

Adams Birthplaces Site Landscape Treatment Program

Project Title

Rehabilitate the Adams Birthplaces Landscape to Welcome Visitors for 250th Anniversary of American Independence.

Vision

The vision is to enliven the birthplaces and provide relevant, on-demand opportunities for immersion, self-discovery, and group interaction. The goal is to make these experiences accessible and interesting to more people than can access them now through independent access and improved physical and programmatic accessibility. The approach is a visceral, immersive, interactive, and relatively low-tech exhibits inside the houses to use authentic experiences to their advantage, complementing without duplicating the more high-tech experiences planned for the nearby Adams Presidential Center. The birthplaces sit in their original locations. The goal is to evoke a sense of the past despite present-day distractions. Interior and exterior exhibits will creatively enliven the spaces with the people who once lived there, describe notable activities, and suggest the former rural setting.

Landscape Treatment Proposal

An improved landscape is proposed to evoke the Adams' farm and to be welcoming for all visitors. The enhanced experience will enable visitors to imagine the rural character and scale of the historic farm with improved delineation of pathways throughout the site and universal design and physical accessibility. An orientation panel and fully accessible waysides will be available 24/7 year-round.

Primary Project Components

1. Universally Accessible Walkways

Providing an accessible route through the Adams Birthplaces site and providing access to the two building interiors is central to this project. The proposed accessible route adapts the route of existing stepping-stone pathways. Careful adjustments to topography will help avoid introducing distracting ramps and handrailing systems to the small site. The proposed accessible route is to be nominally 42 inches wide, with widening to 48" at intersections. The route is to be surfaced with readily available bituminous concrete, which is moderately flexible and requires minimal ground disturbance beyond sod removal. The bituminous concrete surface will be top-coated with a "chip-seal" layer, giving the finished walking surface the character of a firmly stabilized gravel pathway (see below). The provision of universal access to the John Adams birthplace structure, anticipated to enter via a new doorway installed in an existing window opening at the northwest corner, will be designed and constructed to not interfere with a future project to modify an existing employee restroom in the rear lean-to ell to serve as a universally accessible restroom for park visitors. The provision of universal access to the John Quincy Adams birthplace structure will enter via a widened existing doorway at the rear (west) façade of the building. Access to the John Quincy Adams birthplace house will be via the existing visitor entrance door.



Figure 1 – Universal Accessibility: Showing proposed representative bituminous chip-seal pathway at Weir Farm NHS.



Figure 2 – Universal Accessibility: Showing existing conditions of stepping-stone pathways, John Adams house.



Figure 3 – Universal Accessibility: Existing conditions at northwest, John Adams house.

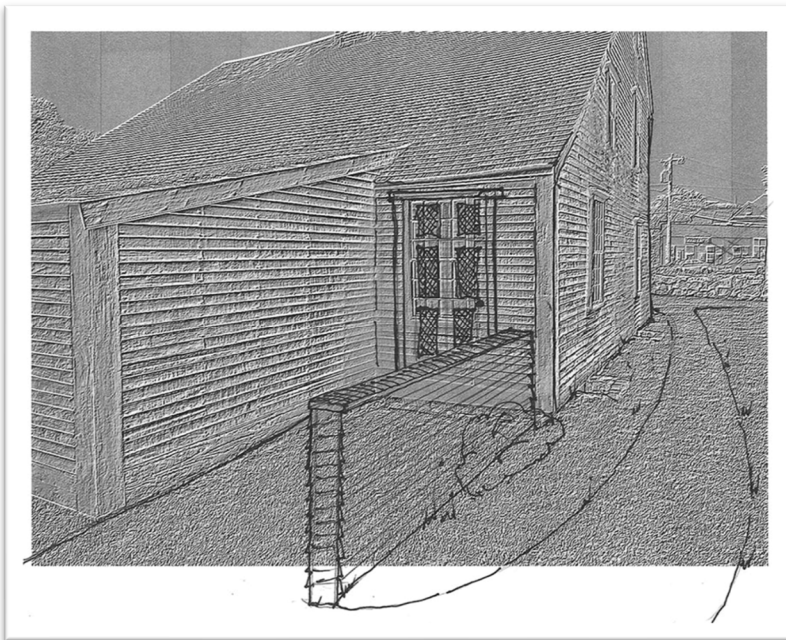


Figure 4 – Universal Accessibility: Conceptual sketch, converting existing window into accessible doorway.



Figure 5 – Universal Accessibility: Existing conditions at west façade and visitor entrance, John Quincy Adams birthplace, looking south.

