

STEWARDSHIP PLAN (*DRAFT*)



**The William Wellington Historic Farm
National Register Historic Property (WLT.336)
735-775 Trapelo Road**

**Waltham Historical Commission
March 2016**



City of Waltham
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Waltham, MA 02452

*Report Authored by Historical Commissioner
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Waltham Historical Commission

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Entryway to The Historic William Wellington Farm

Summary

The William Wellington Historic Farm (WLT.336) is a signature 6.2-acre historic property owned by the City of Waltham. A National Register Historic Property, the house was constructed around 1779 by prominent Waltham citizen and civic leader William Wellington, the house is one of the finest examples of Georgian architecture in the Metropolitan Boston area. Part of the Waverly Oaks - Beaver Brook Preservation District (WLT. AW) and farmed continuously from 1718 until the 1970s, the Wellington fields, when combined with the house, are among the most exceptional remaining examples of rural life in historic eastern Massachusetts.

The Stewardship and Long-Term Use Plan puts forward a 5-year maintenance plan for the property while providing a vision for use that will ensure that this property is made available for the enjoyment of the citizens and city whose continuous support ensured its preservation. This

document is intended to guide future use within the context of reasonable interpretation. Those elements which are binding, are clearly so, while those which are not may require moderate re-visitation by the Waltham Historical Commission and Waltham Recreation Board.

Specifically, this document envisions a fully restored Wellington Farm including a house under passive, continuous use for small community events, educational tours, rentals, oral history, and archive space, adjoining a farmscape brings back the walking trails, orchards, fields, natural species, and related agricultural attributes of the farm in a manner that is relatively easy to maintain with limited financial commitment.

Taken in total, the spirit of this document is to ensure that the restoration of house guides the final steps toward restoring an historic farm landscape that dates to the founding days of the American Republic.

Methodology—Envisioning Wellington Farm in Five Years

The Stewardship and Long-Term Use Plan was developed with the intent of unifying the Wellington House and Fields to re-create a historic farm that reflects and honors Waltham's past while contributing to the community of the present and future. Most importantly, planning was based on the Historical Commission's stated commitment to ensure that the property is open to the public as a resource for community use.

In the course of developing the plan, the Waltham Historical Commission corresponded with nearly a dozen historical commissions in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts regarding their use of similar properties. The grounds were surveyed, and portions were cleared and tested for various use considerations. Factors that previous-

ly contributed to damaging the site were studied in order to ensure that recommended future use does not repeat past mistakes. Deed restrictions and relevant historic preservation requirements were reviewed for compliance. Community input was gathered regarding the use of the fields and lands. National studies on visitation to, and use of historic properties were consulted. Options were reviewed with an architect who specializes in historic preservation.

The result is a plan that should guide the spirit of future use on the property and affirm the City of Waltham's ongoing commitment to continue transform the Wellington Farm a vibrant community asset.

Stewardship—Overall Approach

This plan envisions a five-year plan with recommended practices for maintenance and stewardship of an important historic asset to the City of Waltham. A plan is useful for setting forth some parameters, but ultimately sensible use, maintenance, and best practices cannot be fully set forth in a document. They require the ongoing interpretation of the boards and commissions, clear communication with the city employees who provide daily care for the properties and lands in question, and oftentimes, basic common sense. This document puts in place the broad, guiding parameters for Wellington Farm, and highlights some of the most critical maintenance and stewardship issues that should be kept in mind as those parameters are put in place.



The William Wellington House Prior to Restoration

1.0 Background

1.1 Property History

Prior to acquisition by the City of Waltham, the William Wellington House was most recently occupied by the superintendent of the Middlesex County Hospital, a one-time sanitarium, which closed in 2001. Long-abandoned by the hospital, the building had suffered extensive damage caused largely by neglect. Similarly, the surrounding grounds, which contained active farms and orchards from the 18th century into the 1970s, were left fallow and ultimately forested by invasive plants and species. The elegant combination of historic Georgian architecture and surrounding agricultural landscape were, at the time of acquisition, nearly impossible to discern.

The City of Waltham aggressively pursued acquisition and preservation of the house and lands, winning a suit against an interim purchaser, who threatened to develop the land and demolish the house. In return for a purchase price of \$11, the City of Waltham was awarded the lands and house as a concession, along with a \$100,000 award, which was put toward restoration of the house. In addition, a perpetual easement, allowing the city to landscape the abutting grounds, was put in place, thereby eliminating the risk for encroachment on the property.

