



MEMORANDUM

To: Salem Historic Commission

From: Chris Genter, Senior Associate, Oudens Ello Architecture

Re: Responses to Camp Naumkeag Demo Delay Questions

Copy: Patti Kelleher, Preservation Planner, City of Salem
Elizabeth Peterson, Director, Witch House, Pioneer Village & Charter Street Welcome Center
Trish O'Brien, Director, Salem Park, Recreation and Community Services
Michael Crouse, Signature Parks Project Manager, Salem Park, Recreation and Community Services
Margaret Wood, Director, Anser Advisory
Virginia Adams, Senior Architectural Historian, The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.
John Wathne, Principal, Structures North
Jillian Borghardt, Structural Engineer Preservation Designer, Structures North
Matt Kirchman, Principal, ObjectIdea
Matthew Oudens, Principal, Oudens Ello Architecture

Attachments:

- Camp Naumkeag Conditions Assessment, Structures North, February 22, 2022
- Pioneer Village Conditions Assessment, Structures North, November 29, 2022
- Massachusetts Historical Commission Pioneer Village Area Form
- Memorandum re: Response to the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines on Flood Adaptation for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, Oudens Ello Architecture, February 10, 2023
- Diagrams 1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and 4
- Historic Building Relocation Precedents

This memo is provided in response to questions and comments which were raised during a series of public presentations to the Salem Historic Commission for the above-named project. Presentations were made on 6/2/21, 9/15/21, 11/3/21, 12/8/21, 1/19/22 and 4/6/22.

Camp Naumkeag Site

- **Provide a structural assessment for Camp Naumkeag**

See attached structural assessment by Structures North completed on February 22, 2022

- **Provide full photographic documentation**

To be completed by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. (PAL) prior to demolition

1. What does the structural assessment tell us about the structures?

As noted in the structural assessment, the structures at Camp Naumkeag were built as "camp" structures, and did not have solid foundations or strong frames. As a result, the existing buildings at Camp Naumkeag are in extremely poor condition, including failing foundations that have resulted in floor and roof sagging, extensive structural damage. In addition, the wood siding and roofing has deteriorated. They are presently unsafe and unfit for human occupancy. Because of the vast extent of the damage to the structures, the work required to stabilize, restore, and preserve them on the present site would approach the cost of totally reconstructing them, and the cost of repairing them and moving them would exceed the cost of replacing them with new facilities.

2. What options are available to reuse the existing structures?

As mentioned above, reuse of any of the structures would require new foundations and extensive structural and building envelope repairs. In addition, the structures are uninsulated and mostly unconditioned and therefore are



most suitable for seasonal programs that do not require heating or cooling. Initially, the team considered reusing one of the structures for maintenance storage, but the gas-powered equipment that would be stored there is not suitable in an unrated wood-framed structure. In Phase I, the building might serve as a temporary arrival and ticketing area prior to the construction of the visitor center, but no long-term use has been identified for the structure once the visitor center is constructed.

Four sites were considered for the relocation and restoration of one of the cabins within the proposed site plan (see attached diagrams 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5 with options for location). Location A at the north edge of the proposed parking lot at the entrance to the site is best positioned to serve as a temporary seasonal arrival and ticketing area, but it would also be the most visible from the relocated Pioneer Village structures and presents interpretive challenges.

3. How will the proposed interpretation preserve and reflect the history of the site?

The decision to retain any of the 100-year-old camp buildings in order to interpret the story of Camp Naumkeag is pending. Presently, the buildings themselves do not house much more than stored equipment. No longer used for overnight camping, the building's exteriors and interiors are not interpretively significant beyond what photographs could do. The memories and stories of Camp Naumkeag probably surpass the physical evidence of the structures. As described above, any retained buildings would not be used for interpretive purposes such as an indoor museum space, rather repurposed for operational use such as an interim staffed entry pavilion or gateway.

The history of the site as a camp (both for the infirm and for youth) would primarily be interpreted through wayside signage replete with photographs and testimonials from history and the community.

Pioneer Village

- **Consult with the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC)**

A Project Notification Form was submitted to MHC in October 2022. Although there is no federal or state funding, permitting, or licensing requiring MHC review, a cover letter explained that the City of Salem was filing the PNF to initiate a review and consultation process. MHC has not yet responded.

- **Update the Pioneer Village Area Form to reflect corrected dates**

The area form (attached) was updated by PAL and submitted to MHC with the PNF in October 2022.

- **Provide a written response to Secretary of the Interior's Standards**

See attached Memorandum re: *Response to the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines on Flood Adaptation for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*.

- **Provide full photographic documentation (to be completed by PAL)**

To be completed by PAL prior to moving the structures to the new site.

1. What is the environmental threat to the structures in their current location? How protected is the proposed site by comparison?

The Pioneer Village structures are in FEMA Zone AE: an area of special flood hazard with a base flood elevation (BFE) of 11'-0"; The ground level of the structures is at or below 10'-0"; 1'-0" or more below the BFE. Storm models indicate that the site would be subject to hurricane storm surge from category 1 and higher storms. 3'-0"-4'-0" of sea level rise would make the site inaccessible at high tide and would put the Blacksmith Shop at water level. 6'-0" of sea level rise would put the one-story structures at water level and the two-story Governor's house at the water's edge.

