



SAGAMORE HILL



National Historic Site



SAGAMORE HILL NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE
PRELIMINARY MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES
WINTER/SPRING 2005



NOTE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

We are pleased to share with you the preliminary management alternatives for Sagamore Hill National Historic Site (NHS). We encourage you to take this opportunity to offer your thoughts and comments to help us refine these alternatives before presenting them in a formal draft general management plan.

The management alternatives presented in this newsletter were prepared by the National Park Service (NPS) planning team in consultation with park staff, representatives of the Oyster Bay community, and members of the general public. We would further like to acknowledge the active and on-going participation of the Theodore Roosevelt Association (TRA), the Friends of Sagamore Hill, and the Sagamore Hill volunteers in this important process.

This newsletter describes the current management of the park and summarizes three preliminary management alternatives. Each of the management alternatives outlines a different approach for how the visiting public will experience the park. The alternatives describe different possible scenarios for visitor experience and the physical treatment of the site.

In the formal draft plan, one management alternative will be selected as the “preferred” option by the National Park Service. Ultimately, the preferred management alternative could be a combination of proposals from each of the preliminary alternatives described here.

Please share your thoughts with us. We encourage your involvement!

— Gay Vietzke, Superintendent
Sagamore Hill National Historic Site



The Roosevelt family at
Sagamore Hill, 1903.



MAKING PROGRESS



Theodore Roosevelt with visiting Boy Scout troop at Sagamore Hill, circa 1917.

The National Park Service is preparing a general management plan for Sagamore Hill National Historic Site. This “master plan” will provide guidance for management decisions that affect park resources and visitor experience over the next 20 years.

Last year, planners began gathering ideas from interested citizens about how best to manage Sagamore Hill National Historic Site. The planning team held two public meetings and published the first planning newsletter to describe its preliminary findings and to get feedback from the public. The public input received helped the planners shape four distinct preliminary management alternatives, which are featured in “The Preliminary Alternatives” section of this document. Public input and discussion of these preliminary alternatives will help the National Park Service team learn more about what the public desires for the future of the park. During the next few months, the planning team will refine and revise the preliminary alternatives and present these alternatives in a draft plan that will be available for public review this fall.



THE FOUNDATION FOR THE PLAN

PARK PURPOSE

Sagamore Hill preserves in public ownership and interprets the structures, landscape, collections, and other cultural resources associated with Theodore Roosevelt's home in Oyster Bay, New York to ensure that future generations understand and appreciate the life and legacy of Theodore Roosevelt, his family, and the significant events associated with him at Sagamore Hill.

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

Theodore Roosevelt bought land in Oyster Bay in 1880 where he built his family home and lived until his death in 1919. Throughout his life, Roosevelt attracted national and international figures from every walk of life to this home. Sagamore Hill was the summer White House between 1902 and 1908. Today, due to a high level of dedication to the site's preservation, Sagamore Hill looks remarkably as it did when it was the home of the 26th President.

PARK GOALS

Resource Protection

Park resources are preserved and maintained in good condition and in a manner that supports a balanced approach to cultural and natural resource management.

Visitor Services/ Visitor Experience

Visitors traveling to Sagamore Hill experience well-marked routes with good directional signage, multiple transportation options, and a clear sense of arrival upon entering this national park site.

At Sagamore Hill, pathways and circulation within the park are well-marked and easy to navigate.



Gardens at Sagamore Hill, circa 1905.



Roosevelt Home draped with flags for a public reception, circa 1902.

Visitors receive orientation to Sagamore Hill which helps them understand the opportunities available at the site and provides an overview of the site's significance, the relevance of Theodore Roosevelt today, and the site's place in the National Park System.

All people have opportunities to experience authentic, tangible resources that help them understand, draw inspiration from, and examine the larger meanings, concepts, themes, and stories about Sagamore Hill National Historic Site, Theodore Roosevelt, and his legacy.



Dining room at Sagamore Hill
furnished to 1905 period.



THE FOUNDATION FOR THE PLAN

A wide range of interpretive offerings, educational materials, and outreach programs are available to meet the learning needs and styles of individuals, families, and organized groups.

The park uses established and emerging technologies to provide new opportunities to enhance the visitor experience and to attract new audiences.

Research

The park encourages and disseminates scholarship that contributes to the continuing dialog on and understanding of Theodore Roosevelt, his contributions and accomplishments in the context of US and world history, and his legacy.