Since 2007, the City of Waltham has undertaken an extensive restoration of the house in successive phases. Substantial financial support, expertise, and labor were contributed by the Community Preservation Commission, a Massachusetts Preservation Project Grantaward from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, dedicated city employees, and outside consultants and experts. Original historic items belonging to the Wellington-Castner families were graciously donated by descendants

of the family. Long-term preservation restrictions were put in place, affirming the city's commitment to restoration and preservation of the property.

The restoration of Wellington House, begun in 2007, is slated for completion in 2016. The plan for managed restoration of the surrounding fields is set forth as part of this document.

1.2 Jurisdiction

Wellington House, a .553-acre lot, is located at 735 Trapelo Road, and is the central historic core of the property, consisting of the house and surrounding grounds. It is under the jurisdiction of the Waltham Historical Commission, a board by charter of the City of Waltham.

Wellington Fields, a 5.65-acre lot bounded by the Lexington town line (North), Woburn Street (East), and Trapelo Road (South) is the last remaining historic farmland associated with Wellington Farm. It is under the jurisdiction of the Waltham Recreation Board, a board by charter of the City of Waltham.

1.3 Restrictions and Standards

The William Wellington House parcel is under a perpetual deed restriction, entered into agreement with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts by and through the Massachusetts Historical Commission on November 27, 2007 [see appendix entitled Preservation Restriction Agreement between the Commonwealth of Massachusetts by and through the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the City of Waltham]. These restrictions are binding and enforceable, and set forth obligations for long-

term preservation and clear terms for distinguishing general maintenance from substantial historic renovation. In addition this parcel is zoned Conservation/Recreation (CR).

The 5.65 acre undeveloped parcel to the east and northeast is zoned Conservation/Recreation (CR). This parcel is currently under care and control of the Recreation Board of the City of Waltham.

Use of the abutting lands to the north and northwest of the house, currently owned in part by Wellington Crossing, is deeded a perpetual conservation restriction area, prohibiting development, and allowing the City of Waltham certain rights to maintain the landscape in a manner that contributes to the integrity of the historic parcel. The entire conservation restriction area totals approximately 10 acres.

2.0 Wellington House, Use Plan

2.1 Summary

Massachusetts, and the City of Waltham in particular, possesses a unique dedication to historic preservation. Despite this fact, visits to historic properties nationwide have declined substantially in recent decades, as has financial support for major projects. Since 1982, visits to historic sites have declined 13%, with no signs of rebounding. Following conversations with communities who possess similar properties across the Commonwealth, the long-term use and maintenance plan provided below envisions mixed-use of the historic parcel, taking into account the need to create a unique space that draws continued use by the community for generations to come.

The central historic use of the ground floor of the house will be for educational tours and/or dedicated to recording the oral histories of Waltham's citizens; a place for people to visit with family and record a conversation about their lives here. Fully disability accessible, the ground floor will also provide an occasional office and meeting-place for the Waltham Historical Commission. Containing two additional parlor rooms, including an original grand piano belonging to the Wellington-Castner families, the floor will be made available as a community meeting-place upon

request, and for occasional functions. The kitchen and disability accessible restroom will be made available for supporting outdoor, tented functions on the historic grounds. The walls and spaces of the ground floor will be furnished with original photographs, maps, plans, and furniture from the Wellington-Castner families, and can be used as an occasional exhibit and small lecture space for the Waltham Historical Society or other groups.

The grounds will be made available for small function rentals, and will serve as an affordable alternative to Stonehurst, the Robert Treat Paine Estate, for residents of Waltham.

The second floor of the house will be maintained in low-use. The historic core will be used to properly store and archive historic materials in the possession of the Waltham Historical Commission. The northern-ell of the second floor, which is a later addition to the property, will be used to store items related to the building's public use.

