

# National Monument to the Forefathers





# Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Governor  
**Maura T. Healey**

Lieutenant Governor  
**Kimberly Driscoll**

Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary  
**Rebecca L. Tepper**

Department of Conservation and Recreation Commissioner  
**Nicole LaChapelle**



# DCR Mission

*To protect, promote and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural and recreational resources for the well-being of all.*





## DCR Core Principles

### Our Core Principles:

**Provide access to a diversity of outdoor recreational experiences & unique landscapes**

that is equitable, inclusive, and welcoming



2



**Conserve lands, water, and forests**

by integrating science, research, and technical expertise into the management of our natural resources

**Advance climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts**

by implementing sustainable practices & advancing resiliency across our infrastructure, assets, & resources



4



**Support healthy communities**

by providing places for people to connect with nature and each other


**Inspire generations of stewards**

by recognizing and honoring our legacy through partnerships, public engagement, and education





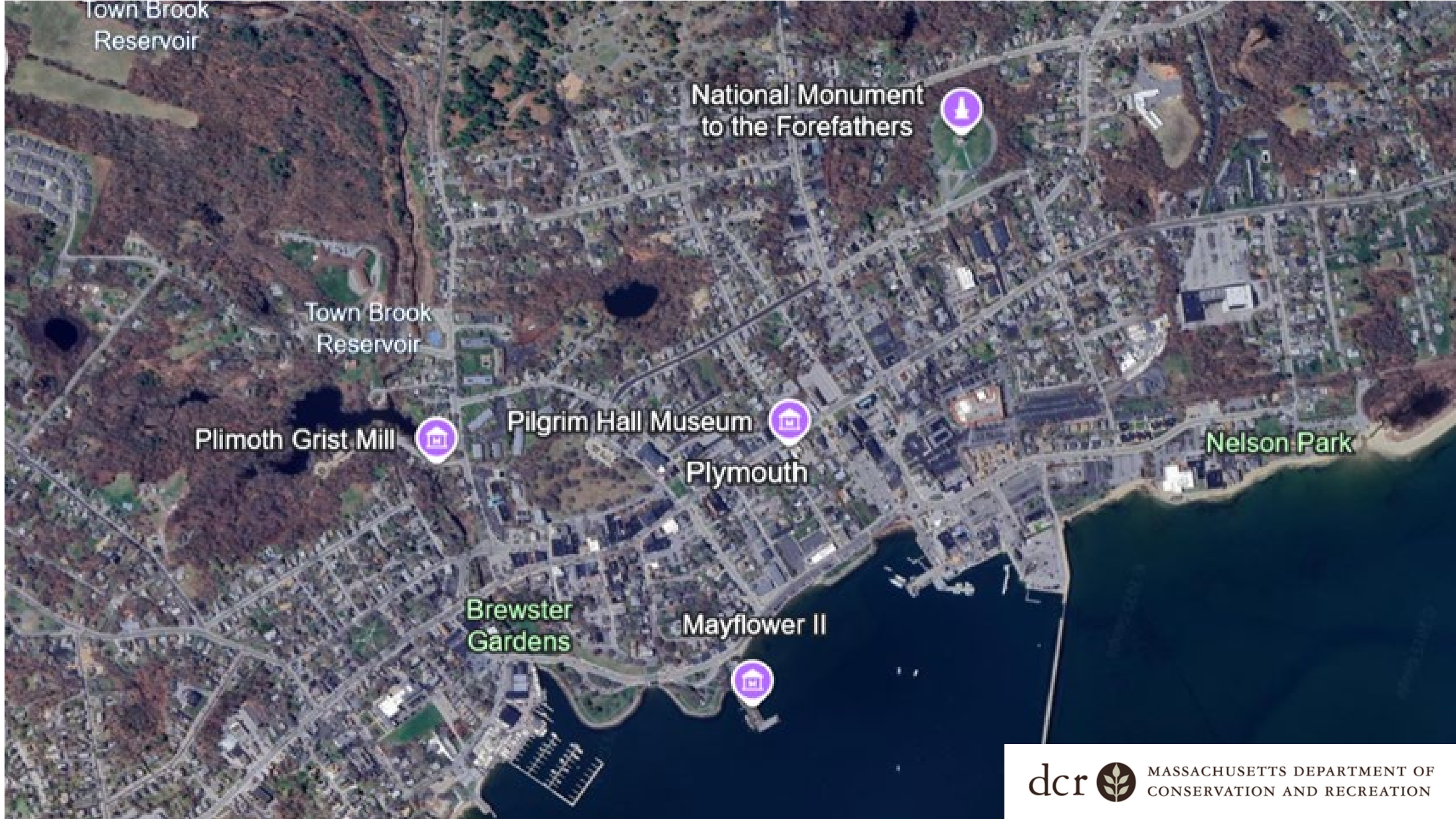
## Meeting Logistics

- Two ways to ask questions during the meeting
  1. Use the Q&A feature – comments go to the moderator
  2. Raise your hand: Click “Reaction”, then click “Raise Hand”  and you will be given permission to unmute and speak.

You will also have the opportunity to submit written comments:

DCR Public Comments <https://www.mass.gov/forms/dcr-public-comments>

*Please note that this public meeting will be recorded; the recording will be a public record.*



Town Brook  
Reservoir

National Monument  
to the Forefathers

Town Brook  
Reservoir

Plimoth Grist Mill

Pilgrim Hall Museum

Plymouth

Brewster  
Gardens

Mayflower II

Nelson Park



MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF  
CONSERVATION AND RECREATION



# Background

- Hammat Billings selected in 1855 by Pilgrim Society to design the monument
- Originally planned to be 183' tall – scaled down to 81'
- Groundbreaking in 1859; monument dedicated in 1889
- Park managed by the Pilgrim Society until 2001 when acquired by DCR (formerly DEM)



# NPS Semiquincentennial Grant

- Honoring the 250th anniversary of the US by preserving sites that commemorate the founding of the nation
- Program announced in 2020
- \$27 million awarded, supporting 56 projects
  - *4 projects in MA*
- 2023 – NPS awarded DCR \$750,000; DCR matched with \$250,000



## Project Goals:

- Conserve and clean monument
- Update National Register nomination
- Enhance interpretation
- Provide accessibility

## Scope of Work:

Phase 1: Monument Cleaning and Conservation

Phase 2: Research, National Register update, landscape design

Phase 3: Landscape Construction





# Phase 1: Monument Conservation

- Cost: \$190,000
- Conservation Team: Village Green Restoration and Building and Monuments Conservation
- Status: Assessment completed in Spring 2024; Work completed in Spring/Summer 2025