Students and scholars have access to opportunities for research in an environment that offers accessible, appropriate, and dedicated space.

Partnership

The park strengthens its network of partners and works cooperatively to preserve and interpret Sagamore Hill NHS within the context of US history and in relationship to the network of Theodore Roosevelt-related sites and organizations.

The greater park community is engaged on a broad variety of issues affecting the park in an effort to generate effective public participation and better informed decisions.

The park continues and expands its positive working relationships with the Oyster Bay community.

The park and its primary park partners – the Theodore Roosevelt Association, the Friends of Sagamore Hill, and the Sagamore Hill Volunteers – actively contribute to their mutual success.

Operations

The park and its partners actively pursue park goals in a flexible and cost effective manner.

The park provides a safe and healthy environment for both employees and visitors to the site.

The park capitalizes on existing and emerging technology to increase efficiency and enhance the overall park operations.



Farm hands with dairy cows in front of New Barn, circa 1907.



Quentin Roosevelt on
Sagamore Hill Ice House.



PRELIMINARY MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES



Sagamore Hill front hall, 1900.

The planning team developed the following alternatives in response to public input, the park's legislation, the conditions of park resources, the park purpose and significance, the park's goals, and the planning issues. After examining all of this information, the team determined that there was a central question to be addressed: what should Sagamore Hill's visitors be able to see and do and how does that influence the treatment and development of the site? The planning team used this question as the basis for developing alternative approaches to park management.

Implementation of the final plan would be dependent upon the availability of funds. Proposed construction projects would have to compete for funds through the National Park Service's normal priority setting processes for funding. Substantial financial contributions from the park's primary partners and other non-federal sources may accelerate the implementation of the final plan.

COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES

Regardless of which alternative is ultimately chosen and implemented, numerous objectives for management will be applicable to the park as a whole. For example, the park would continue to work closely with the Theodore Roosevelt Association in undertaking park programming and other management initiatives. Also the Theodore Roosevelt home would be preserved as a furnished historic home viewed by guided tour. Further the park would work with state and local officials to improve directional signage from the major highways as well as along secondary roads. The park also would expand its capacity to manage the natural resources on the property.



ALTERNATIVE I STATUS QUO (CURRENT MANAGEMENT)







CONCEPT

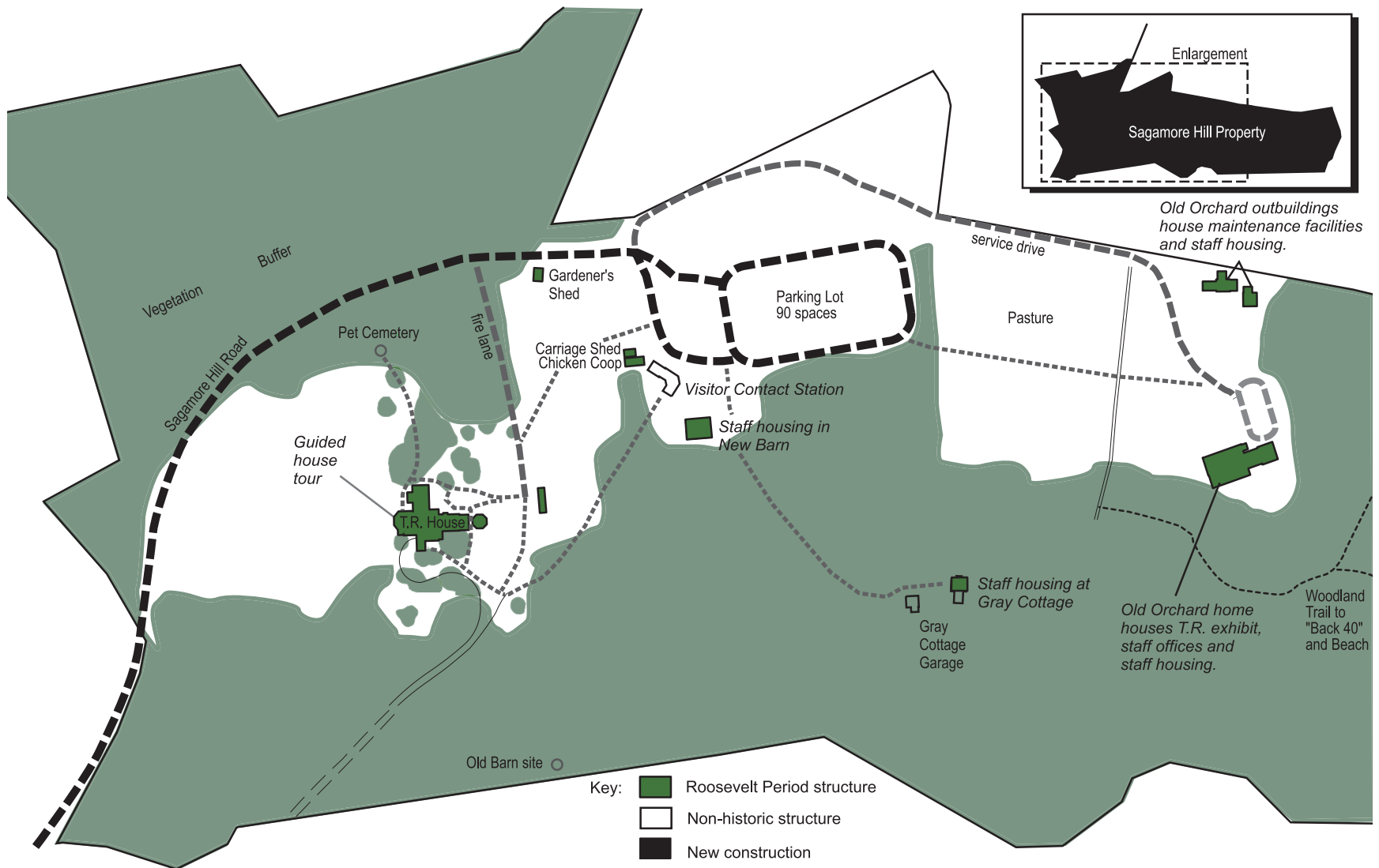
Sagamore Hill would continue to be managed in accordance with existing plans and in compliance with legal and NPS policy mandates. This approach would allow for limited incremental actions to enhance park management but would not result in any change to the park's current management philosophy and physical conditions. The status quo alternative serves as the baseline for evaluating and comparing the other alternatives.