2.2 The Castner Oral History Room

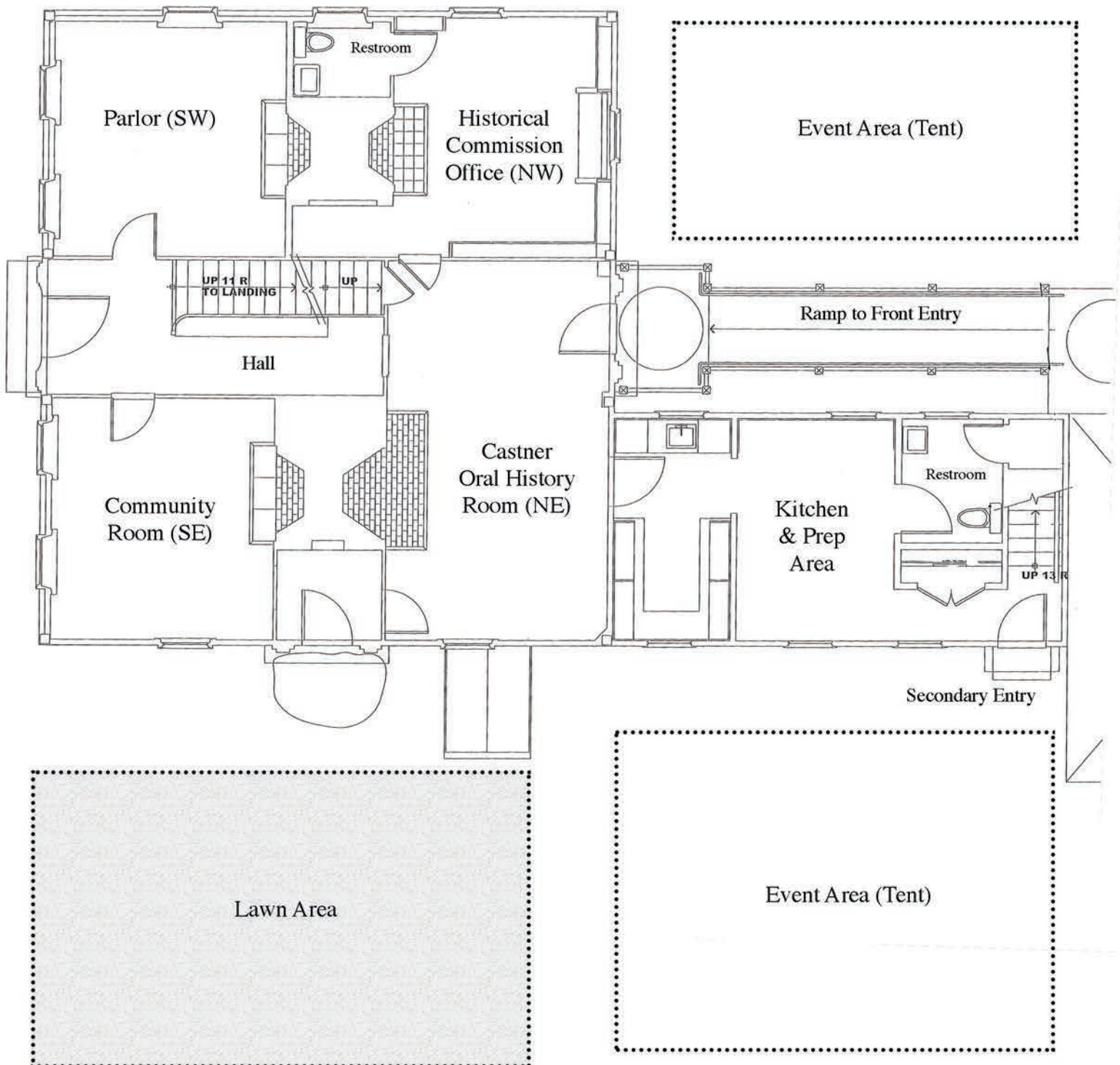
The unwritten history of Waltham is vibrant and also fragile, slipping into the past continuously without being recorded. The Castner Oral History Room will be dedicated to providing a space for current and former residents of Waltham to record