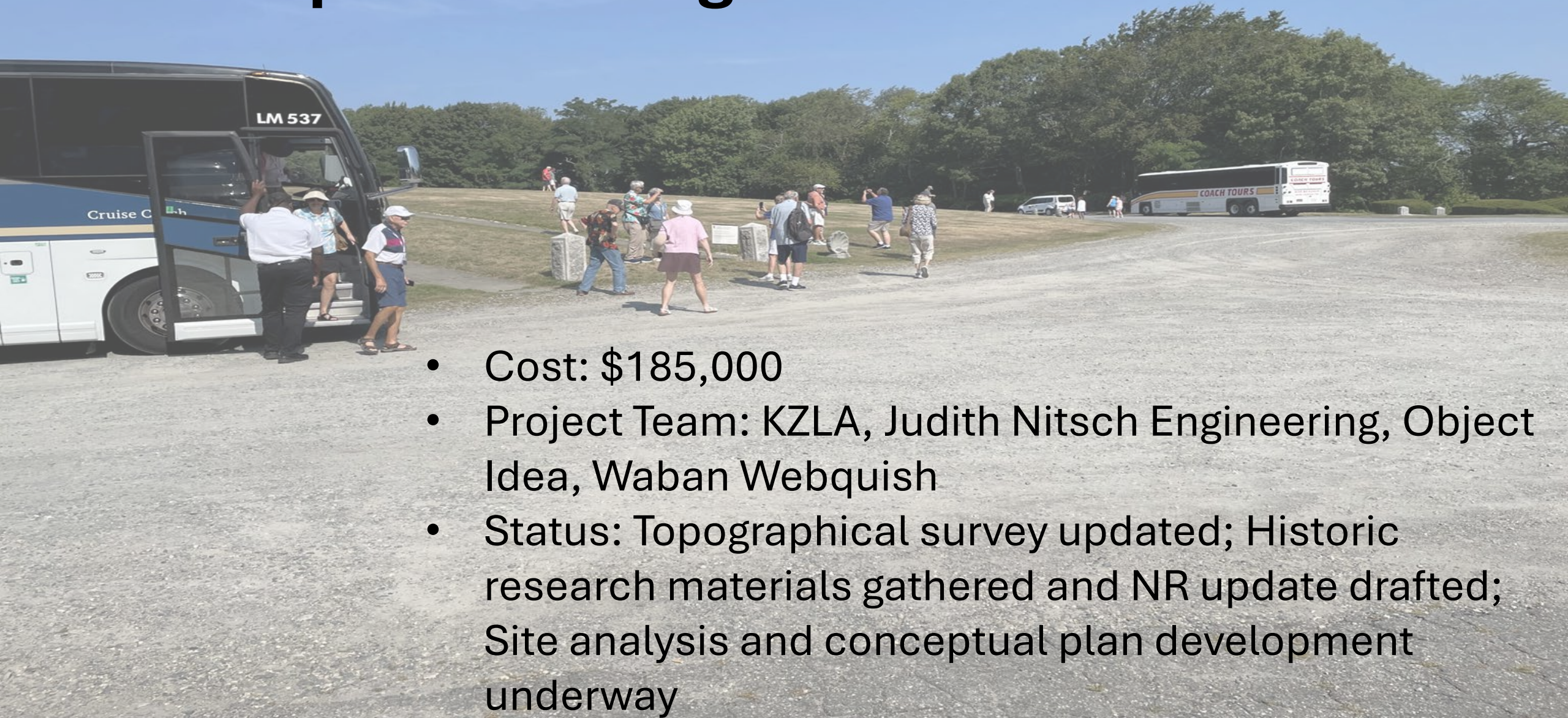








# Phase 2: Accessible Landscape and Interpretive Design



- Cost: \$185,000
- Project Team: KZLA, Judith Nitsch Engineering, Object Idea, Waban Webquish
- Status: Topographical survey updated; Historic research materials gathered and NR update drafted; Site analysis and conceptual plan development underway



