



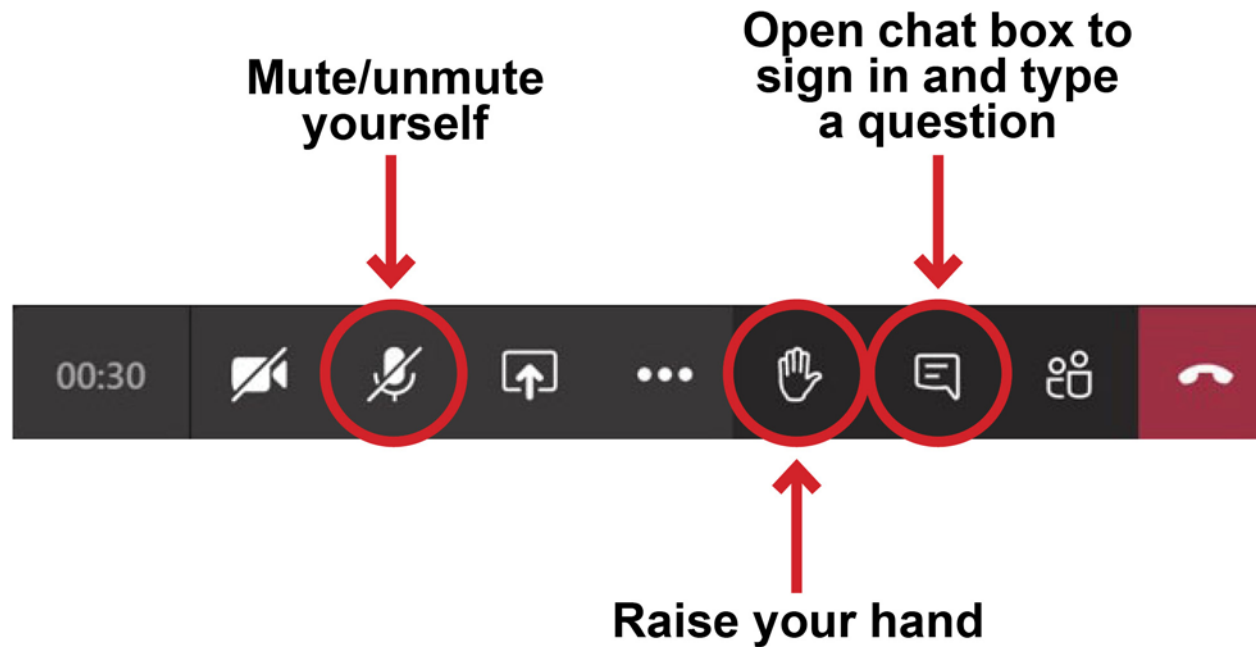
Harmony Hall Development Concept Plan Public Meeting #2

September 14, 2021



Meeting Housekeeping

Please sign in to the meeting using the website link posted in the chat box.





Agenda

Welcome + Introductions

Meeting Purpose

Project Background + Timeline

Existing Conditions + Site History

Review of Initial and Refined Concepts

Comment Submissions

Discussion



Meeting Purpose

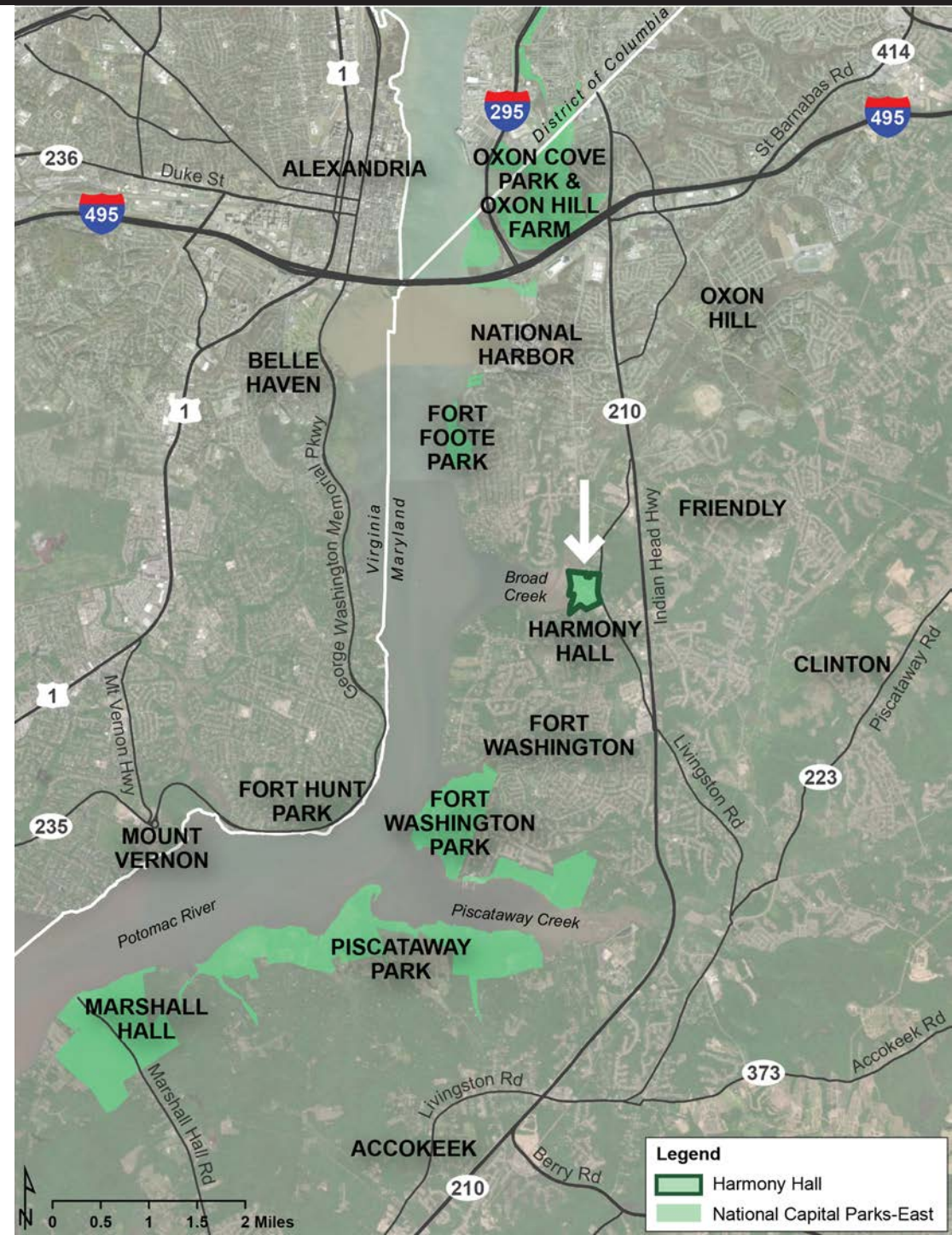
The purpose of this meeting is to provide the public with an opportunity to:

- Review refined concepts
- Identify any issues, concerns, and ideas



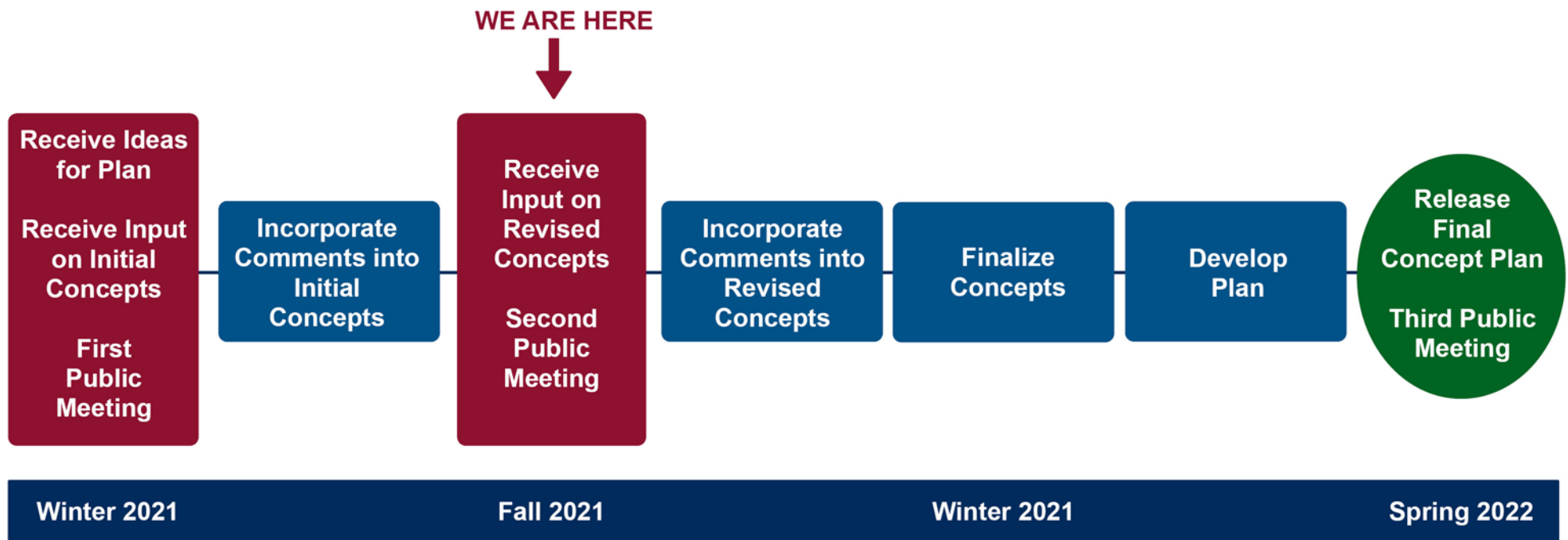
Project Background

- The NPS is taking steps to improve visitor opportunities for learning and recreation at Harmony Hall, a historic site in Fort Washington, MD.
- A Development Concept Plan summarizes existing conditions at the site and proposes potential concepts for the future use and development of the area. Input from stakeholders and the public are sought during the development of the Plan to identify any issues, concerns, and ideas, and receive feedback on the concepts. The NPS will use the Plan, which will be available to the public, to implement improvements to the area.
- Public Meeting #1 was held in March and feedback provided on initial range of concepts.