William Wellington House

First Floor Plan

Waltham Historical Commission

March 2016

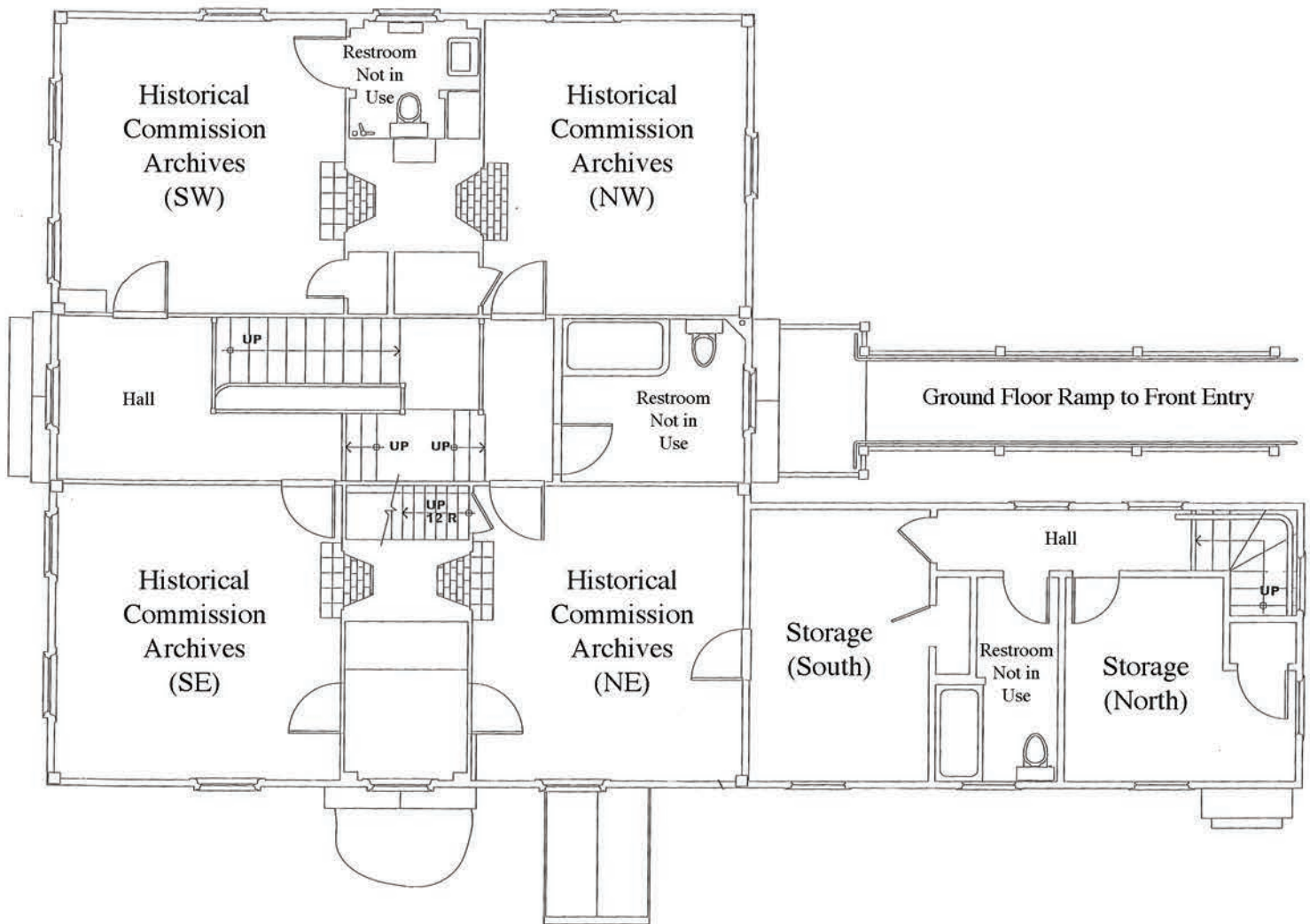


William Wellington House

Second Floor Plan

Waltham Historical Commission

March 2016



oral history interviews with relatives. Easy-to-use digital recording equipment will be provided by the City of Waltham, and the space will be made available on certain days by appointment, as well as to students at Waltham High School who are enrolled in the History of Waltham course.

Directly accessible by a wheel-chair accessible ramp, and the original fields-facing front entryway, this room contains the majestic original kitchen fireplace from 1779. It be entirely furnished with original items from the Wellington-Castner families. The room will be dedicated to the memory of Elizabeth Castner, a direct descendant of William Wellington, and one of the finest historians in the history of the City of Waltham.