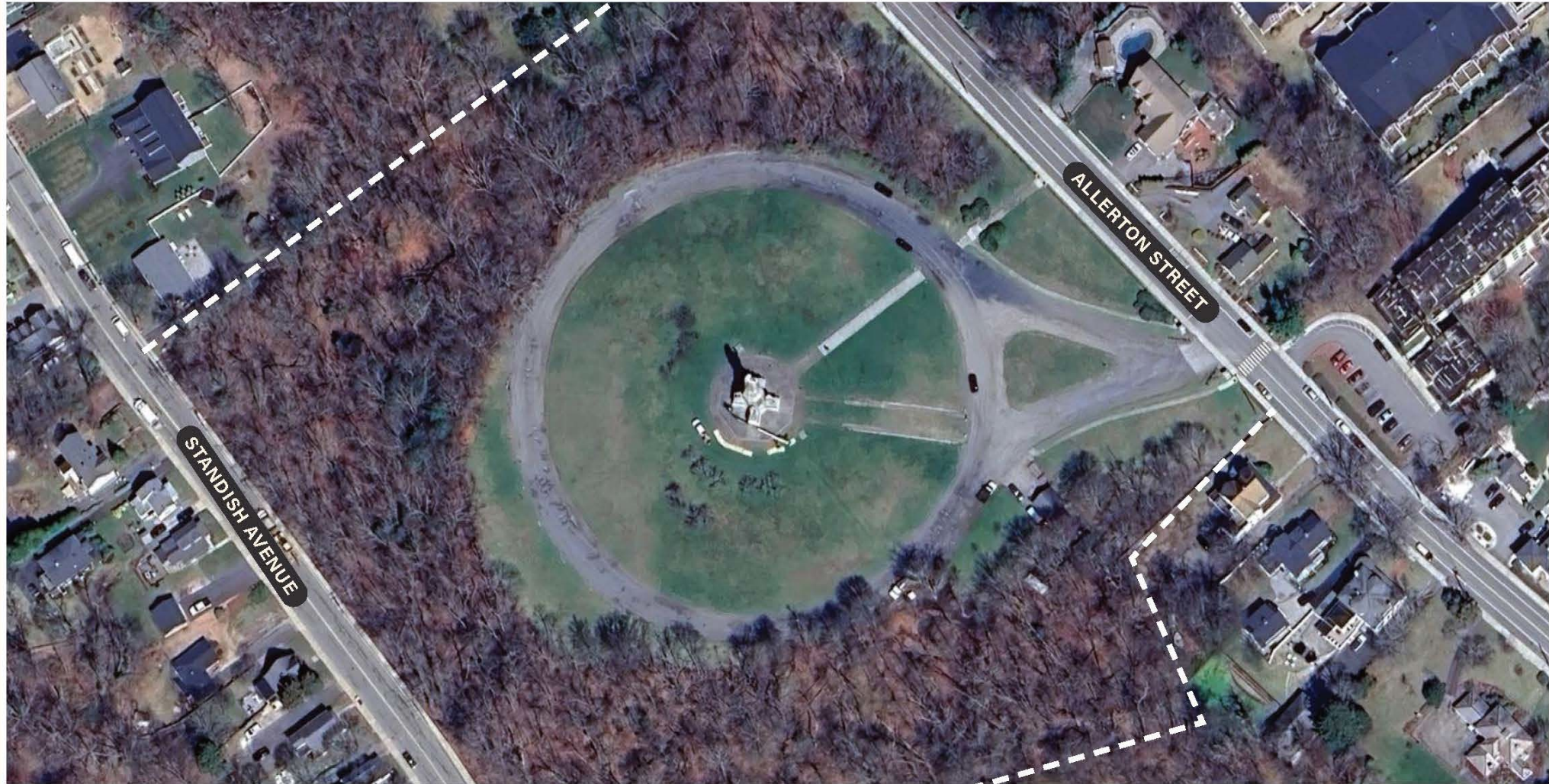
# HISTORY

- 1857 Sculpture begun with the base in Maine
- 1858 *Faith* begun
- 1877 *Morality* & the *Departure from Delft Haven* installed
- 1881 *Education* & the *Signing of the Mayflower Compact* installed
- 1888 *Liberty* & *Law* installed with the *Landing on Plymouth Rock* & the *First Treaty*
- 1889 August 1: *National Monument to the Forefathers* dedicated
- 1896-97 Changes made to the landscape
- 1960s "Beautification" of the landscape