The proposed site for the relocation of the structures at Camp Naumkeag is outside of the FEMA special flood hazard area. The ground level of the structures would be between 19'-0" and 20'-0" above sea level, with no anticipated impact to the structures from up to 6'-0" of sea level rise. Storm models indicate that the site could be subject to hurricane storm surge from category 4 storms, with no anticipated impact from category 1, 2 or 3 storms.



Please refer to the attached diagrams comparing FEMA flood zones (3.1), Hurricane Storm Surge (3.2), and Sea Level Rise (3.3) for the Forest River and Proposed sites. (Source Data: [FEMA Flood Hazard Map](#); Massachusetts office of Coastal Zone Management [Massachusetts Sea Level Rise and Coastal Flooding Viewer](#); [USGS Topographic Map](#))

2. How intact is the Pioneer Village and its landscape relative to its original design?

The village remains in the same location it was constructed in 1930, and, although the site has been enclosed by a palisade fence. The setting, on a man-made pond, differs from the original in several key ways:

- The area of the site immediately surrounding and rising behind the structures is covered with successional growth forest; some of the larger trees may have been planted in 1930 as part of the Harlan P. Kelsey landscape design and have matured in place. However, no record of any original drawings for the site have been located and the record available is limited to photos, the earliest of which date to c.1931.
- The pond which formed the foreground to the stage set has been significantly impacted by invasive phragmites, which is a tall perennial reed grass. This invasive plant has made the building hard to see from the original view point.
- In response to public demand for the parking at the popular park, a large amount of parking has been introduced in the area that was used for viewing the park across the pond.

Four of the buildings on the site - two one-story cottages, the Governor's Fayre House, and the English Wigwam - were constructed under the direction of George Francis Dow, with in-kind repairs made as needed. The remaining one-story cottages, the Blacksmith shop and Dugouts post-date the 1930's construction but are replacements for structures lost to fire, vandalism, or deterioration due to age, that closely match the design and construction of the original buildings and reflect Dow's original layout of the site.

3. What was the basis of the current orientation of the structures?

The Pioneer Village was created as a stage set for a play celebrating the Massachusetts Bay Colony tercentenary: the cottages were sited in a single row along the northern edge of a man-made lake facing south, with spectators positioned to the south of the village on an elevation in the park for viewing. The southern orientation of the Pioneer Village cottages was likely intended to follow traditional settlement patterns of the early 1600s: however it does not represent any known arrangement of historic buildings in Salem, and was instead created as a foil to the performance.

The proposed siting of the relocated Pioneer Village structures at the Camp Naumkeag site replicates as closely as possible the general landscape characteristics and relationship of the selected moved structures within the site's existing landscape features: the goal is to create a similar opportunity to see the buildings together in the same relationship to each other, to a rising background landscape, and with a foreground from which to experience a performance. This results in a northern orientation for the structures, with Beverly Harbor in the foreground and with densely planted trees behind the relocated buildings.

4. What instances of relocation of historical structures might the Commission look to as antecedents for the relocation of Pioneer Village?

Examples listed in the attached *Historic Building Relocation Precedents*.

5. How will the structures be relocated?

The most practical path of transport between the present site at Forest River Park and the proposed site at Camp Naumkeag is by water. Transportation would be by barge between the two locations, starting out at Forest River, passing through Salem Harbor, around Abbot Rock and the Willows and landing at Dead Horse Beach. Such a method of transport would avoid shutting down roadways and removing utility lines as would be necessary if the path were over land and through the downtown.

For more detailed information, please refer to 'Lifting and Moving Methods' in the *Pioneer Village Conditions Assessment*, Structures North, November 29, 2022.



6. How will the project be funded?

The project will be funded through the Signature Parks Initiatives fund, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds, and Capital Improvement (CIP) funds.

7. How will pedestrians, parking and other vehicles be provided for?

The proposed plan includes 10 on-site parking spaces, 6 of which are accessible, along with a bus and trolley drop-off. Trolleys are intended to run frequently during peak visiting periods to reduce traffic. Many visitors will park either at Dead Horse Beach or the Fort Lee Parking areas. Sidewalks, walkways and crosswalks between these off-site parking areas and the entrance to the site will be added and/or improved as part of the project scope. Directional signage will be added between the off-site parking areas and the entrance to Pioneer Village to direct visitors.

Please refer to the attached parking and access diagram (4) for preliminary recommended locations of walkways, crosswalks, and directional signs.

8. How will interpretation preserve and reflect history?

ObjectIdea is in the process of developing an interpretive plan for Pioneer Village at the new location.

9. How does the financial viability of the project adjacent to the Willows compare with the financial viability in the current location? How will the city financially support the Pioneer Village?

The City of Salem is working with ConsultEcon, Inc. to evaluate the attendance potential of and develop an operating plan for Pioneer Village in its new location. Their final report and recommendations will be completed in the next few months and will inform operations, budgets and staffing for the City in taking full advantage of the new opportunities created by moving the village.

End of Memorandum