Scheduling will be done by the Waltham Historical Commission. Funding for equipment should be budgeted for FY2017 (see Budget). Visitors will have the option to contribute their interviews to a growing archive of Waltham's oral history, and to make their recording available at their choosing, by way of the Waltham Historical Commission.

2.3 Function Rentals and Community Events

The City of Waltham currently offers residents the opportunity to rent Stonehurst, the Robert Treat Paine Estate, at an affordable rate for weddings and other functions. For smaller events, however, no affordable alternative is available. Just as the grounds of the Wellington House were used by the family for well over a century, the grounds today could be used for small high school and family reunions, weddings, or other events. Given the fact that the City of Waltham already offers such a service at a historic property, extending the use of the grounds in such a fashion under related policies can be easily implemented at low initial cost, and will remunerate both culturally

and financially. The interior of the house should be available for such functions only on a very limited basis, by approval of the Waltham Historical Commission.

2.4 Community Room

Residents of north Waltham currently have few options for small community meetings. The southeast room of the historic core offers the opportunity for community members to schedule small meetings at no cost. The room will be made available upon request to the Waltham Historical Commission administrator and chairperson, and approved for municipal, neighborhood, and civic meetings of up to 10 people. Meetings should be arranged in accordance with the monthly meeting schedule of the Waltham Historical Commission in order to reduce administrative burden on the board, while providing timely access for community members.

2.5 Parlor

Thanks to a generous donation from the family of Elizabeth Castner, the Wellington House southwest parlor room now houses a mid-19th century Hallett and Cumston Square Grand Piano once owned by the descendants of William Wellington. Following proper restoration, the piano will be a historic and cultural attribute to the City of Waltham. In coming years, a plan should be implemented to make the room available for small recitals, and to incorporate its use for occasional functions within the building, upon approval by the Waltham Historical Commission.

2.6 Waltham Historical Commission Office

Waltham has significant historic assets, and commissioners on the Waltham Historical Commission conduct continuous, intensive research into innumerable historic matters that require a quiet, dedicated space for research and occasional small gatherings.

Initial restoration of the Wellington House included plans for housing the full operations of the Waltham Historical Commission at Wellington House, including monthly meetings. After careful review of similar historic structures under municipal ownership in communities across the Commonwealth, this was determined to be inadvisable. This does not reduce the need, however, for space for the commission and its holdings, but rather, directs the use of the Wellington House as it relates to those pressures and needs.

The Historical Commission shall use the northwest room of the historic core of the house, adjoining the Castner room, for passive office and research. The second floor of the historic core will be used as support space.

2.7 Archival Storage

The historic core of the second floor of the Wellington House poses unique challenges for future use because it is currently inaccessible for persons with disabilities. While the Waltham Historical Commission should remain open to potential future use of the second floor that is sensitive to the ongoing use of the building, for the foreseeable future, the rooms should be dedicated to archival and object storage for possessions of the commission. A room should be dedicated to objects in poor condition, including storage bins for books

and items that may not be deteriorating. Other rooms should be dedicated to organizing the commission's many and growing holdings, and for housing copies of documents that are currently scattered in the possessions of various groups and archives across the city.

2.8 Event and Use Storage

The second floor of the northern ell of the house contains three rooms which should be purposed to support the use of the house and grounds, including storage for tents, chairs, farm tools, and items for regular maintenance and operations.

2.9 Basic Maintenance

Basic maintenance, conducted regularly and according to the spirit and letter of the preservation deed restrictions is essential for reducing the need for further major historic preservation work on the property. An annual inspection of the property shall be made by the Inspector of Buildings in order to assess maintenance issues and proper adherence to code. The Inspector of Buildings will also set forth the maximum occupancy of each room in the house. An annual inspection by the Wires Inspector and the Fire Inspector will also be made. Recommendations and orders by all three inspectors will be implemented by the City of Waltham immediately.

Maintenance relies on the support of city staff, but also requires financial allocations. A budget to support operations should be in place annually, in perpetuity, as part of the Waltham Historical Commission budget, and should reflect the use of the property and financial contributions that the use plan provides to the city general fund.