# EXISTING CONDITIONS



THE NATIONAL MONUMENT TO THE FOREFATHERS



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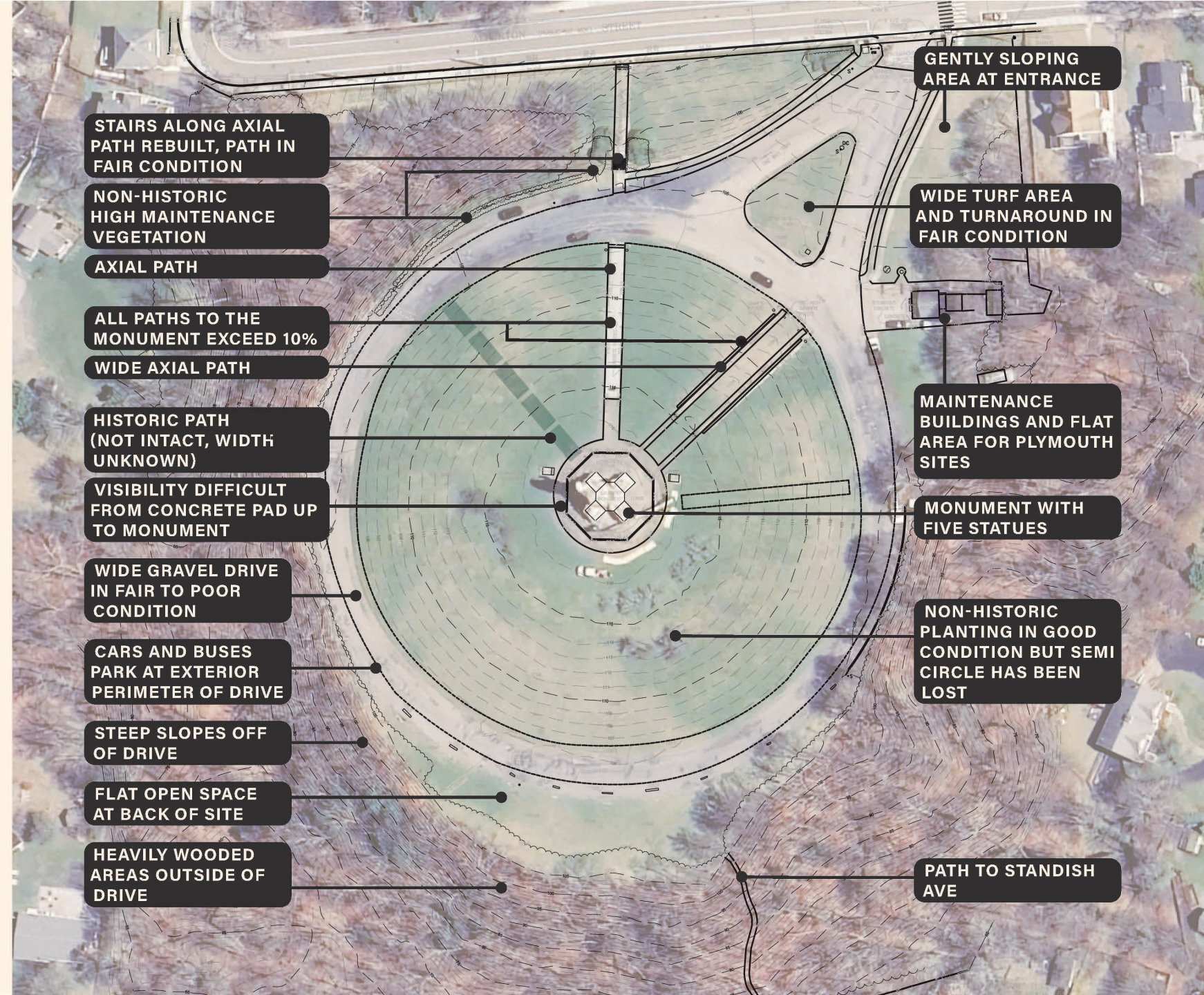