Project Timeline



The Development Concept Plan is not a decision document, but only provides recommendations for the NPS to consider when future proposals and decisions are being made. Prior to a decision, the NPS will conduct the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 review processes as required.



Existing Conditions

- Harmony Hall is a 65-acre property bordered by Broad Creek, the Harmony Hall Regional Center, the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission's treatment facility, private property owners, and Livingston Rd.
- The NPS acquired the property in the 1960s. The property has never had a management, development, or interpretive plan.
- Key existing features include:
 - 18th century Harmony Hall manor house
 - Early 1930s ha-ha
 - Early 20th century bungalow
 - Late 20th century horse stable
 - Ruins of an 18th century dwelling known as Want Water
 - Slash Creek
 - Want Water Canal
 - Fields
 - Forested areas, including a pine stand





Site Significance

The National Capital Parks-East (NACE) Foundation Document (2016) identifies the following significance statements for Harmony Hall:

- Harmony Hall is significant for its association with 18th century colonial settlement and its Georgian architecture, which is characteristic of early Potomac River masonry plantation houses.
- The site contains important historical remnants of the American colonial era and the early commercial use of the Potomac River, including the ruins of the Want Water house and canal.
- Robert Stein, a well-known explorer and linguist, purchased Harmony Hall in 1892 and encouraged emigration from his homeland of Silesia, Prussia, which has influenced the ethnographic make-up of the surrounding community, now known as Silesia, MD.
- In the early 20th century, Charles Collins purchased the property with the intention to create a romanticized southern plantation experience on the site. Collins was a segregationist and strategist for the Dixiecrat Party. His efforts to preserve and re-envision the property are a complex and often ignored component of American history that directly influenced the civil rights movement.
- Harmony Hall is the keystone property of the Broad Creek Historic District, the first historic district in Prince George's County, Maryland.

Please note that the sequence of the above statements does not reflect the level of significance.



Existing Conditions



Harmony Hall (Livingston Road side)



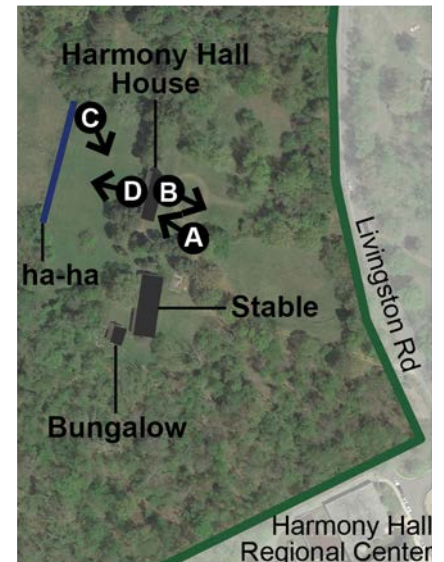
View from Harmony Hall towards Livingston Rd



Harmony Hall (Broad Creek side)



View from Harmony Hall towards Broad Creek





Existing Conditions



Early 1930s ha-ha



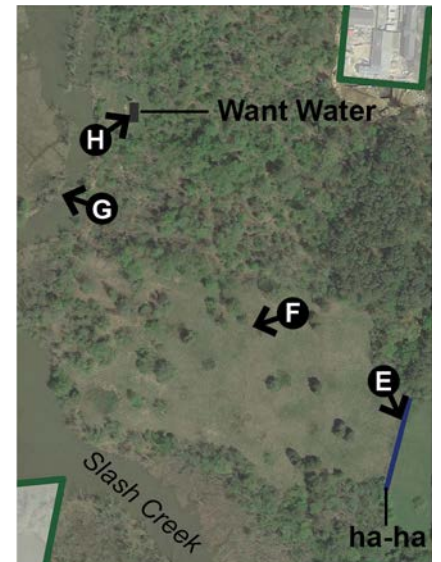
View towards Broad Creek



Want Water Canal



Want Water





Existing Conditions



Late 20th century horse stables



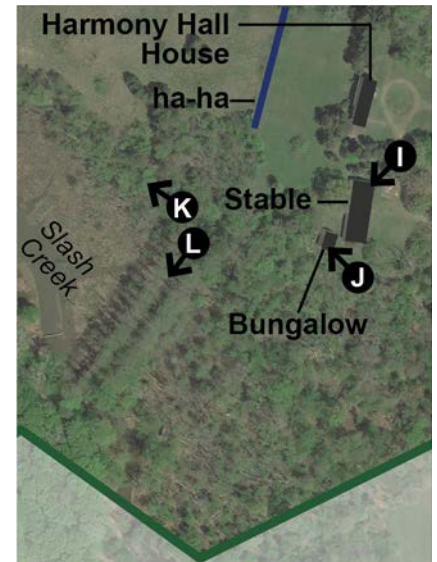
Early 20th century bungalow



View towards Broad Creek between
cypress allée and Harmony Hall



Cypress allée





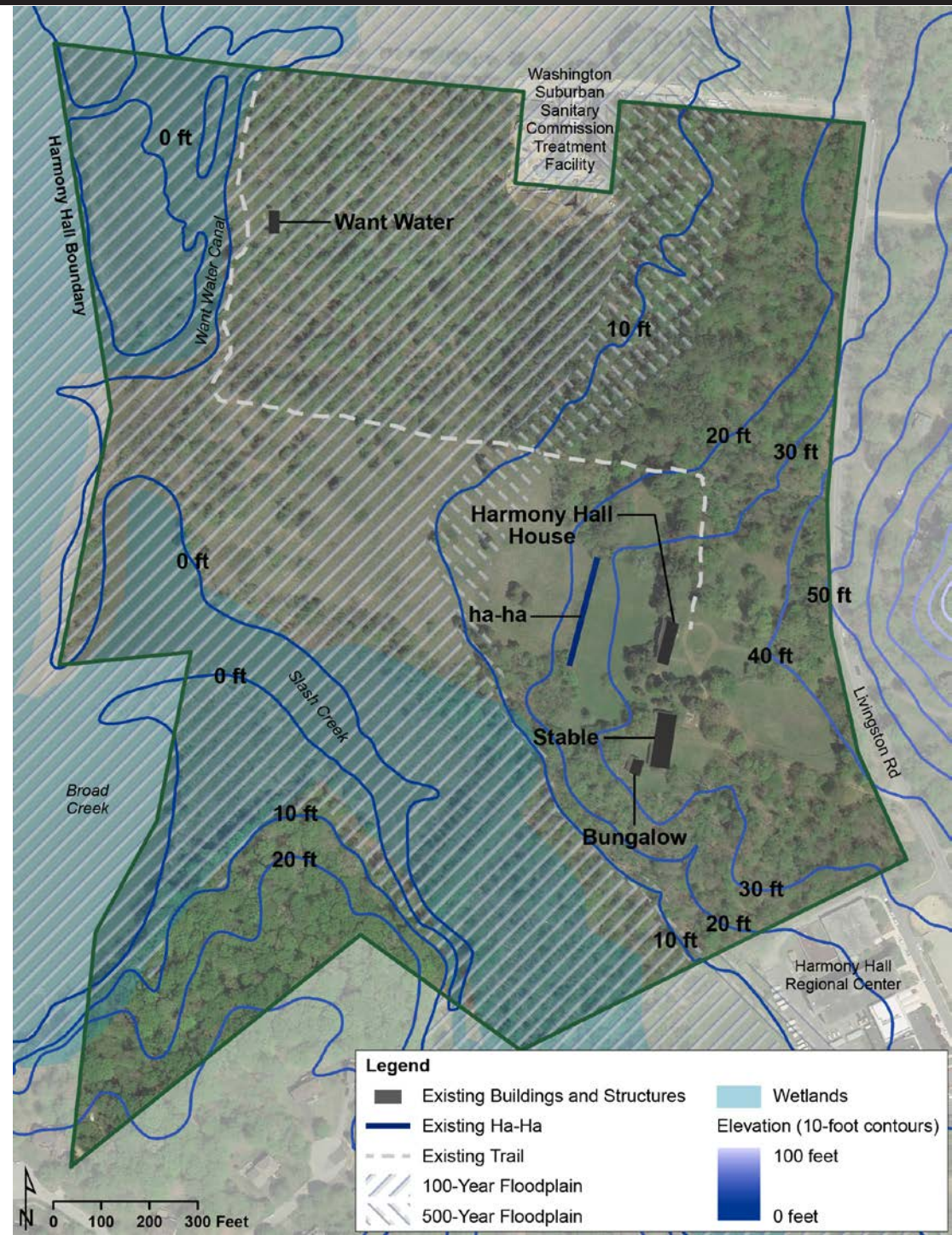
Existing Considerations and Constraints

Natural Systems:

- Floodplains
- Wetlands
- Topography

Cultural Resources:

- Archeological sites
- Harmony Hall cultural landscape:
 - Periods of Significance: 1708-1786
1929-1962
- National Register of Historic Places-listed:
 - Harmony Hall:
 - Period of Significance: 1700-1799
 - Listed in 1980
 - Broad Creek Historic District (includes Harmony Hall and Want Water ruins):
 - Period of Significance: 1662-1783
 - Listed in 2011





Nearby Kayak/Canoe Launch Sites



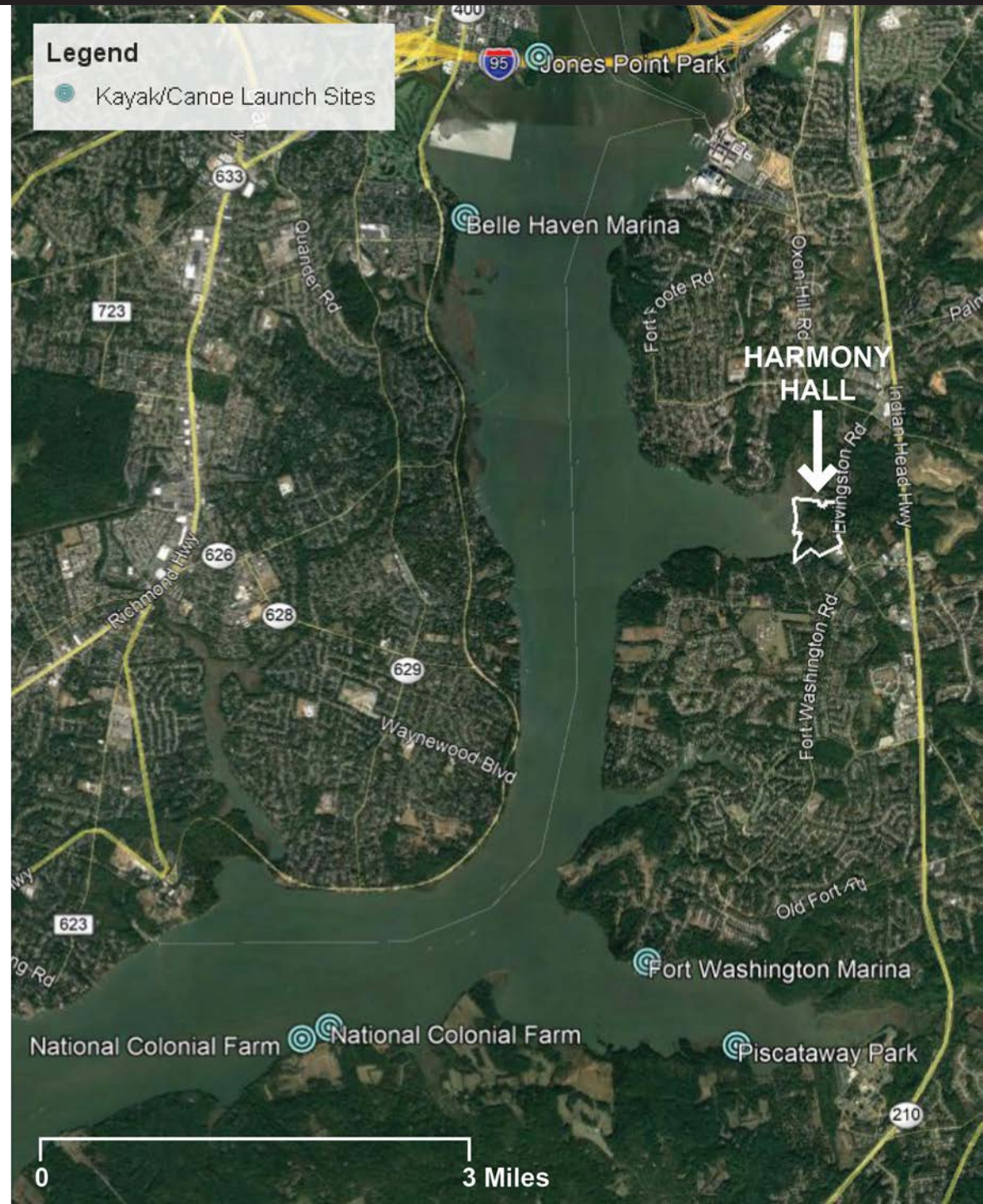
Kayaker by the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge near Jones Point Park (Gary Riegel/Shutterstock.com)



Fort Washington Marina



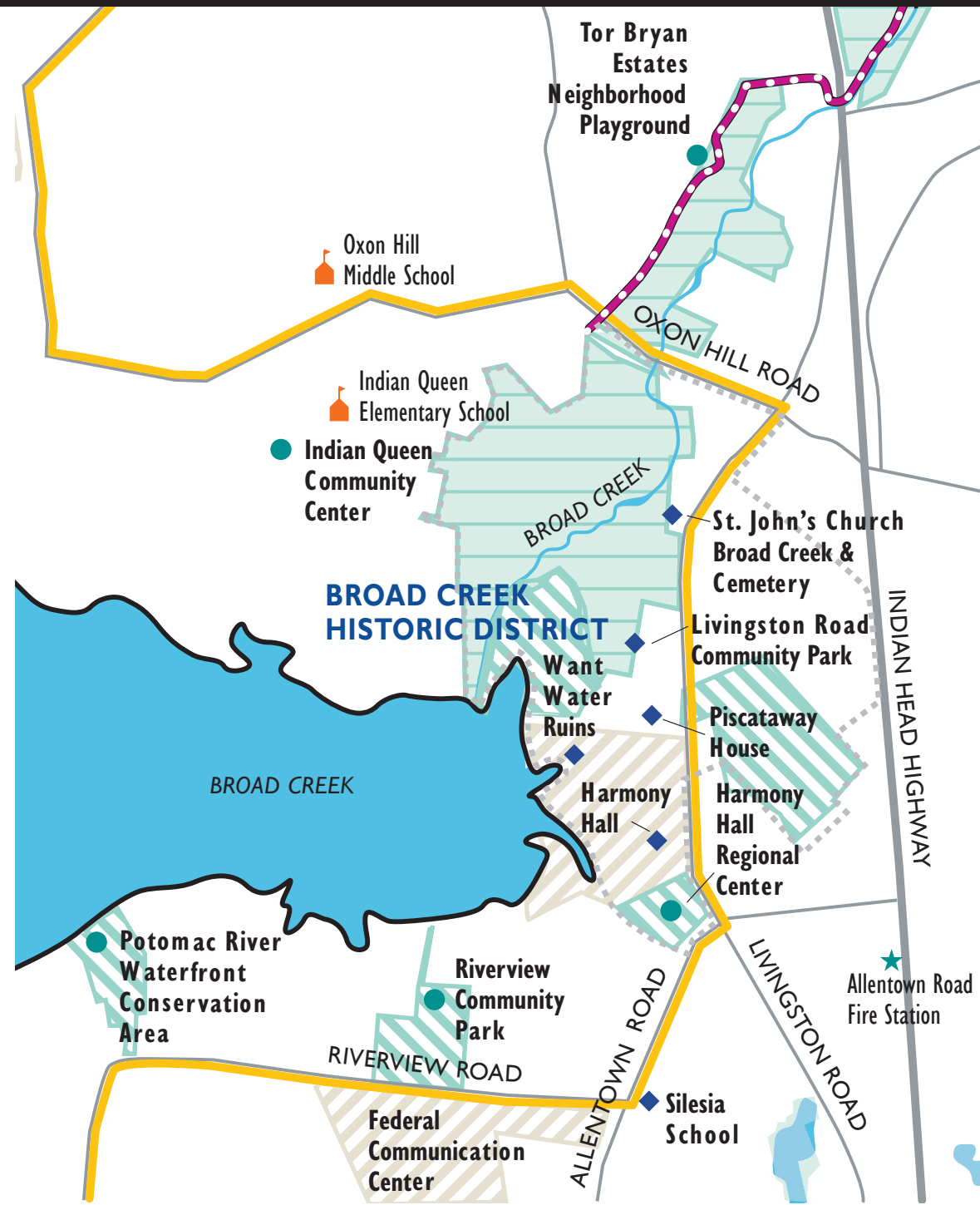
Kayak launch at National Colonial Farm





Nearby Parks, Trails, Historic Sites, and Other Community Amenities

- Henson Creek Hiker/Biker/Equestrian Trail
- Potomac Heritage Trail & On-road Bicycle Route
- Henson Creek SVP
- M-NCPPC Properties
- Federal Lands
- Ponds/Lakes/Rivers
- Park Site
- Historic Site
- School
- Police & Fire Stations



Note: Map adapted from Henson Creek Trail Map, Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation



Interpretive Themes

The NACE Foundation Document (2016) identifies the following interpretive themes for Harmony Hall:

- Harmony Hall tells the story of a changing landscape that provides exceptional insight into commercial uses along the Potomac River, the role of the estate as a catalyst for growth and development in the surrounding community, and the evolution of historic preservation practice.
- The Harmony Hall property represents an opportunity to further investigate the archeology and history of human settlement along the Potomac River.
- The Harmony Hall property represents an opportunity to further investigate the cultural and societal history of enslaved workers on a Maryland tobacco plantation.
- The grounds at Harmony Hall protect a variety of natural habitats that support flora and fauna and provide opportunities for visitors to connect with nature and experience outdoor recreation near a densely developed urban area, including the historic loblolly pine trees.
- Harmony Hall was established as a corridor of forest and natural scenery as part of a comprehensive system of parks for recreation, preservation of substantial tracts of forests, and protection of source water in and around the nation's capital.