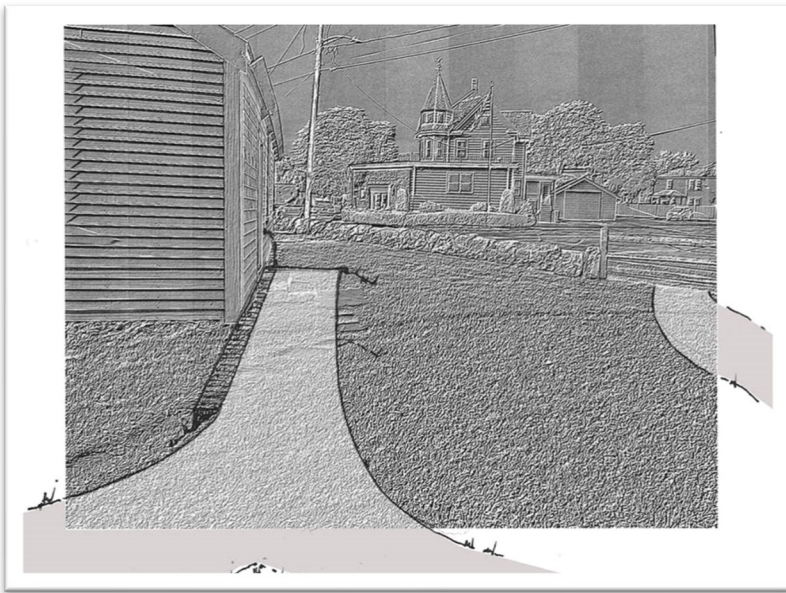


Figure 6 – Universal Accessibility: Conceptual sketch, mitigating existing visitor entrance for accessibility.



Figure 7 – Universal Accessibility: Existing conditions at west façade and visitor entrance, John Quincy Adams birthplace, looking north.

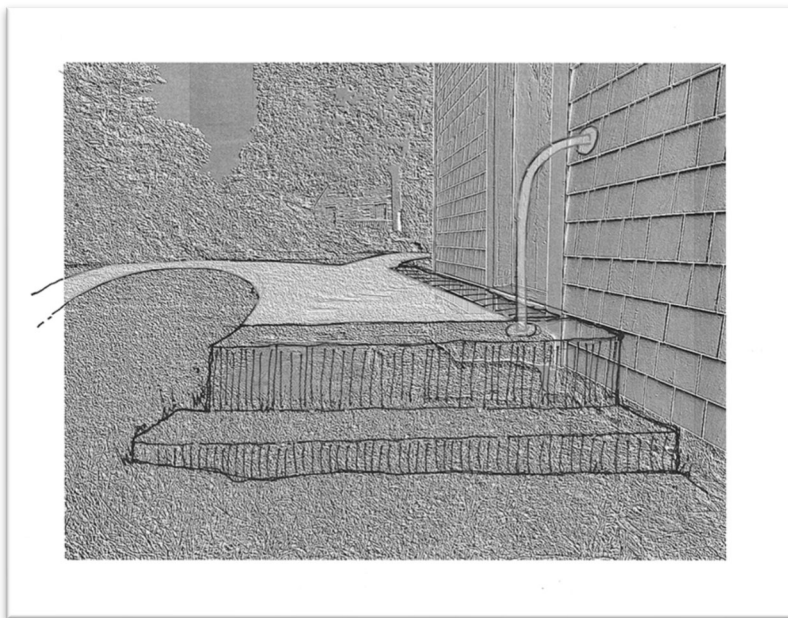


Figure 8 – Universal Accessibility: Conceptual sketch, mitigating existing visitor entrance for accessibility.

2. Gathering Node

An additional area of the accessible route will be located and constructed near the stone wall separating the John Adams and John Quincy Adams portions of the site. This location will provide a small outdoor gathering space, furnished with bench seating, and serving as a central rally point for tours of the buildings and grounds.



Figure 9 – Gathering Node: Treatment will establish a widened area of accessible route at this location under the shade of a tree, to serve as a tour rally point.

3. Vegetative Screening

Once a farmstead, the remnant triangular Adams Birthplaces site has become surrounded by development, making it difficult to imagine the rural conditions present during the Adams family tenure. Installation of a mass planting of evergreen trees will have the effect of draping a green curtain north of the two historic birthplace structures, blocking distracting off-site views and setting the two small buildings apart from their urban context. The planting of evergreen trees will be located at the northern boundary, this being the base of an inverted south-pointing triangle. This mass planting will be composed of two different pine species. Six white pines will be planted at the northern boundary line, and being of a forest species known for its mature height and breadth will block distant views. Sixteen pitch pine, a minor species known for its low branching and asymmetrical growth, will be planted in front of the white pines to block views into the immediately adjacent residential lots.