THE NATIONAL MONUMENT TO THE FOREFATHERS



# SITE ANALYSIS

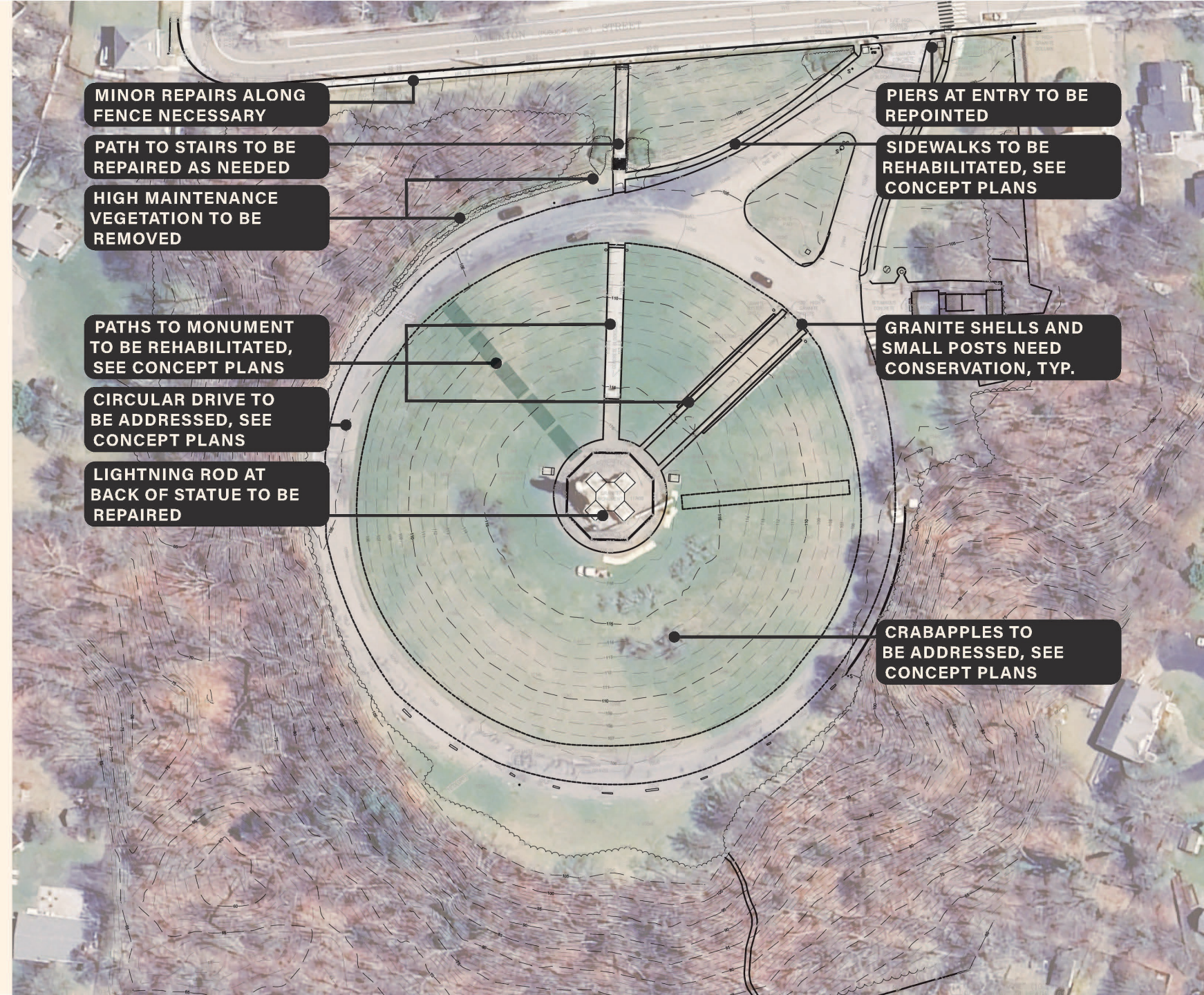
- Defining character traits include circular drive and axial relationships.
- Historic path completes symmetrical form of the site but was removed.
- Grade change from the circular drive to the base of monument is significant and makes accessibility difficult.
- Gravel drive suffers from drainage issues. It is in overall poor condition.





# SITE RESTORATION

- Certain elements that serve as defining character traits are in fair to poor condition and need rehabilitation.
- High maintenance items, like the juniper and yew hedges, could be removed to allow for more maintenance capacity.
- Changes to circulation are addressed in the site concepts. Elements in poor condition, like the gravel drive, need rehabilitation.
- Rehabilitation efforts in 2003 addressed stairs leading to axial path but did not address piers or concrete paths.