The visitor experience would remain largely unchanged. People would continue to visit the small visitor contact station (circa 1953) located near the current parking lot. This modest facility offers little room for orientation exhibits or for staging groups of visitors in preparation for tours. Visitors would continue to rely on existing park brochures and the park's visitor services staff and volunteers to learn about the site and its programs and activities. Regardless of the weather, staging for group tours would continue to take place outdoors. Park-sponsored workshops, lectures, and other special programs would continue to take place in space located off-site as available.

The centerpiece of the visitor experience would remain the Theodore Roosevelt home. Grounds walks and bird walks would continue to be offered at current limited levels. The Theodore Roosevelt museum exhibit would continue to be housed in the Old Orchard main house. Park collections currently stored in the basement of the Roosevelt home would be relocated to the Old Orchard conference room to improve conditions for their storage, resulting in the loss of that meeting space.

Highlights

-  Sagamore Hill's historic structures would be preserved and maintained – no additional major historic restoration or new development would occur.
-  The park's landscape would be managed to allow for areas of hay field and meadow that are more evocative of Sagamore Hill's agricultural past.
-  The New Barn would be preserved and continue to be used for staff housing and storage. Other historic farm buildings like the carriage shed, chicken coop, and gardener's shed would be preserved and continue to be used for storage.
-  Old Orchard would continue to house park staff offices and the Theodore Roosevelt museum exhibit. Park collections would be relocated from the Roosevelt home basement to Old Orchard conference room for storage.
-  The maintenance facility would continue to be located in the Old Orchard garage.
-  The TRA offices would continue to be located off-site.



ALTERNATIVE I – STATUS QUO (CURRENT MANAGEMENT)

Maps are diagrammatic in nature – not to scale.




ALTERNATIVE 2 SAGAMORE HILL: BUILDING CAPACITY


CONCEPT


This alternative is geared toward building the park's capacity to address its minimum visitor services and operational needs. In this alternative, visitors to Sagamore Hill would be offered a museum experience that combines the opportunity to explore the site's contemporary relevance in the same context in which one explores its history. People would begin their visits at the visitor orientation facility located within Sagamore Hill's historic core – at the rehabilitated New Barn. Through introductory exhibits and an audio visual presentation visitors would learn more about Sagamore Hill and Theodore Roosevelt and would be presented with a menu of options offering a variety of activities and programming from which to choose. Tickets for house tours and other programs also would be purchased here. The addition of new program space would enable the park to offer regular programs to the visiting public and organized groups that explore many aspects of the Roosevelt family at Sagamore Hill. Interpretive exhibits would continue to be available to the public at the Old Orchard main house.