Figure 10 – Proposed site of vegetative screening at northern boundary: Evergreen trees, mass planting, looking north toward north site boundary.

4. Small Orchard

A second mass planting of seven apple trees will be installed west of the John Adams birthplace structure. This will serve as an exhibit of representative orchard trees, also screening the adjacent parking lot. The planting of apple trees is not intended to evoke historic conditions, but to screen off-site views with plants appropriate to a rural farmstead. The apple trees will be semi-dwarf specimens chosen from modern varieties that are resistant to pests and diseases.



Figure 11 – Small Orchard: This location will feature a proposed domestic orchard exhibit. Showing area west of John Adams house, and the screening the large off-site parking lot.

5. Stockade Fencing

Accompanying and supporting the vegetative screening, a new seven-foot-high stockade fence will replace the existing chain-link fence at the northern boundary. Given that the effect of the vegetative screening will require the maturation of the plantings, this fencing will help provide immediate visual separation of the historic site from the adjacent residential properties. This fence is not to be sourced from a retail home-center but will require custom design and construction appropriate to its historical context.



Figure 12 – Existing fencing to be replaced with stockade fencing at the Northern Site Boundary. Photo taken from off-site, within adjacent commercial parking lot.

6. Outdoor Meeting Space

The combination of both the evergreen planting of pines at the northern site boundary, and the smaller planting of apple trees will work in concert to create a large turf-covered “outdoor room” with the new screen plantings serving as the walls of the outdoor gathering space. The perimeter of this outdoor space will be nominally accessible by way of a widened nearby portion of the accessible route.



Figure 13 – Proposed outdoor meeting space. This space defined by evergreen screening to the north and the proposed orchard exhibit to the southwest.

7. Interpretive Waysides

Three interpretive wayside exhibits will be designed and produced for placement along the accessible route. One outdoor wayside exhibit will be provided along the accessible route near the north-facing façade of the John Quincy Adams birthplace; another will be provided along the accessible route near the front south-facing façade of the John Adams birthplace; the third wayside exhibit will be located at the tour rally point located near the stone wall dividing the two birthplace structures.



Figure 14 –Proposed location for the wayside exhibit panel for the JQA house to be located in the wye of these two flagstone pathways. Remaining two waysides to be located as indicated on accompanying drawing.

8. Well-Sweep

The proposed Adams Birthplaces landscape treatment includes landscape exhibits beyond interpretive wayside panels, these project elements intending to help recover the historic domestic character of the farmstead landscape. These domestic motif elements include the replacement of the long-missing but well-documented “well-sweep,” a landscape feature accompanying the existing cut-stone well cover.



Figure 15 – Well-Sweep. Showing former early 20th century outdoor well exhibit.

9. Herb Garden

Another important project element is the provision of a small garden of medicinal and culinary herbs in the protective angle of the existing stone wall found nearest the John Quincy Adams birthplace structure. There is also an opportunity to install appropriate low-maintenance herbaceous plantings as an alternative to turfgrass at the southern apex of the triangular lot, immediately south of the John Quincy Adams birthplace structure.



Figure 16 – Herb Garden. Location of proposed domestic herb garden landscape exhibit:

10. New Flagpole

The poor condition of the existing flagpole on site warrants its replacement in-situ with a durable contemporary fixture. Lighting is deemed unnecessary as the flag is brought indoors during the evening hours.



Figure 17 -New Flagpole. Proposed replacement of existing flagpole with new fixture.

Next Steps:

- Initiate PEPC consultation with park Section 106 advisors on the landscape project described above.
- Contract for archeological testing based on the area(s) of potential effect of the elements described in the ten project elements.
- Confirm locations for three proposed wayside exhibit panels
- Update PMIS statement to include three separate components. Landscape, Architecture, Waysides.