While not fully inclusive, the following maintenance must be conducted by City of Waltham, along with any and all obligations to the deed restrictions:

- Regular landscaping of the grounds of the historic core, including pruning of trees and plants, mowing of lawns, etc.
- Annual cleaning of gutters and downspouts, including annual oiling of gutters, and occasional replacement of and realignment of downspouts.
- Annual professional cleaning of the house, regardless of intermittent cleanings that may accompany use of the house for functions
- Painting of the entire house exterior every 10 years
- Replacement of the boiler in a timely fashion

according to warranty

- Cleaning and coating of floors in accordance with Secretary of Interior Standards for Historic Preservation, and proper notification to MHC, every 10 years.
- Roof maintenance every five years
- Substantial roofwork as needed, upon inspection, planned for every 15 years.
- Occasional restoration of stone walls in accordance with Secretary of Interior Standards for Historic Preservation
- Annual re-tuning of the piano
- Annual inventory of exposed historic items
- Initial appraisal of historic items

3.0 Wellington Fields and Grounds

3.1 Summary

The Wellington Fields were used as part of Wellington Farm from the 18th century into the 1970s. The south-facing parcel of land that remains contains a sloping hillside and surrounding flat land that was purposed for various uses. A large barn, now demolished, was once located on the fields facing the house, and house cows, horses, and equipment for surrounding orchards, pastures, farmland, and gardens.

An initial clearing of the southernmost half-acre that adjoins Trapelo Road was undertaken by the Waltham Land Trust and Waltham Historical Commission in 2014, revealing aspects of the initial landscape. An accompanying informal site survey and study of the restoration of Westport's similar Town Farm restoration, guides the following plan.

Over the next decade, the City of Waltham will clear the landscape, restoring some of the modified historical agricultural parcel and making it available to residents of the City of Waltham. This will include passive walking trails, restoration of the orchards and original fields, inclusion of an apiary, planting of native species and heirloom varieties, and gardens, and connection to the western greenway trails which closely abut by way of the former Metropolitan State Hospital lands. This approach will seamlessly integrate the Wellington Farm into the Beaver Brook reservation, draw visitors and varied use of the property, and provide a vital open space/historic asset to the City of Waltham.

Such an approach paves the way for National Register Historic Landscape designation for the Wellington Fields and greatly enhances the opportunities for significant external funding in support of continued maintenance and preservation.

3.2 Fields Use Plan

The original driveway of the Wellington Farm will continue to be the main point of entry for visitors and can currently accommodate 13 vehicles. Additional lighting will be necessary along the stone wall path. Trees lining the stone walls will be maintained and stone walls will be maintained an occasional refurbished in accordance with Secretary of Interior Standards for Historic Preservation. The immediate grounds surrounding the house will continue to be sparsely planted, with the exception of the continued cultivation of flowers/shrubs along the Trapelo Road, such as the existing French lilacs.

3.21 Inventory of Species

An inventory of plants and a historic review of the produce of the Wellington Farm should be undertaken and consulted by 2017 as part of a plan to re-create the historic landscape, ensuring that visitors experience what farm life would have been. Various specimen trees line the main driveway. Some cherry and apple trees remain on the southern slope, as do a handful of other plants and trees that date to Wellington ownership of the property.

3.22 Passive Use Recreation—Walking Trails

The northeast acreage will be initially ringed by passive use recreation walking trails and subsequently cleared for further trails that are sensitive to the re-creation of the planted landscape. Entry way to the initial loop should extend north from the end of the current existing drive, extend to

the northernmost edge of the property, and then follow the edge of the property to Willow Street and back to Trapelo Road. This will ensure that the earliest phases of trail development connect the property to the Metropolitan State Hospital trails and lands.

