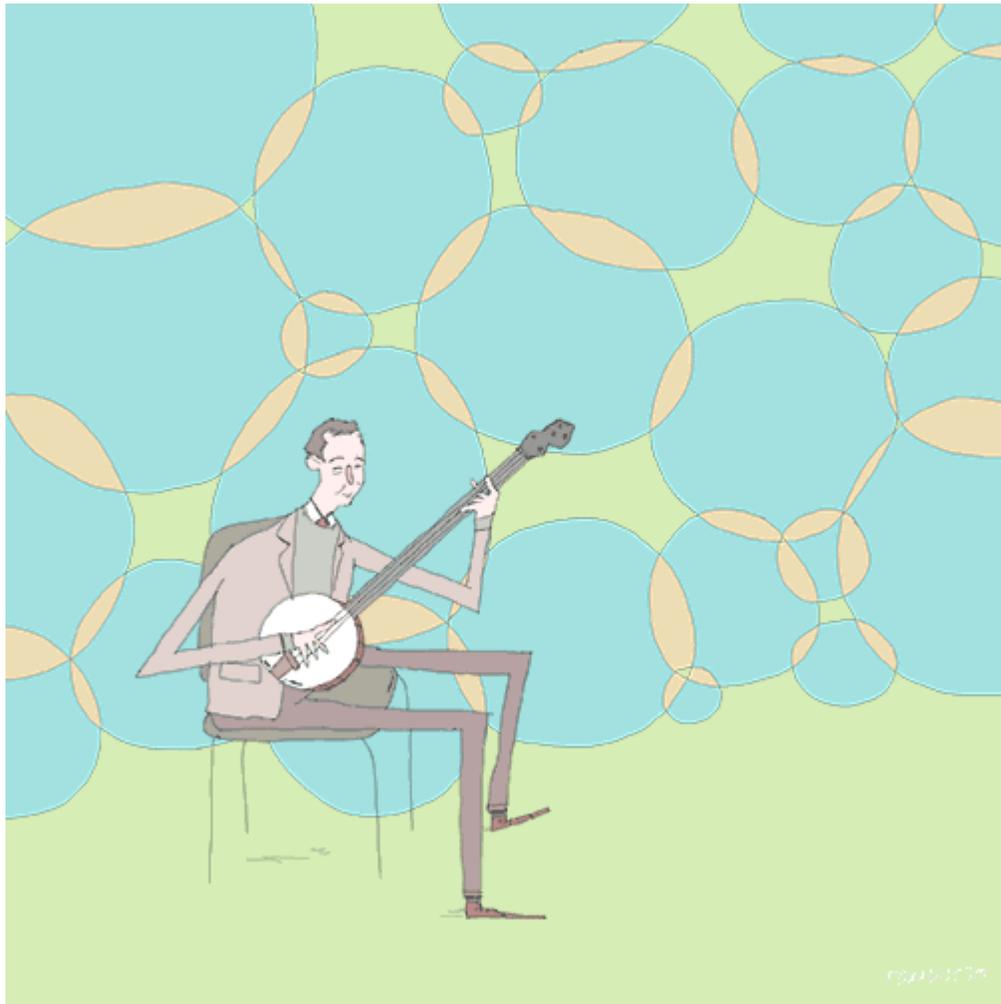
1 message

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To: jwmartin@natickma.org

Tue, Nov 5, 2019 at 9:59 AM



When will we ever learn?



I'm kind of a sucker for folk songs, and one of my favorites is "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" by Pete Seeger. (I like the [Peter, Paul and Mary version](#) best.)

It's a beautiful song, and it makes a great lullaby (I'll sing anything to get my two-year old to sleep). But it's the song's message - that everything ends where it began - that I've been drawn to lately.

As you might expect, I've started to think about this song in the context of climate change. Increasingly, experts agree that the best way to protect ourselves against climate impacts (flooding, extreme storms, drought, heat waves) is to restore the services nature provides - to bring back the flowers! These '[nature-based solutions](#)' can range from [preserving wetlands along the Charles River to provide flood protection](#) to [planting trees to sequester carbon and provide public cooling](#) to [using porous pavement in parking lots to reduce runoff and recharge underground aquifers](#).

Here in Natick, we are in the early stages of adopting nature-based solutions, and are working to build the capacity of municipal staff and volunteers on this

subject. If you are an elected official (Town Meeting Member, Committee/Board member, or want to be one), you have an important role to play and I encourage you to consider attending this [free training on climate resiliency](#) and nature-based solutions. On the staff side, we are also attending trainings, and are beginning a project with the Charles River Watershed that focuses on [incorporating green infrastructure into roadway improvement projects](#).

To me, it feels like a sea change in how the public sector values and incorporates nature-based solutions is underfoot, and I'm excited Natick is an active participant in this journey. To learn more about what we're up to, including a specific opportunity to incorporate nature-based solutions into the South Natick Dam rehabilitation project, please keep reading. :)

Sustainably yours,

[Jillian Wilson Martin](#), your local Sustainability Coordinator

Happy Compost-iversary!



Happy paper anniversary!

November marks the one-year anniversary of Natick's transition to private

curbside composting - and what a year it has been! Nearly 70% of the original pilot composters continued the program, which has grown from 500 households to 800 strong. We also launched a new drop-off compost location at the DPW, and began selling discounted backyard compost bins.

We are excited to continue this momentum and [invite you attend Natick Neighbors Compost's first social gathering](#) on Tuesday, November 12 at 7pm at the Morse Institute Library. Justin Sandler, a founding owner of Black Earth Compost, will be leading a short talk on his vision for curbside composting, and you can learn more what happens to your leftovers. They will also have a table of activities for children and light refreshments for everyone. [Please RSVP here](#). All (composters and non) are welcome!