Landscape Project Total Requested: (\$398,745)

(See detailed estimate that follows)

Adams National Historical Park - Birthplaces Landscape Treatment FY24

GOVERNMENT CLASS C COST ESTIMATE February 2024

ITEMS AND ASSUMPTIONS	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT COST	TOTAL COST
<u>Project Archeological Testing and Monitoring</u>				
Archeological Testing and Monitoring	1	allow	\$60,000	\$60,000
			subtotal	\$60,000
<u>G10 Site Preparation</u>				
G1010 Site Clearing				
Clearing and grubbing along northern boundary	9500	sq. ft.	\$1	\$9,500
Remove existing flagstone walk	200	sq. ft.	\$2	\$400
Removal of same off site	2	cu. yd.	\$40	\$80
G1030 Site Earthwork				
New fill material (1920 sf area * average 0.5 ft fill)	36	cu. yd.	\$100	\$3,600
Grading for new accessible walk	1	allow	\$5,000	\$5,000
			subtotal	\$18,580
<u>G20 Site Improvements</u>				
G2030 Pedestrian Paving				
New accessible chip seal bituminous concrete walk (320 lf	1120	sq. ft.	\$12	\$13,440
New accessible chip seal bituminous concrete seating area	330	sq. ft.	\$12	\$3,960
G2045 Site Furnishings				
Stockade fencing at northern site boundary, 7 ft ht	175	lf	\$100	\$17,500
New Well Sweep Landscape Exhibit	1	allow	\$3,000	\$3,000
Install new flagpole fixture (40 ft ht)	1	allow	\$8,000	\$8,000
New interpretive wayside exhibits	3	ea.	\$3,800	\$11,400
Bench seating at tour rally node (milled log bench)	5	ea.	\$653	\$3,263
G2050 Landscaping				
Vegetative screening, pitch pine trees (<i>Pinus rigida</i>), 4-!	16	ea.	\$248	\$3,960
Vegetative screening , white pine trees (<i>Pinus strobus</i>), 4	6	ea.	\$360	\$2,160
Vegetative screening, apple trees (<i>Malus sp.</i>), 1-1.5 in c	7	ea.	\$338	\$2,363
Install new herb garden (60 #1 containers at 12" oc)	1	allow	\$900	\$900
Fine grade and seed disturbed areas, project wide	1	allow	\$3,000	\$3,000
			subtotal	\$72,945
<u>F10 Special Construction</u>				
F1010 Special Structures				
Install vertical granite curb section to protect J. Q. Ada	12	lf	\$40	\$480
Install monolithic granite steps at J. Q. Adams Birthplace	2	ea.	\$750	\$1,500
Install vertical granite curb section to protect J. Adams	12	lf	\$40	\$480
			subtotal	\$2,460
			TOTAL	\$153,985
<u>DSC Cost Estimating Handbook for Class C Estimates</u>				
Park Location Factor	17.2% <i>DSC Estimating Template</i>			\$26,485
Remoteness Factor	1.0% <i>DSC Estimating Handbook, 1% pe</i>			\$1,540
Design Contingency	23.0% <i>Middle Value of DSC Estimating</i>			\$35,417
State and Local Taxes	6.25%			\$9,624
	TOTAL DIRECT CONSTRUCTION			\$227,051
Government General Requirements / Conditions	18.0% <i>Middle Value of DSC Estimating</i>			\$40,869
Historic Preservation Factor	5.0% <i>Lower Value of DSC Estimating</i>			\$11,353
	SUBTOTAL NET CONSTRUCTION			\$279,273
Overhead	11.0% <i>Middle Value of DSC Estimating</i>			\$30,720
Profit	10.0% <i>Upper Value of DSC Estimating</i>			\$27,927
	ESTIMATED NET CONSTRUCTION			\$337,920
Bonds	3.0% <i>Upper Value of DSC Estimating</i>			\$10,138
Government Contracting Method Adjustment	15.0% <i>Upper Value of DSC Estimating</i>			\$50,688
	TOTAL ESTIMATED NET CONSTRUCTION			\$398,745
	CLASS C ESTIMATE TOTAL			\$398,745

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Cultural Landscape Report

Birthplaces
Adams National Historical Park
Quincy, MA

2024 Treatment Plan



National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

- 1. HABS Survey, 1936
- 2. HABS Survey, 1979
- 3. City of Quincy, 2011
- 4. Site visits, 2011 and 2023
- 5. Aerial photographs, 2012 and 2023

DRAWN BY

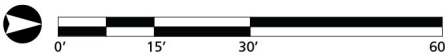
Kirsten Holder, Jaime Young, Eliot Foulds, and James Mealey
AutoCAD and Adobe Illustrator

LEGEND

- Proposed Accessible Route
- Proposed Herb Garden
- Proposed Deciduous and Evergreen Trees
- Proposed Interpretive Wayside
- Existing Roads
- Existing Building
- 10 Foot Contour
- Stone Wall
- Flagstone Path
- Existing Deciduous and Evergreen Trees
- Existing Deciduous Shrubs
- Adams Birthplaces Property Lines
- Property Lines
- Wood Fence
- Chain Link Fence

NOTES

- 1. All features shown in approximate scale and location.
- 2. Plan shows proposed conditions in 2024.



Drawing 1