After leaving the New Barn, visitors to the site would set out across the property to participate in the day's programming and activities. They would experience a Sagamore Hill that includes selected areas of the landscape that are rehabilitated to reflect the historic character of the place during the Roosevelts' tenure. The centerpiece of the visitor experience would continue to be the Roosevelt family home, however, greater emphasis would be placed on the larger cultural landscape. Visitors would be encouraged to explore the site and to participate in outdoor activities and programs.


Highlights


 Selected features of Sagamore Hill's cultural landscape are rehabilitated to reflect the period of the Roosevelt family's residence in support of specific interpretive objectives. This could result in the restoration of some agricultural fields and other features evocative of the site's agricultural past and the family's use of the property.


 A visitor orientation facility would be established within the historic core. In this scenario, the New Barn would be modestly expanded and used to accommodate a variety of orientation and visitor services. The exterior of the New Barn would be rehabilitated to its appearance during the Roosevelt family's tenure. The visitor orientation facility would feature a visitor information/ticketing desk, orientation exhibit, an audio-visual presentation, as well as staging space.


 The existing visitor contact station would be improved and would continue to house the bookstore and upgraded restrooms. The picnic area also would be retained and improved.


 The existing parking lot would be reduced by approximately one-third to a more appropriate size and allow for the restoration of portions of the vegetable and flower gardens, but would remain in its current location.


 Much of Sagamore Hill's historic architecture would be rehabilitated to the period of the Roosevelt family's residence on the property in support of interpretive objectives. For instance, the gardener's shed would be rehabilitated and would house interpretive media describing farm operations.

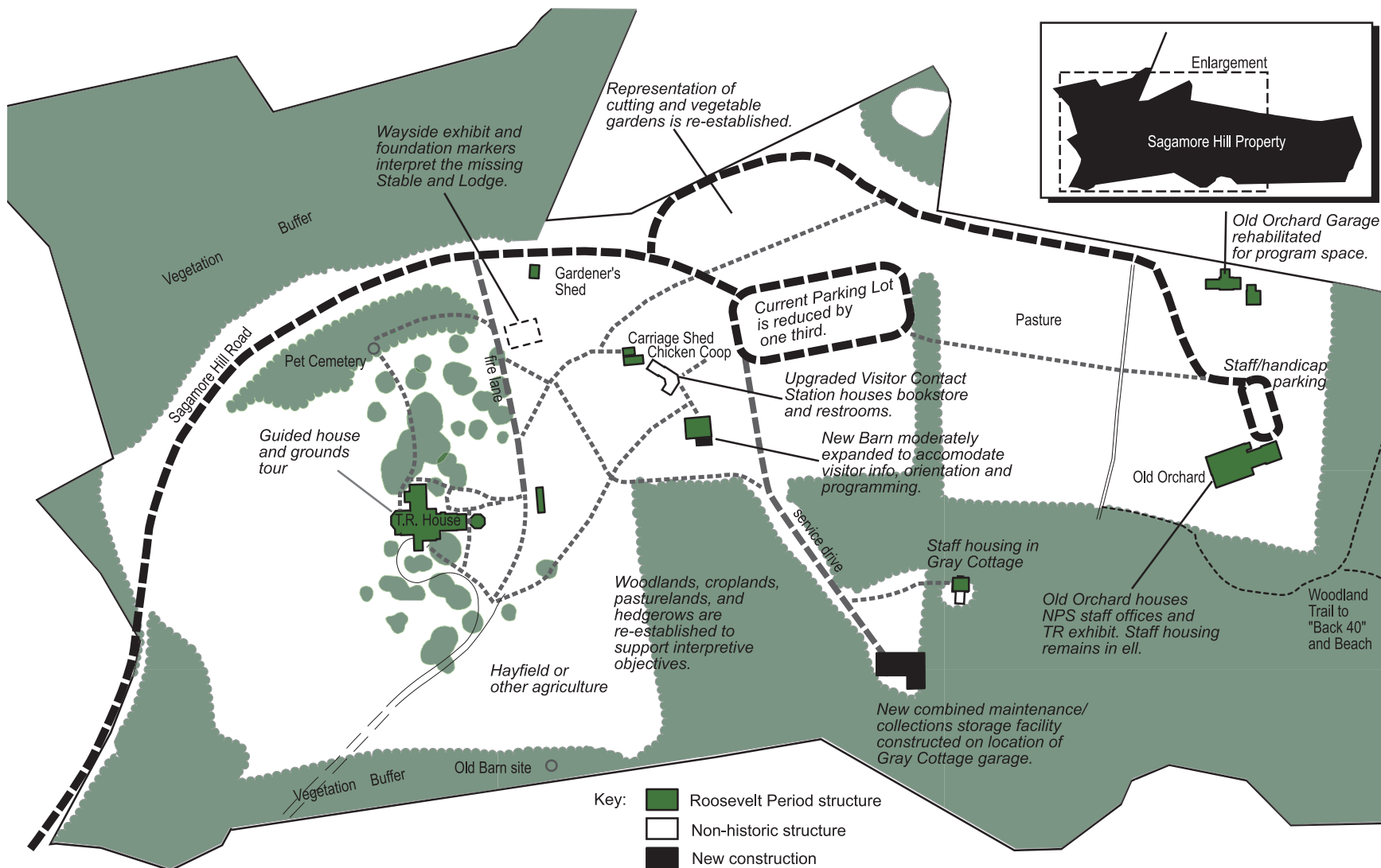
 Programming is expanded to offer limited on-site lectures, gallery talks, and on-site programs that link Theodore Roosevelt and his achievements to the lives of contemporary Americans.