**Remember, most of Black Earth Compost's customers signed up for a year-long subscription that renews automatically. If you joined last November, you will be automatically billed for a new year soon.*

Another Dam Meeting



The South Natick Dam is considered to have a High Hazard potential by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation Office of Dam Safety (DCR-ODS), based on the probability of property damage or potential loss of life in the event of dam failure or misoperation. Biennial inspections have consistently noted the condition of the dam and spillway as “Fair”, and rehabilitating the dam was identified a priority action on the Town's 2010 Hazard Mitigation Plan and [2018 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update](#).

Unfortunately, the [DCR-ODS is requiring the Town to remove the trees on top of the earthen embankment](#) (known as Grove Park), which are compromising the integrity of the dam. The mature trees and root system are at risk of failing during intense storms and high winds, which would cause major damage to the dam and threaten downstream properties.

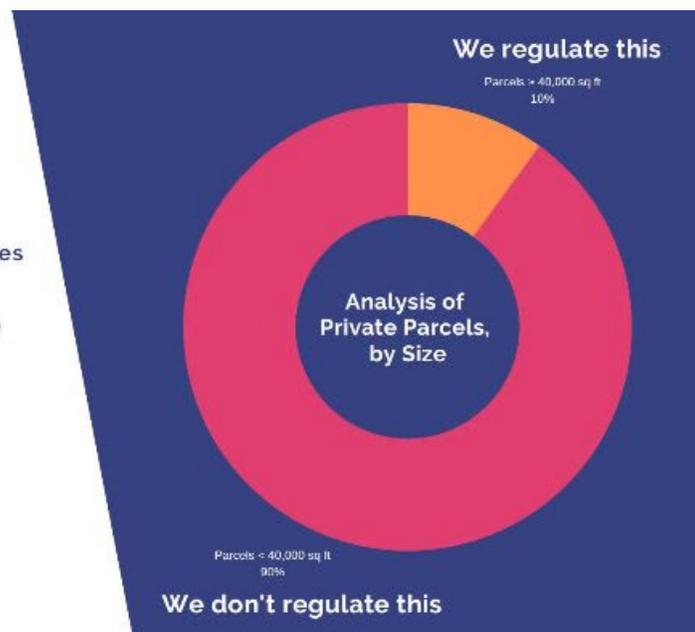
However, construction at the South Natick Dam presents a unique opportunity to advance other climate resilience priorities. This November Natick will be applying for [MVP funding](#) to design a climate resilient park network that includes adjacent parcels and delivers flood protection, improves water quality, provides onsite stormwater capture, removes invasive species, and creates new and improved opportunities for recreation. If the funds are awarded, we would seek public input at multiple stages in the design process.

Want to learn more? Join the Conservation Commission at a public forum on the subject next Wednesday, November 13 at 7pm at the Community Senior Center.

Article 19 Update

We can do better.

90% of Natick's private properties are not subject to stormwater regulations, as defined in Article 79a of the Natick Town By-laws.



Article 19, which focuses on protecting Natick's water bodies from polluted stormwater runoff passed with a majority vote at Fall Town Meeting. Yay!

To learn more, check out the [slides that were presented at Town Meeting](#) or read the [full version of the motion here](#). The gist is that Town Meeting voted to establish new permit thresholds that are in line with the level of construction and development in Natick. The new Bylaw is scheduled to go into effect in the

spring (pending review by the Attorney General's Office), as will the regulations the Conservation Commission develops to implement it.

One hundred thank yous to the many volunteers and town staff who helped make this possible, especially Susan Assunta Simone Kang (Planning Board), Alfredo Vargas (Sustainability Committee) and Matthew Gardner (Conservation Commission). You're the best!

Update from School Recycling Coordinator

Volunteers Needed



Natick's new School Recycling Coordinator, Jane Ellen Newman, is a busy lady. Since starting in September, she has visited eight of the nine Natick Public Schools (including the preschool!), taken stock of recycling practices and observed behaviors in the cafeteria.

Her next step is to complete one day cafeteria waste sorts at select schools, in which students sort their waste into several categories: food for compost, food for donation, liquid, single stream recycling, and trash. The intent is to identify opportunities for pilot programs and to test hypotheses about different lunch

service models.

Volunteers are needed to make these sorts possible and we looking for individuals with availability on one or more of the following days to help:

- Nov 19 @ Ben-Hem
- Nov 20 @ Natick High
- Dec 3 @ Johnson
- TBD @ Wilson

Volunteers would be asked to help direct students to place their waste in the appropriate container, and we would love to partner with you to make these sorts successful. Please email Jane Ellen at jenewman@natickps.org to sign up!

What's Next with Net Zero?

The Sustainability Committee is hard at work on Natick's Net Zero Action Plan, which focuses on eliminating community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050.

How's it going? We are in the process of completing our first community-wide GHG inventory, and expect to share that with you in early 2020.

In the meantime, this November, members of the Committee will be voting on the creation of a more energy efficient and climate-smart [2021 International Energy Conservation Code](#). Creating energy efficiency compliance options within state building and energy codes is one of the most effective ways to make progress toward Net Zero.



Follow the journey at
mapc.org/net-zero/



#netzeronatick



A collaboration between
Town of Natick and MAPC



Join us!

We are looking for volunteers to help coordinate the annual Earth Day festival (scheduled for April 26, 2020). Day of support is especially welcome. Please email me at jwmartin@natickma.org if you are interested.

Everyone is welcome to attend the Sustainability Committee's monthly meeting. Pending the end of Town Meeting, we are scheduled to meet on 11/19 at the DPW at 7:30pm. Please contact the Chair, Leo Ryan, if you would like to request time on the agenda via email at lryannaticksustain@gmail.com.

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