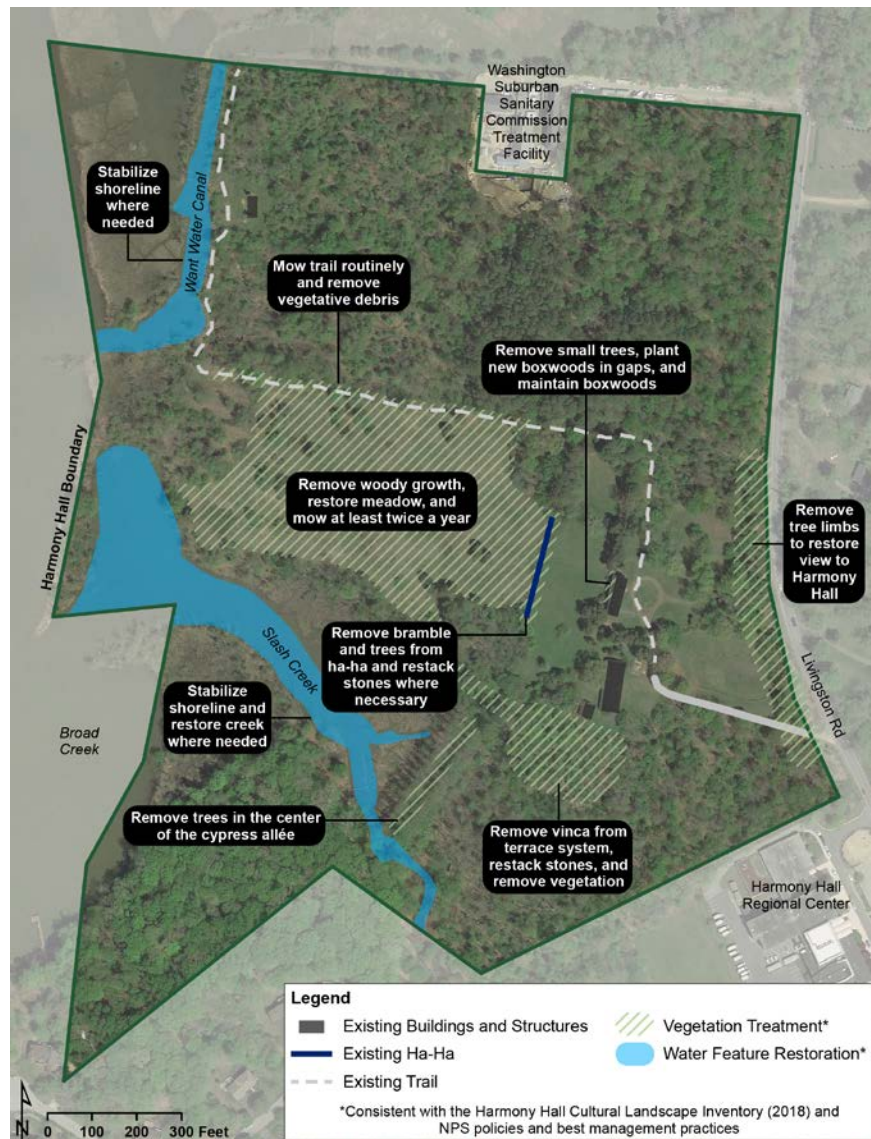
Concept Overview

- The NPS is committed to telling a complete history of the Harmony Hall site.
- The Harmony Hall site represents a complex history that is associated with Native American occupation, enslaved people, and the civil rights movement. The social and physical history of the site will inform the direction and recommendations for the future use and development of the site.
- All potential concepts and expanded opportunities for public use will:
 - Be balanced against the carrying capacity of the park's facilities, infrastructure, and fiscal capacities
 - Provide recommendations to minimize impacts to cultural and natural resources
- Potential uses considered appropriate and inappropriate for the site include:

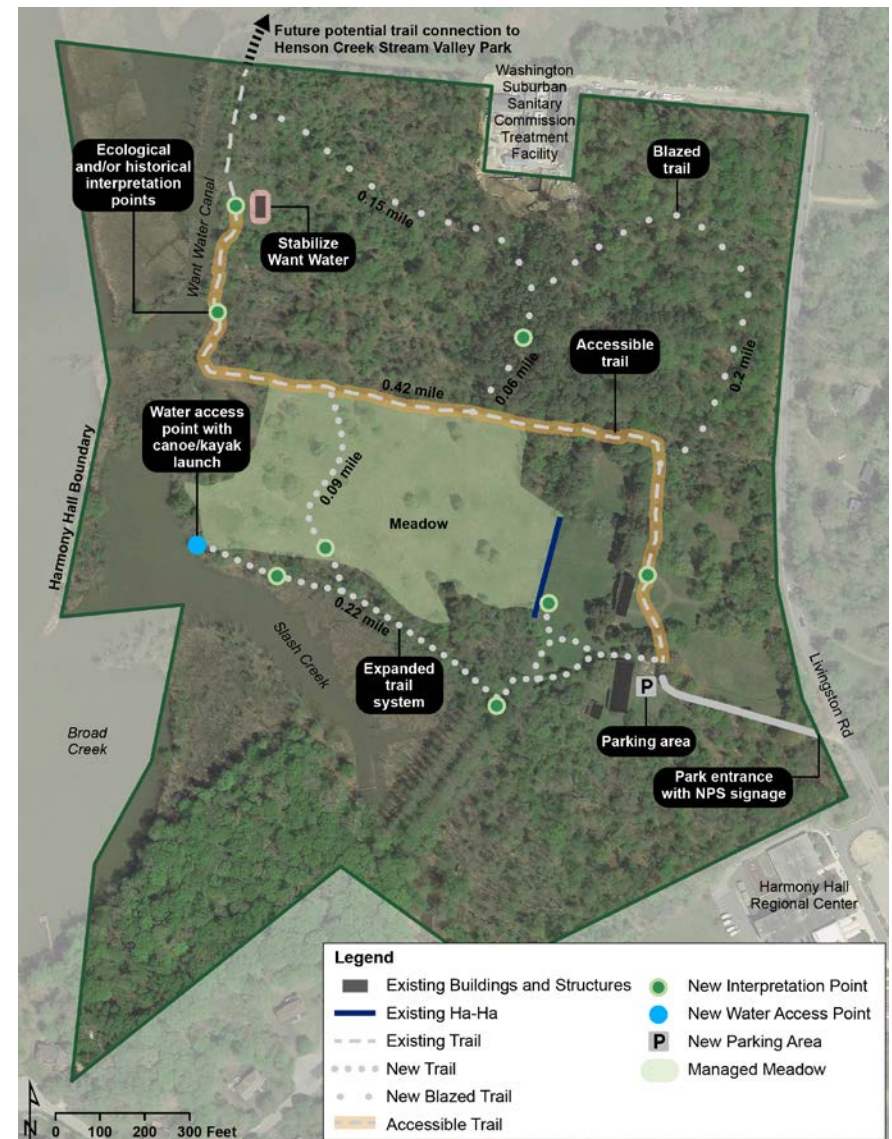
Appropriate Uses		Inappropriate Uses
Educational programs	Fishing	Weddings
Meetings	Picnicking	Public equestrian use
Volunteer activities	Informal passive recreation	
Hiking/walking	(e.g., picnicking, family gatherings)	
Wildlife/nature viewing	U.S. Park Police (USPP) facilities	
Kayaking/canoeing	(including equestrian)	