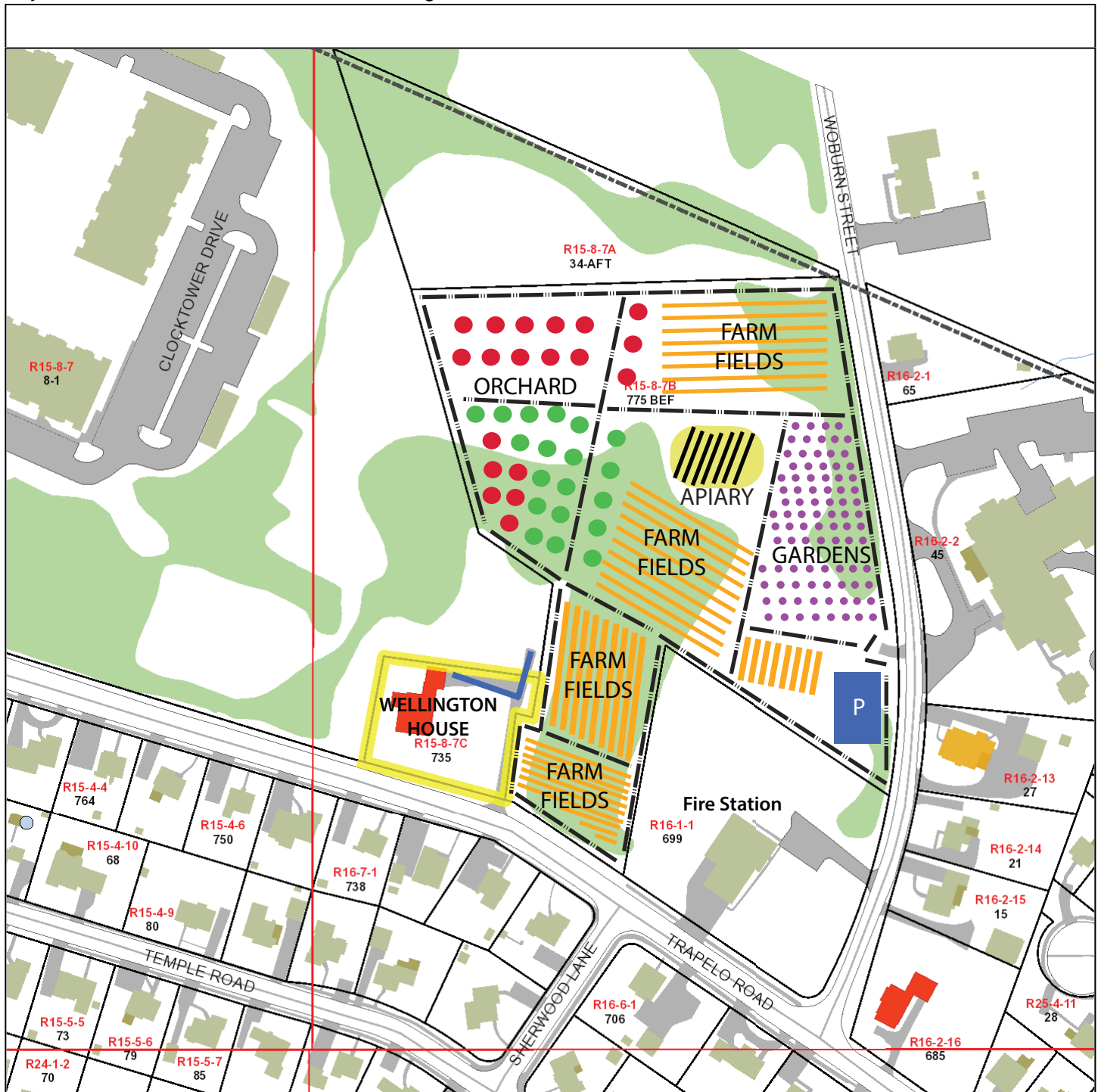
Over time, additional trails will be added. Within five years, the entire property should have a clear trail system, responsively organized according to the plantings of the grounds. The trails should be open, without restriction, from sunrise to sunset. Lighting should be included at the driveway for safety. Dogs should be prohibited, unless leashed.

3.23 Farm Fields, Orchards, and Apiary

Following identification of native species, the lands will be divided into areas for clearing and re-planting. Farm fields will be opened along the southernmost acre of the lands. Orchards will be planted along the northwest hillside. An apiary will be placed on the property, not to exceed a reasonable, small area. These lands should be made available to children and families in Waltham, with occasional walking tours. Maintenance of the fields could be delegated to outside groups including garden clubs and farming organizations.

3.24 Gardens and Meadowland

As would have been the case at the original Wellington Farm, land should be left open for gardens and passive meadowland. Meadows will allow for animals, including native birds, to nest along the south-facing lands, and will ensure the presence of bees and butterflies, as well as deer and turkeys. Historic species natural to Waltham should be planted and tagged for public education, and can



This map is for reference and planning purposes only. It is prepared for the inventory of real property within the City of Waltham and is compiled from tax maps, recorded deeds and plats. Users of this tax map are hereby notified that the aforementioned public primary information sources should be consulted for the verification of the information contained on this map. The City of Waltham and its mapping contractors assume no legal responsibility for the information contained herein.