 Sagamore Hill would support the creation and operation of a Theodore Roosevelt education and study program, however the Theodore Roosevelt Association would develop the program's headquarters and offer much of its programming off-site.

 Old Orchard would continue to house interpretive exhibits and NPS staff offices as well as staff housing.

 A new combined maintenance and collections storage facility would be constructed on the site of the Gray Cottage garage. The new facility would also include dedicated research space as well as offices for park staff.

 The garage at Old Orchard would be converted from its current use as maintenance and housing facility and rehabilitated for use as program space.



ALTERNATIVE 2 – SAGAMORE HILL: BUILDING CAPACITY

Maps are diagrammatic in nature – not to scale.



ALTERNATIVE 3

SAGAMORE HILL: PAST MEETS PRESENT

CONCEPT

Similar to alternative 2, visitors to Sagamore Hill would be offered a museum experience that combines the opportunity to explore the site's contemporary relevance in the same context in which one explores its history. People would begin their visits at the visitor orientation complex composed of both historic and more recent buildings located within Sagamore Hill's historic core – in this case at a complex composed of an expanded New Barn and the existing visitor contact station. Through exhibits and an audio visual presentation visitors would learn more about Sagamore Hill and Theodore Roosevelt and would be presented with a menu of options offering a variety of activities and programming from which to choose. Tickets for house tours and other programs also would be purchased here. Space for additional exhibits and programming would be available at the newly expanded Old Orchard main house enabling the park to offer a wider variety of regular programs to the visiting public and organized groups that explore the historic and contemporary relevance of the Roosevelt family at Sagamore Hill. Old Orchard would also house new, climate-controlled collections storage and dedicated archival and research space.

After leaving the visitor orientation complex, visitors to the site would set out across the property to participate in the day's programming and activities. They would experience a Sagamore Hill that includes selected areas that are rehabilitated to reflect the historic character of the place during the Roosevelts' tenure. The centerpiece of the visitor experience would continue to be the Roosevelt family home, however, greater emphasis would be placed on the larger cultural landscape. Visitors would be encouraged to explore the site and to participate in outdoor activities and programs.

Highlights

As in alternative 2, Sagamore Hill's cultural landscape is rehabilitated to reflect the period of the Roosevelt family's residence in support of specific interpretive objectives. This could result in the restoration of some agricultural fields, and partial restoration of the vegetable and flower gardens.

As in alternative 2, the existing parking lot would be reduced to a more appropriate size and allow for the restoration of portions of the vegetable and flower gardens, but would remain in its current location.

As in alternative 2, much of Sagamore Hill's historic architecture would be rehabilitated to the period of the Roosevelt family's residence on the property in support of interpretive objectives. For instance, the gardener's shed would be rehabilitated and would house interpretive media describing farm operations.