Previous Concept Overview



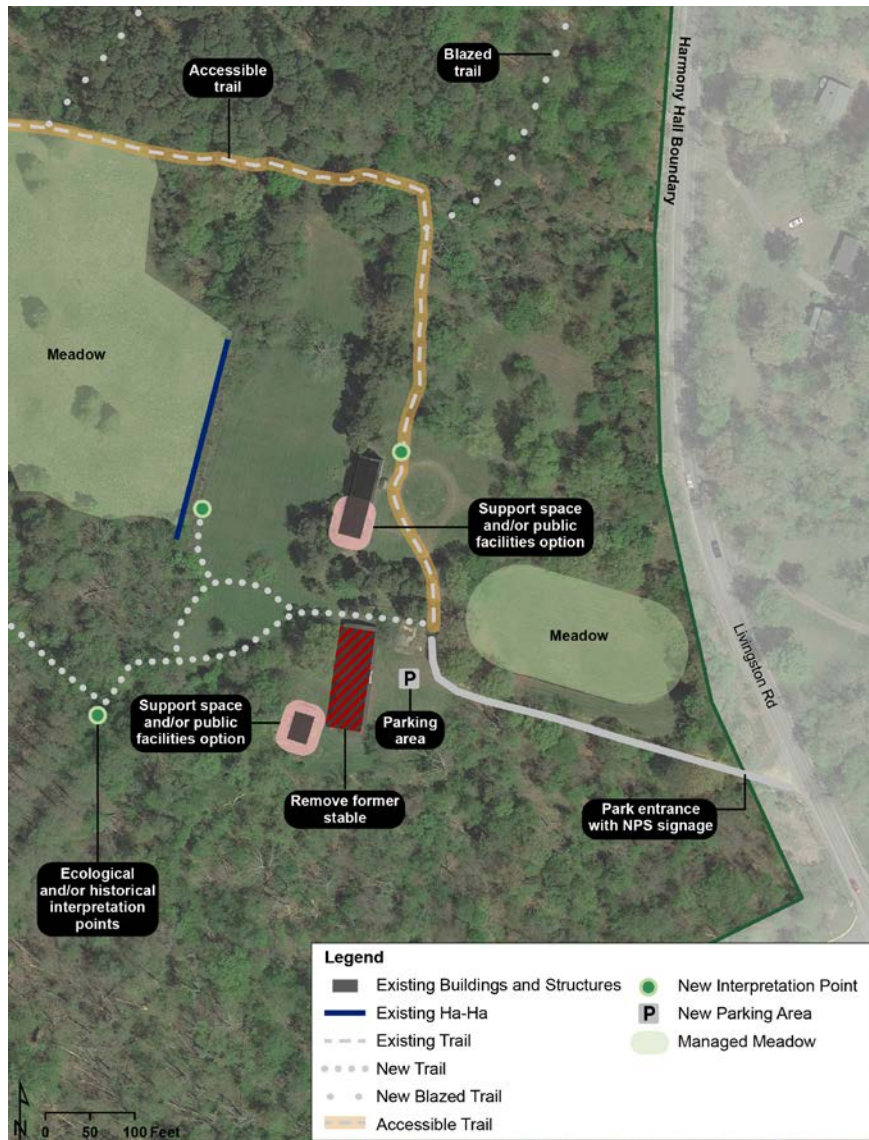
Landscape Treatment
(03/2021)



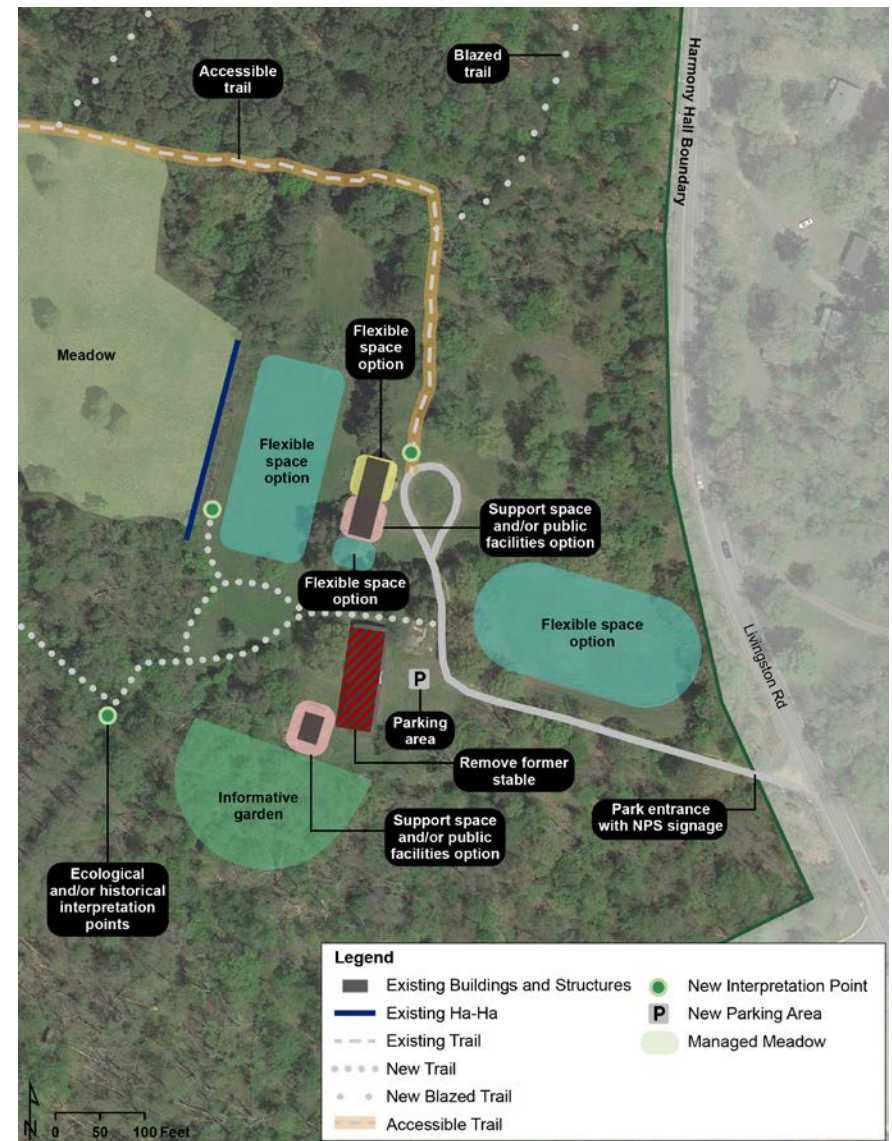
Expanded Trail Network
(03/2021)



Previous Concept Option Overview



Option: Focused Rehabilitation
(03/2021)



Option: Flexible Space
(03/2021)



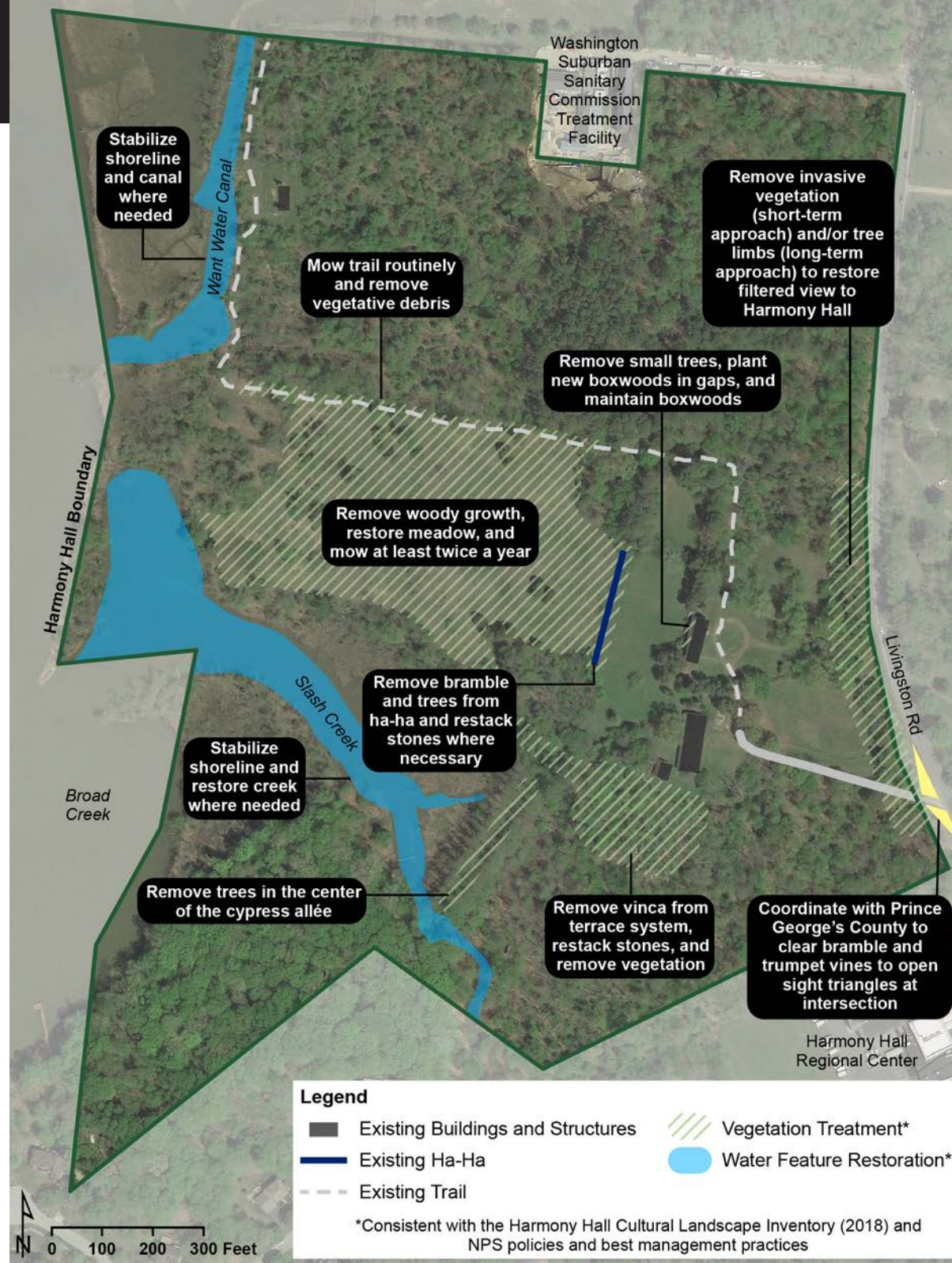
What We Heard

Summary of comments received:

- **Support of Proposed Plan**
- **Site Development**
 - *Stabilize Want Water*
 - *Adapt Stables*
 - *Rehabilitate Harmony Hall*
- **Security**
 - *Vandalism*
 - *Lack of visibility*
- **Recreation Uses and Trails**
 - *Active recreation*
 - *Kayaking*
 - *Events*
- **Interpretation**
 - *Reflect history*
 - *Coordination with other historic properties and local organizations*
 - *Signage, tours*
- **Balancing Recreation and Historic Preservation and Natural Resources**
- **Trails**
 - *Routes*
 - *Horseback Riding, Bicycles*
- **More Details**
 - *Specific plans*
 - *Clearer explanations*
- **NEPA Compliance and Process**
- **Transportation and Parking**
 - *Availability of parking*
 - *Traffic*
- **Partnerships**
 - *To support interpretation, maintenance and operations, and programming.*
- **Revenue**
 - *Entrance fees and/or event fees*

Landscape Treatment (Common to all concepts)

- Improves safety and security through vegetation removal to increase visibility along Livingston Road and at park entrance
- Stabilizes shorelines of canal and Slash Creek for improved ecological health
- Outlines areas for ongoing maintenance for trails, open areas, and meadows
- Treats contributing features of the cultural landscape, including the ha-ha wall, cypress allée, stone terrace system, and plantings



Expanded Trail Network (Common to all concepts)

Water

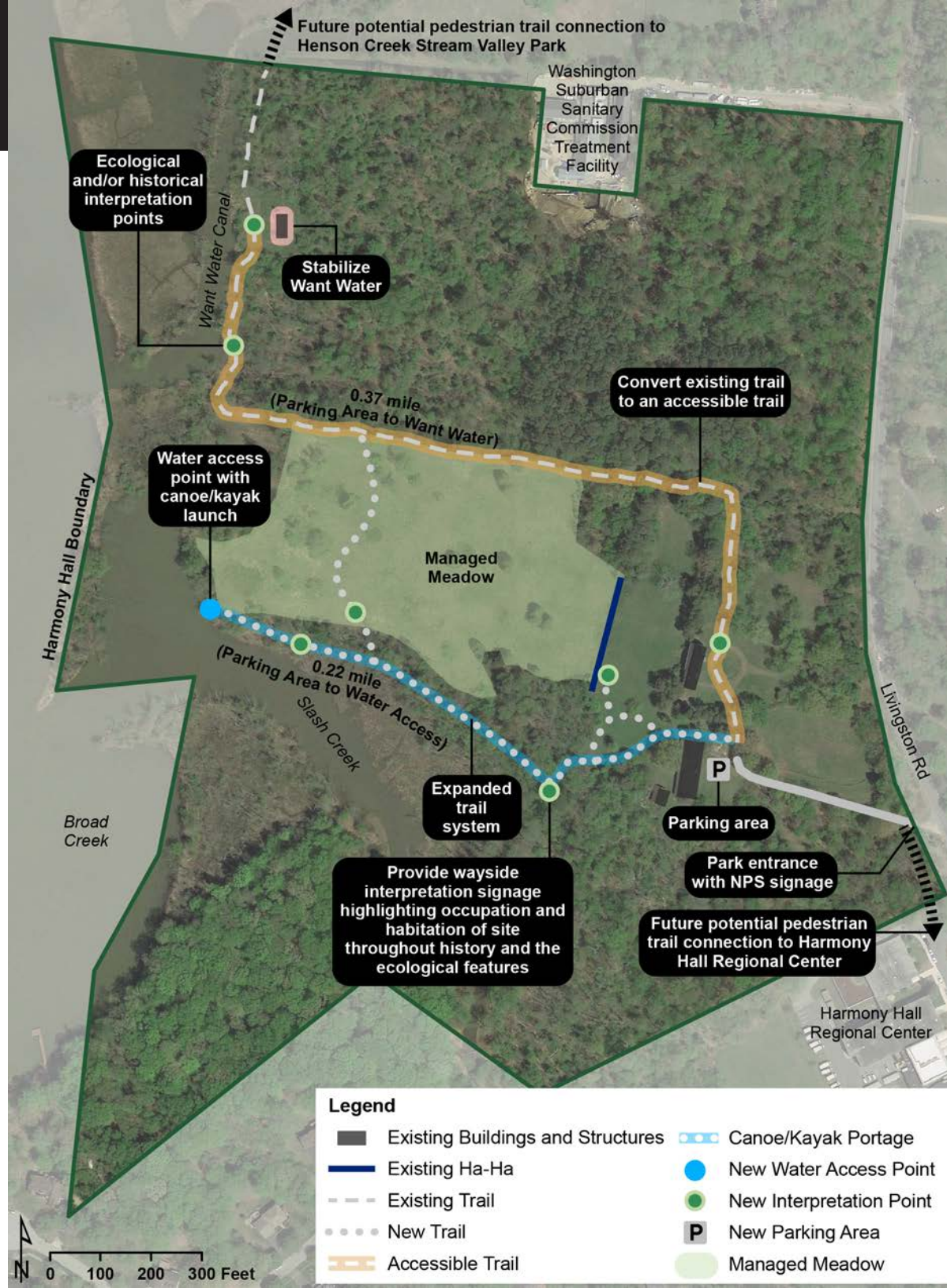
- Stabilizes ruins to limit further degradation
- Provides wayside interpretation signage highlighting occupation and habitation of site throughout history and the ecological features

Trails

- Provides an accessible trail to Want Water from accessible parking

Canoe/Kayak Launch

- Maintains wide trail width for canoe/kayak portage from parking area to launch
- Option to provide a cart for easier portage
- Provides stabilized launch pad to limit erosion and accommodate changing water levels





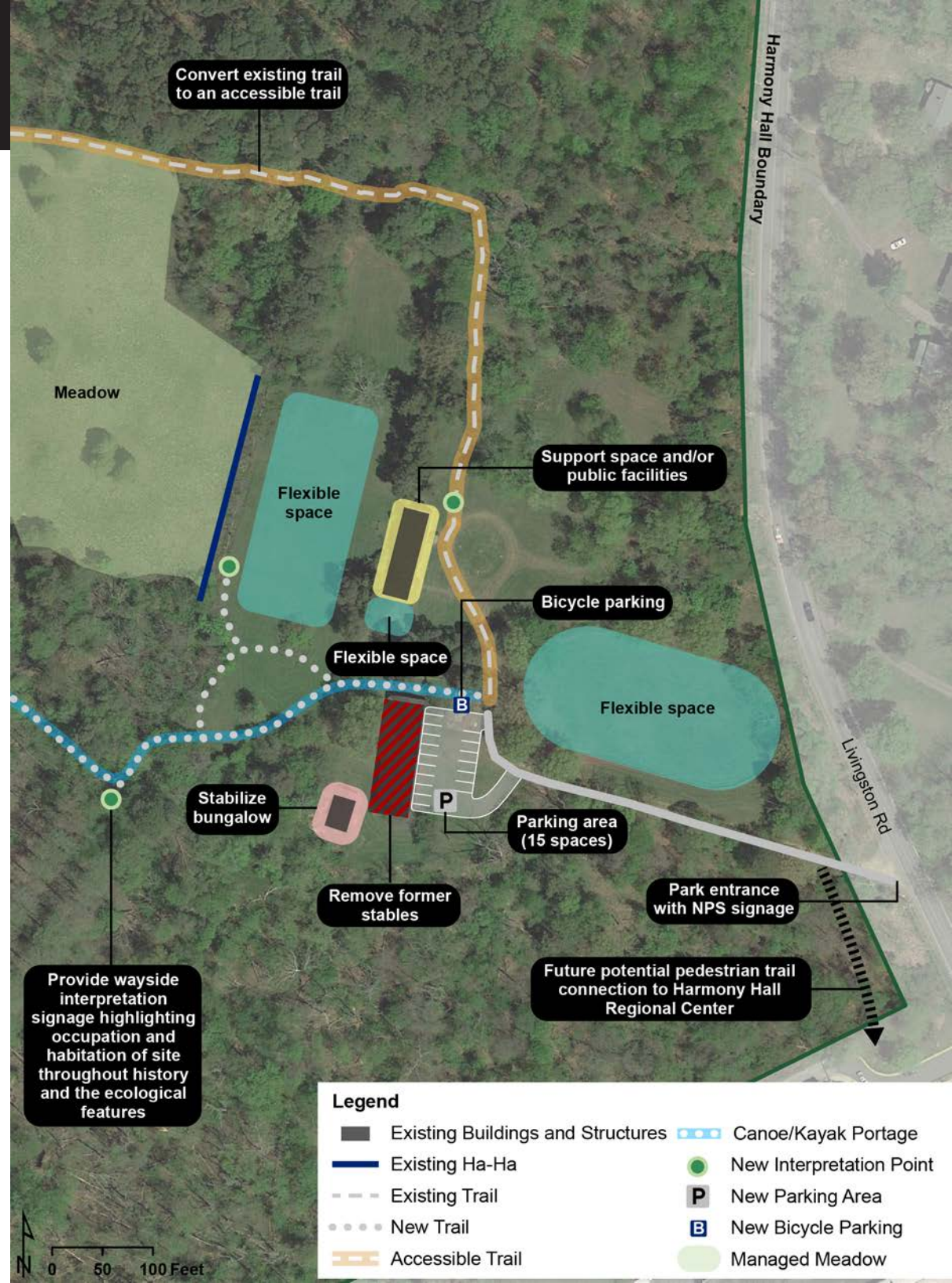
Common to all Options:

The following components are common to all of the following plan options:

- Supports interpretation and management of historic resources through rehabilitation of Harmony Hall
- Short- and long-term options for Harmony Hall rehabilitation through a phased approach
- Support space/public facilities could include offices for NPS, USPP, or other organizations; visitor contact and support services; meeting space; or other
- Provides opportunities for NPS to establish new partnerships or expand existing partnerships with local organizations
- Open space available for programs, educational events, or informal recreation
- Expands parking and signage
- Recreation and events managed to avoid use conflicts with historic context

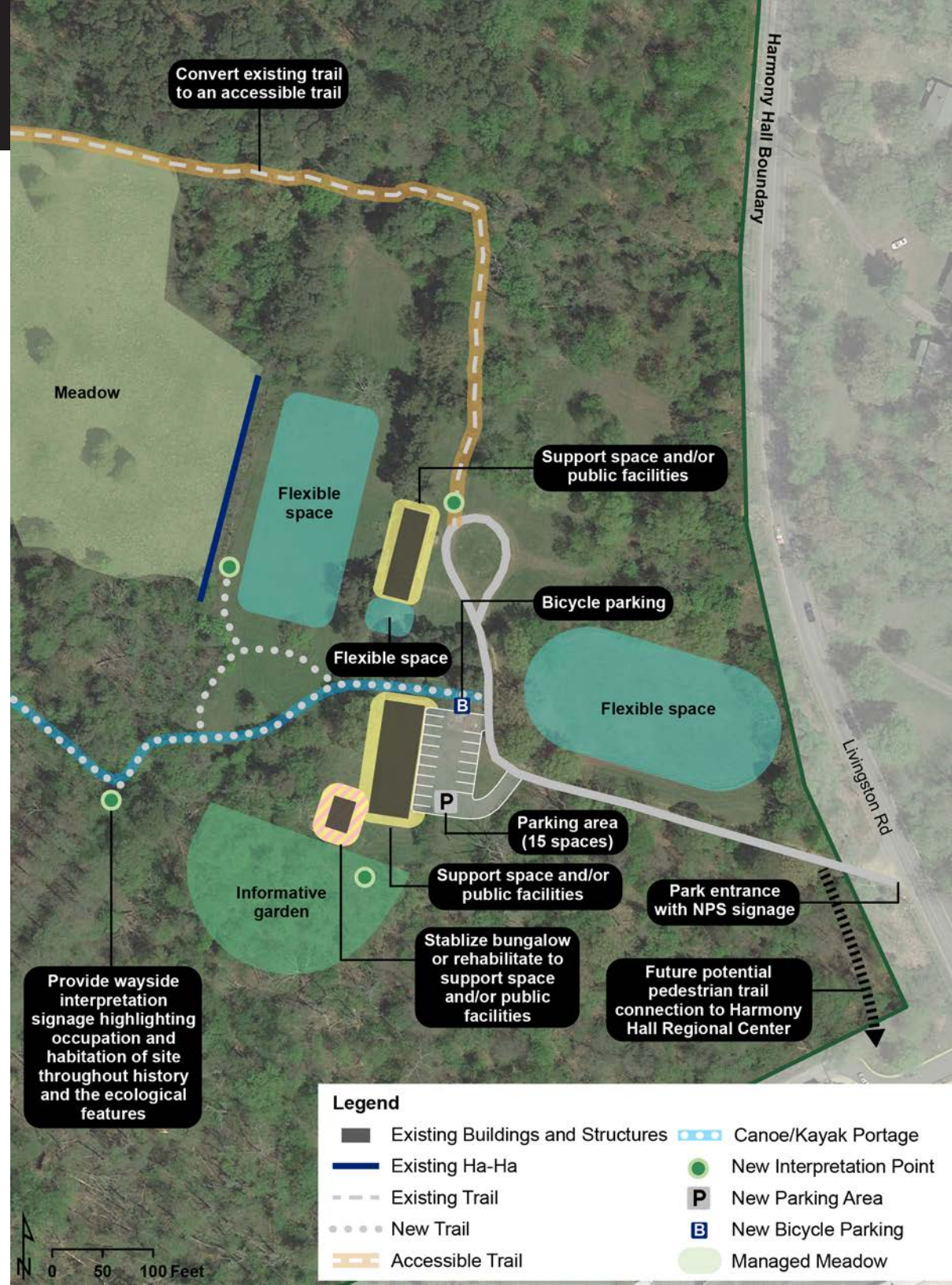
Option A: Focused Rehabilitation

- Minimizes building maintenance through removal of former stables
- Stabilizes bungalow



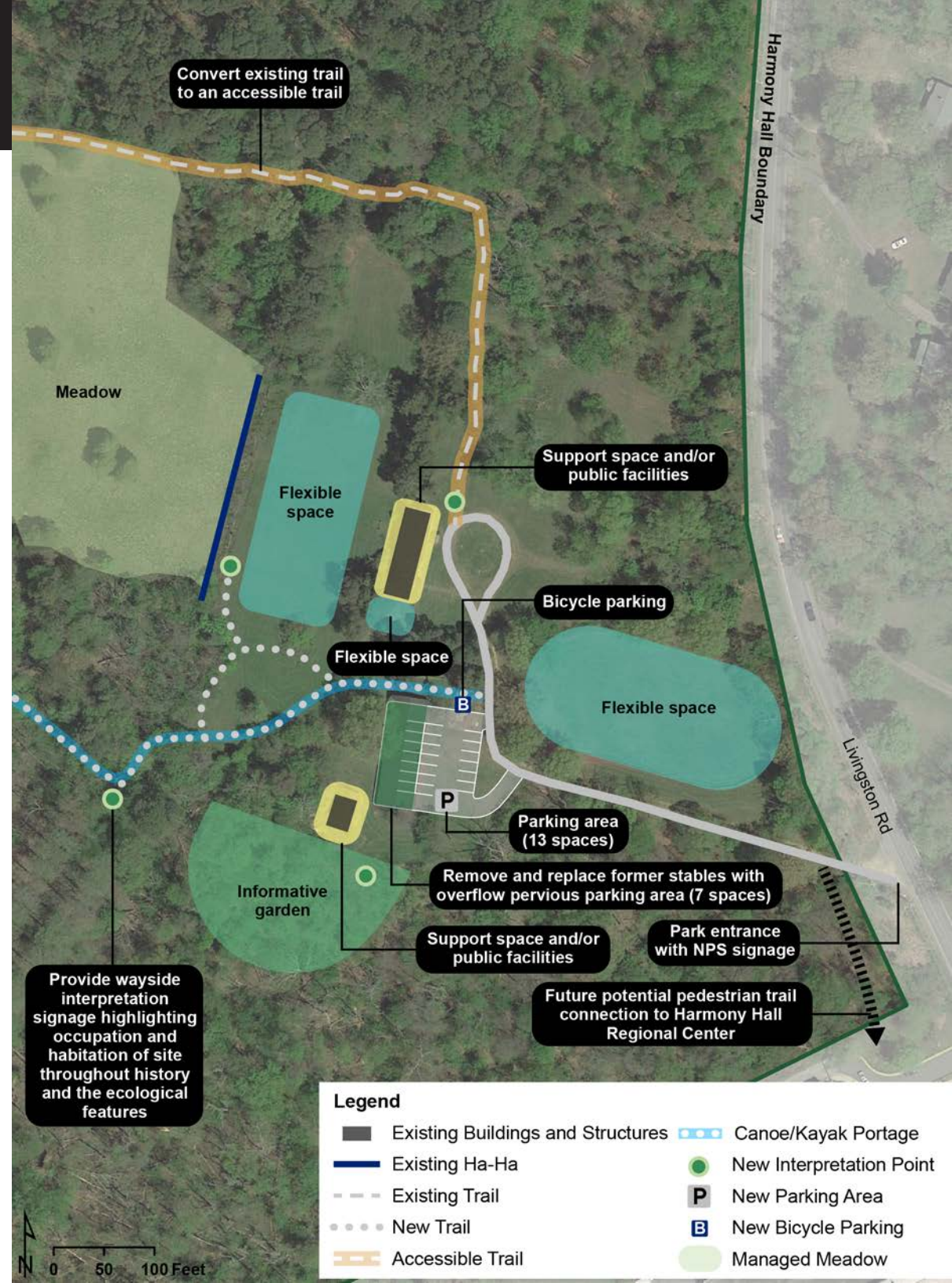
Option B: Maximum Building Space

- Capitalizes on existing infrastructure by repurposing and adapting former stables for new use
- Stabilizes or rehabilitates bungalow
- Adds an informative garden with interpretation