- NRHP
- Historic Buildings
- Historic Districts
- Tax Map Grid

- Rail lines
- City Boundary
- Swimming Pools
- Bridges

- Streams
- Parcels

- Walking Trails
- Farm Fields
- Gardens
- Cherry Trees
- Apple Trees
- Historic Property Core
- Parking & Proposed Parking
- Apiary



Wellington Farm Fields and Farm Restoration Sample Proposal

Waltham Historical Commission
Arthur Clark Government Center
119 School Street
Waltham, MA 02452

STEWARDSHIP AND LONG TERM USE PLAN
Drafted by Laurence A. Green © 2016



be found referencing historical documents. Diseased or dying specimen trees along the driveway should be replaced. Maintenance and implementation of a small arboretum approach could be delegated to local groups including garden clubs and farming organizations.

3.25 Stone Walls

Stone walls will be restored and maintained. Initial restoration of the stone walls can be funded through external funding sources or the Community Preservation Act.

3.26 Archaeology

Any disturbance of the grounds in the vicinity of former structures, shall be submitted for review by the Waltham Historical Commission, the Massachusetts Historical Commission, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts State Archaeologist for prior review, in accordance with state law.

3.3 National Register Historic Landscape

All work shall proceed with the intent of creating a landscape that—while not identical to the original farm—represents the original workings of Wellington Farm in such a fashion that the Waltham Historical Commission can prepare an application for National Register Historic Landscape status and continue to meet standards that make support from various state environmental and historic funding and support sources available at all times. No act shall be undertaken that has an adverse impact on this possibility.

3.4 Parking

Parking at Wellington Farm is currently available for approximately 13 cars. Additional parking may be needed, but should be created with sensitivity to traffic concerns on Trapelo Road. In addition, parking at Wellington Farm should not exceed 25 cars under any circumstance, as it would permit an intensity of use that is inappropriate for proper restoration and maintenance of the site. Location of added parking should be decided by the relevant boards and commission, and only added following a full assessment of current use at the time of proposal, including consultation with the City Traffic Engineer.

3.5 Basic Maintenance

A yearly cleaning of the house should take place. Maintenance of the grounds and building should be done in a timely and regular fashion. The house should be maintained by Building Maintenance per the conditions of the preservation restriction. Maintenance should not be done without prior approval of the Waltham Historical Commission or the commission's designee.

The grounds should be maintained by the Department of Public Works in consultation with the Recreation Board and Historical Commission.



Handpainted Fireplace Tile ca. 1779

4.0 Partnerships

The City of Waltham will actively seek reasonable formal and informal partnerships to maximize use and educational interpretation of the Wellington Farm for children and families. The City of Waltham will not create any long-term

partnerships for use of the interior and core of the Wellington House and Grounds without prior review and approval from the Waltham Historical Commission and review of any agreement by the City of Waltham Law Department.

5.0 Proposed Timeline for Stewardship and Long-Term Use

2016

April-May, 2016, Clearing of southernmost acre of pasture land

March-June, 2016, Completion of Interior Restoration of William Wellington House

June, 2016 Approval and Passage of Annual Maintenance Budget for William Wellington House

June 2016 Occupancy of House by Historical Commission

May-June 2016, Planting of Pumpkin Field

September 2016, Sign for Wellington Field Placed at Property Edge

Fall, 2016, Opening of House for Occasional Community Meetings

2017

Opening of the Castner Oral History Room

Inventory of Natural and Historic Flora

Opening of Facility for Community Gatherings

Creation of Initial Passive Use Recreation Trail Loop

Presentation and Approval of Grounds Plan In-

cluding Budget

Presentation and Approval of Small Event Rental Plan Including Budget

Opening of House Grounds for Small Events

Clearing of northern three acres of pasture land

2018

Creation of additional trails

Implementation of Plan for Apiary, Gardens, Orchards, Fields

Implementation of Orchard, Opening of Orchard

National Historic Register Landscape Application

2019

Stone wall rehabilitation

2020-1

Ongoing maintenance and stewardship

6.0 Budget

Forthcoming following consultation with the Waltham Historical Commission.



Appendix and Additional Documents