A visitor orientation complex would be established within the historic core using preexisting structures. In this scenario, the New Barn would be expanded, and with the existing visitor contact station, would be rehabilitated to accommodate a variety of orientation

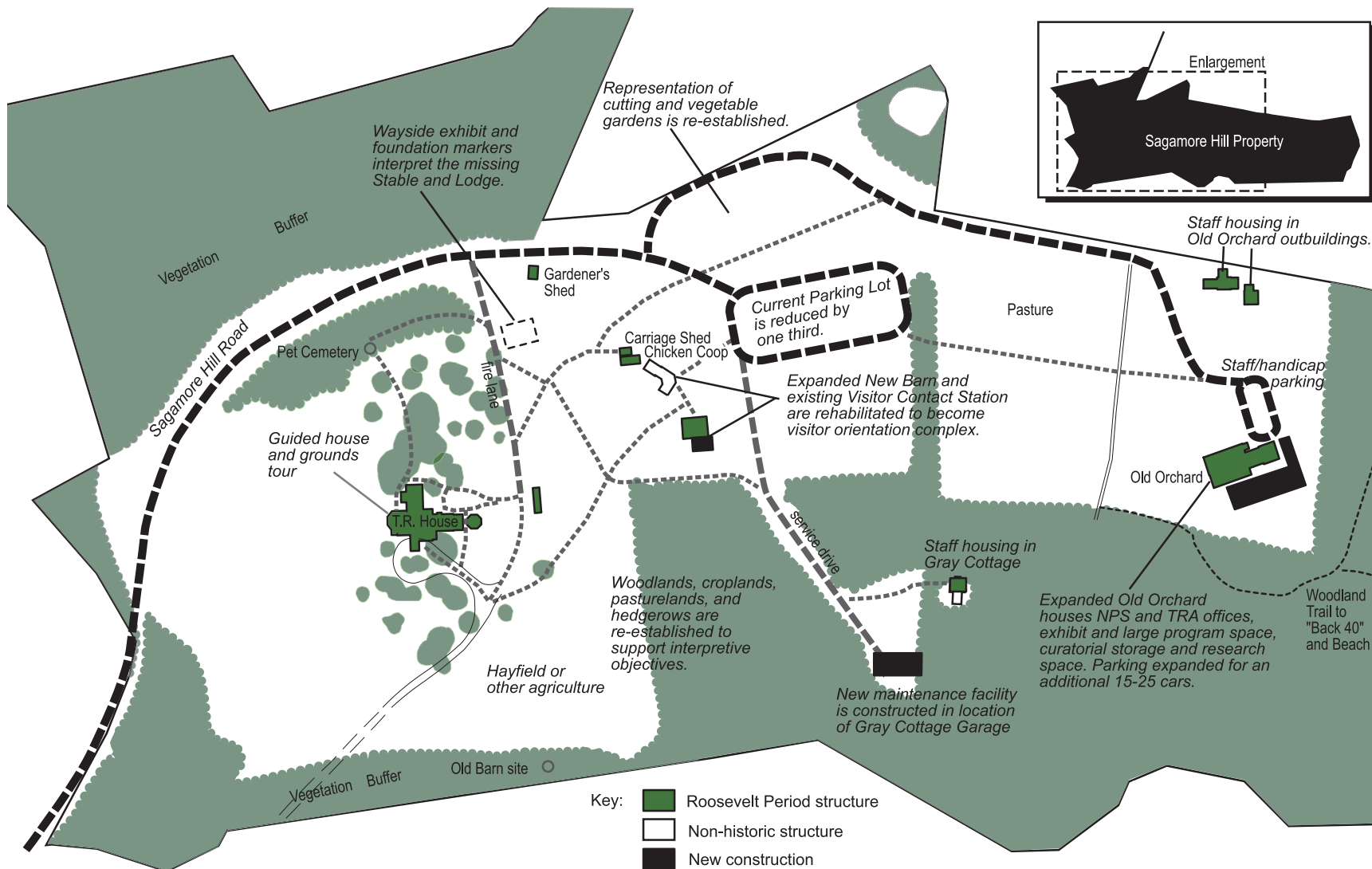
and visitor services. The visitor orientation complex would feature visitor information/ticketing desk, orientation exhibit, audio-visual presentation, staging and program space, offices for visitor services staff and volunteers, and bookstore.