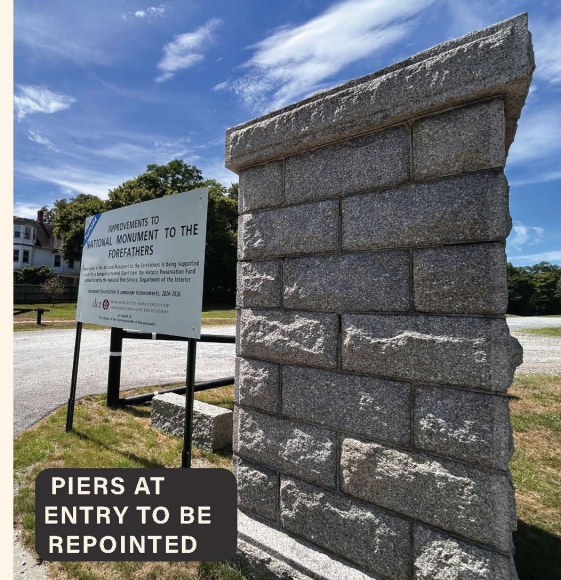




**PATH TO STAIRS  
TO BE REPAIRED  
AS NEEDED**



**SIDEWALKS TO BE  
REHABILITATED, SEE  
CONCEPT PLANS**



**PIERS AT  
ENTRY TO BE  
REPOINTED**



**GRANITE SHELLS AND SMALL  
POSTS NEED CONSERVATION**



**PATHS TO MONUMENT  
TO BE REHABILITATED,  
SEE CONCEPT PLANS**



**MINOR REPAIRS  
ALONG FENCE  
NECESSARY**



**CRABAPPLES TO  
BE ADDRESSED, SEE  
CONCEPT PLANS**



**CIRCULAR DRIVE TO  
BE ADDRESSED, SEE  
CONCEPT PLANS**



## DESIGN OPTIONS INCLUDE:

- Maintaining the **historic integrity** of the site which includes:
  - Pedestrian paths that radiate from the monument base and terminate at the circular drive
  - An “austere” and “solemn” environment that allows the monument to be the primary focus of the site
  - Minimal planting with large expanses of uninterrupted lawn
- Addition of **interpretive elements** to expand the story of the site.
- Addition of **accessibility** into the pedestrian circulation network to improve visitor experience for people of all abilities.
- Necessary **green infrastructure**, which will be added to any variant of the design concept to improve drainage outside of the drive.
- Revised **planting strategy**, including removing high maintenance shrubs, creating more transitional format outside of the drive, and using conservation seed in areas that are difficult to mow.
- The design options are a sliding scale that **combine these elements in different ways to achieve different goals**, especially considering historical accuracy and modern accessibility needs.