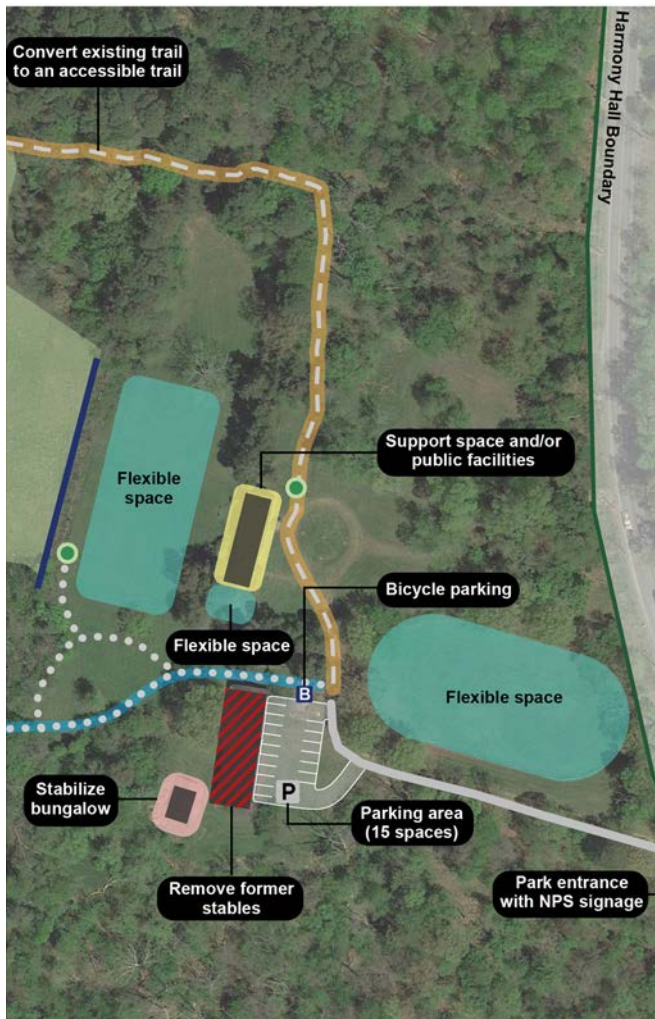
Option C: Full Rehabilitation

- Rehabilitates bungalow
- Removes former stables
- Provides overflow parking area
- Adds an informative garden with interpretation

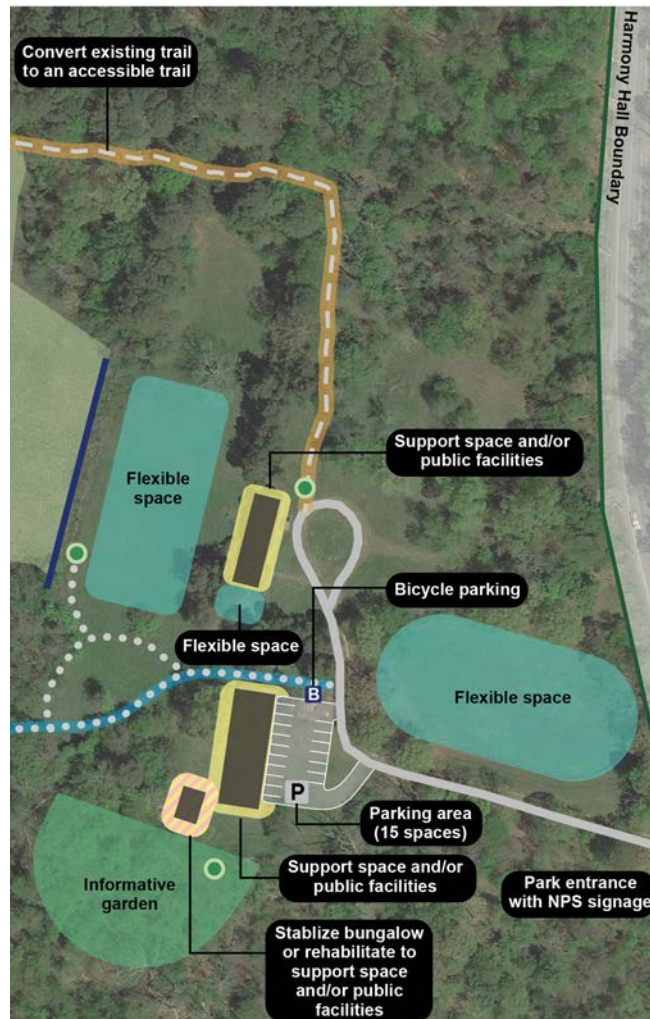




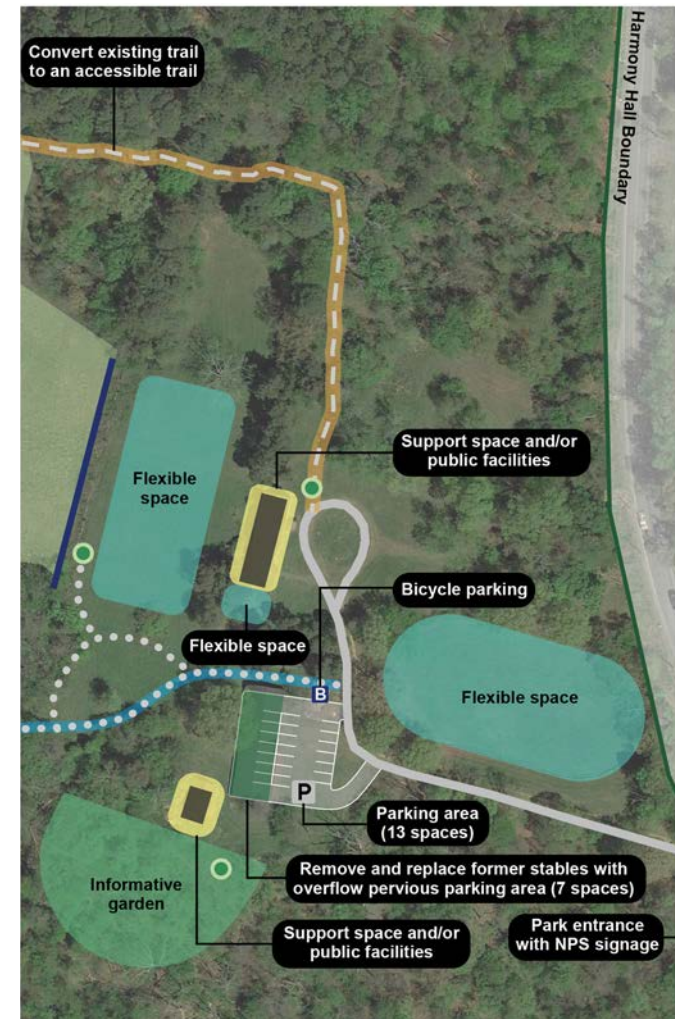
Option A: Focused Rehabilitation



Option B: Maximum Building Space



Option C: Full Rehabilitation



Legend

- Existing Buildings and Structures
- Existing Ha-Ha

- Existing Trail
- New Trail

- Accessible Trail
- Canoe/Kayak Portage
- New Interpretation Point

- New Parking Area
- New Bicycle Parking
- Managed Meadow



How Can You Submit Comments?

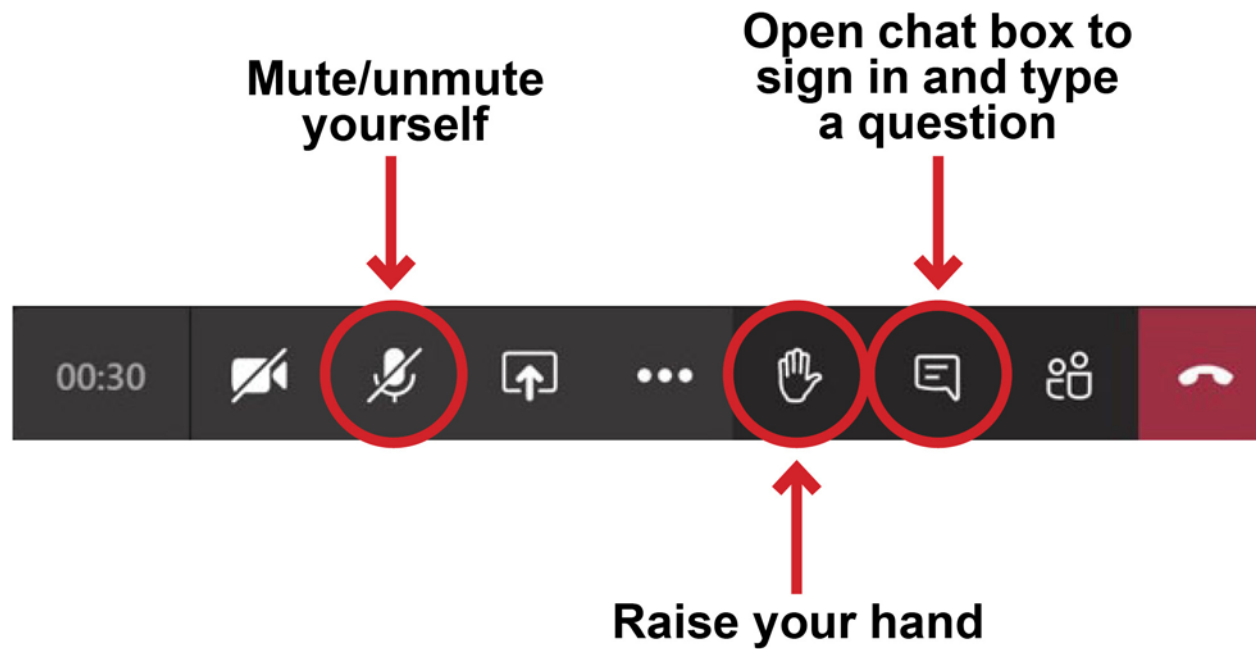
Please provide feedback on the concepts and identify any issues, concerns, or ideas you may have regarding the proposed project.

Starting September 14, 2021

- **Online:** Submit comments online by **October 14, 2021** at <https://go.nps.gov/HarmonyHall>
- **Written comments can be mailed to:**
 - Daniel Noon
 - Superintendent (acting)
 - Attn: Harmony Hall Concept Plan
 - National Park Service
 - Piscataway Parks
 - 1900 Anacostia Drive SE
 - Washington, DC 20020
- **Mailed comments** must be postmarked by October 14, 2021 to receive consideration



Questions?





Thank You!