Programming is expanded to offer on-site lectures, gallery talks, changing exhibits, and on-site programs that link Theodore Roosevelt and his achievements to the lives of contemporary Americans. The park would work collaboratively with business and land owners in Oyster Bay Hamlet to interpret its historic ties to Theodore Roosevelt and Sagamore Hill.

Sagamore Hill would support the creation and operation of a Theodore Roosevelt education and study program with its headquarters located in Old Orchard.

An addition to Old Orchard would be constructed to provide appropriate climate-controlled storage for the park's collections. Old Orchard would also house interpretive exhibits, large flexible program space, dedicated work space for researchers, and staff offices for both the park and the Theodore Roosevelt Association.

A new maintenance facility would be constructed on the site of the Gray Cottage garage. The garage at Old Orchard would be rehabilitated for use as staff housing.



ALTERNATIVE 3 – SAGAMORE HILL: PAST MEETS PRESENT

Maps are diagrammatic in nature – not to scale.







ALTERNATIVE 4 HISTORIC SAGAMORE HILL

CONCEPT


Visitors to Sagamore Hill would be offered a traditional, historical museum experience. People would begin their visits at the new visitor orientation facility located within the park's boundary, but outside Sagamore Hill's historic core. As in the previous alternatives, through exhibits and an audio visual presentation visitors would learn more about Sagamore Hill and Theodore Roosevelt and would be presented with a menu of options offering a variety of activities and programming from which to choose. Workshop and large program space would be available at the new visitor orientation facility enabling the park to offer regular programs that explore aspects of the Roosevelt family at Sagamore Hill to the visiting public and organized groups. Tickets for house tours and other programs also would be purchased here.


After leaving the new visitor orientation facility, visitors to the site would cross into the historic core of the property. They would experience a Sagamore Hill that would be familiar to the Roosevelt family and evoke the historic character of the place, but for practical reasons, could not be restored in its totality. As in all alternatives, the centerpiece of the visitor experience would continue to be the Roosevelt family home, however, greater emphasis would be placed on the larger cultural landscape. Visitors would be encouraged to experience the site as Theodore Roosevelt and his family were known to have by participating in nature hikes, point to point walks, birding, and other outdoor activities. Some visitors and organized groups might conclude their visits by participating in a discussion session at the rehabilitated New Barn containing some additional program space. Within minimal view of visitors, an addition to Old Orchard's main house would be constructed to house climate-controlled collections storage and dedicated research space in order to insure the long term protection and accessibility of the park's museum collection and archives.


Highlights

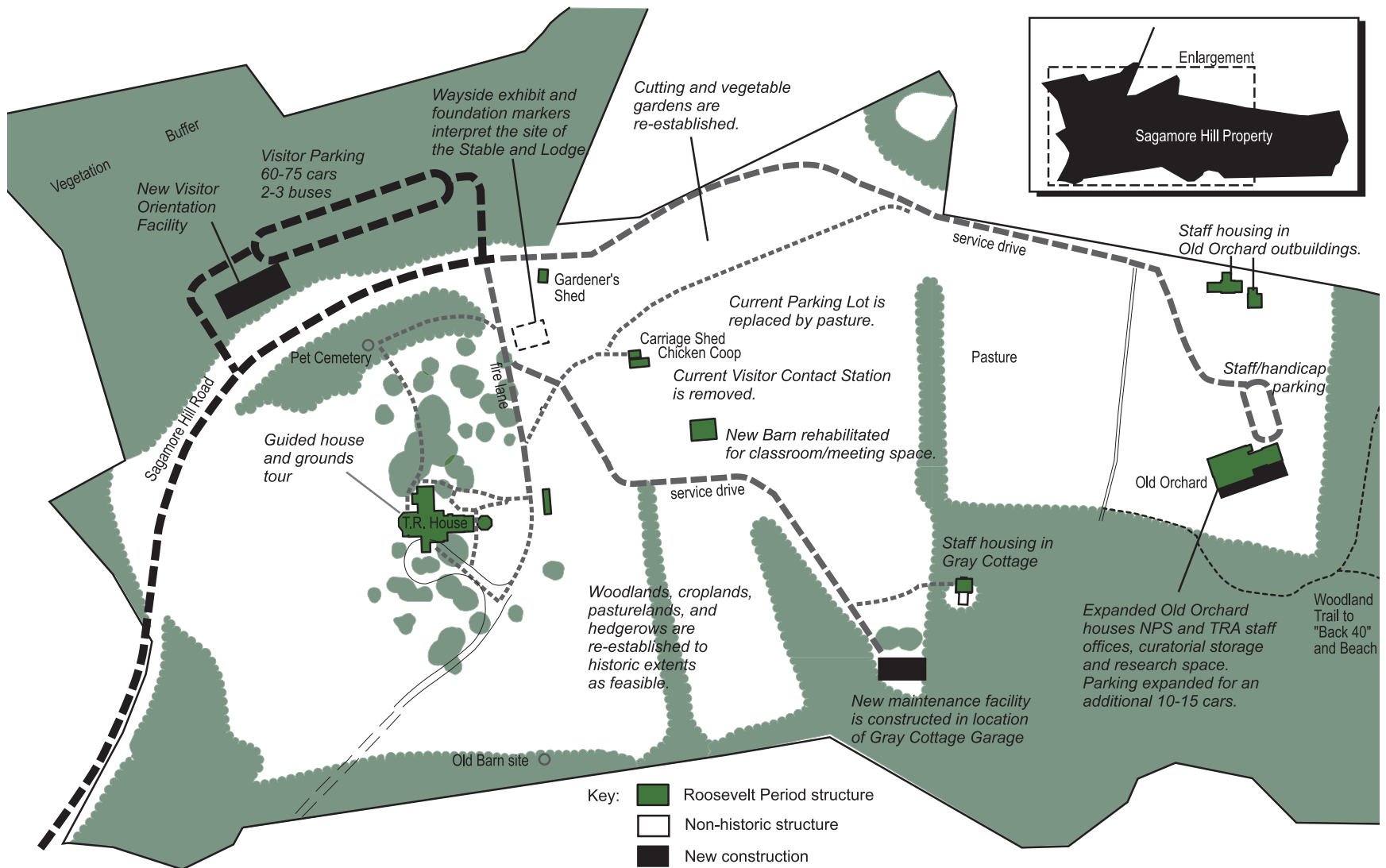
-  Sagamore Hill's cultural landscape is rehabilitated to evoke the period of the Roosevelt family's residence, to the degree feasible. This could result in restoration of agricultural fields, the vegetable and flower gardens, and historic pathways.
-  Non historic features like the existing parking lot and visitor contact station are removed and relocated away from the historic core.
-  Sagamore Hill's historic architecture would be rehabilitated to the period of the Roosevelt family's residence on the property. Historic buildings like the Carriage Shed, Chicken Coop, and Gardeners shed would house interpretive exhibits describing aspects of family life and farm operations. The rehabilitated New Barn – without the additions proposed in alternatives 2 or 3 – would house meeting space for school groups or others requiring workshop space.
-  A new visitor orientation facility would be developed on park-owned lands located to the north of Sagamore Hill Road. The new facility would be designed to minimize its visual impact on the site. The new facility would feature a visitor information/ ticketing desk, orientation and interpretive exhibits, an audio-visual presentation,

a large multipurpose program space, offices for visitor services staff and volunteers, and bookstore.

 As in the previous alternatives, Sagamore Hill would support the creation and operation of a Theodore Roosevelt education and study program with program headquarters located on-site.

 A small addition to Old Orchard would be constructed to provide appropriate climate-controlled storage for the park's museum and archival collections. Old Orchard would also house dedicated work space for researchers wishing to use the park's collections, and staff offices for both the park and the Theodore Roosevelt Association.

 As in alternative 3, a new maintenance facility would be constructed on the site of the Gray Cottage garage. The garage at Old Orchard would be rehabilitated for use as park housing.



ALTERNATIVE 4 - HISTORIC SAGAMORE HILL

Maps are diagrammatic in nature – not to scale.



NEXT STEPS



Roosevelt addressing the suffragists from piazza, 1917.

The planning team will review the comments received from the publication of this newsletter and the results of NPS policy review, collect and analyze resource information, and refine the preliminary alternatives. The team will present the revised management alternatives in a draft plan that will be on public review by fall 2005.

Let us know what you think. Please fill out the mail-back card and fax it or mail it to the park. Or call, send a fax, write a letter, or e-mail your thoughts and suggestions to the planning team. Please include your name and address.

SEND YOUR COMMENTS TO:

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*“A nation’s greatness lies in its possibility of achievement in the present,
and nothing helps it more than the consciousness of achievements in the past.”*

—THEODORE ROOSEVELT