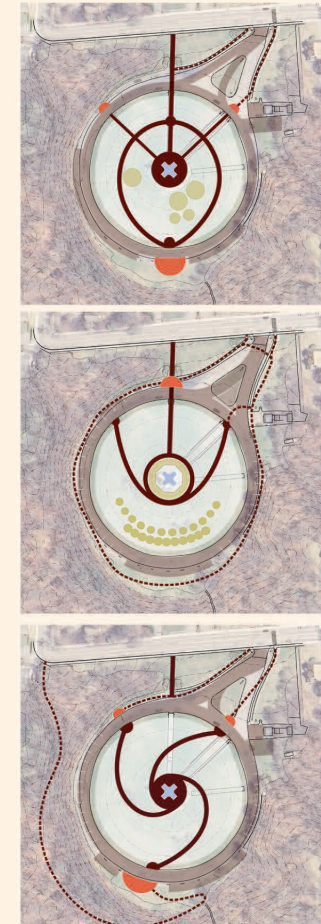
**CLOSEST TO HISTORIC FOOTPRINT  
LEAST ACCESSIBLE**



**SYMMETRY MAINTAINED  
MORE ACCESSIBLE**



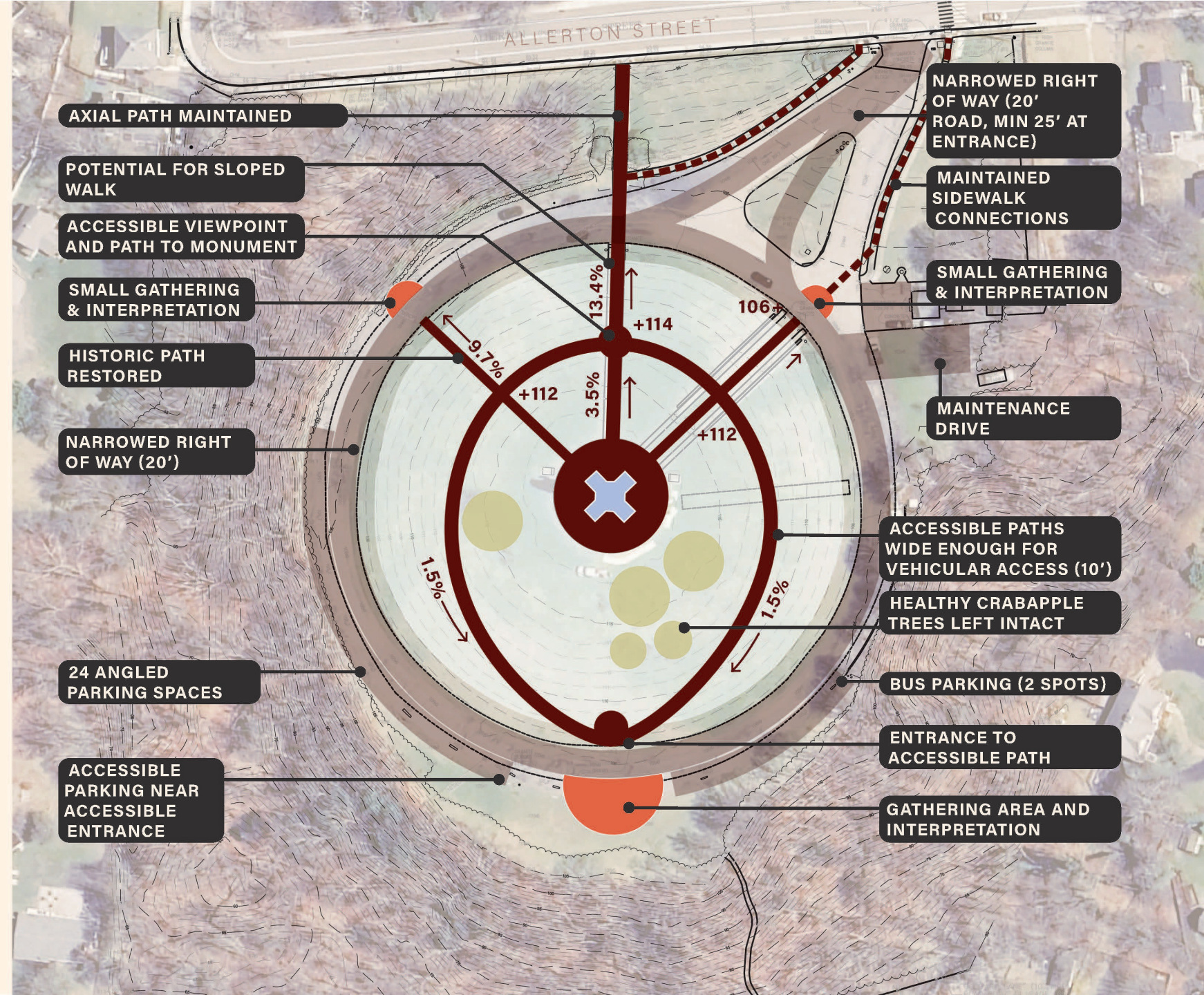
**BIGGEST DEVIATION FROM HISTORIC  
FOOTPRINT  
MOST ACCESSIBLE**





## OPTION A

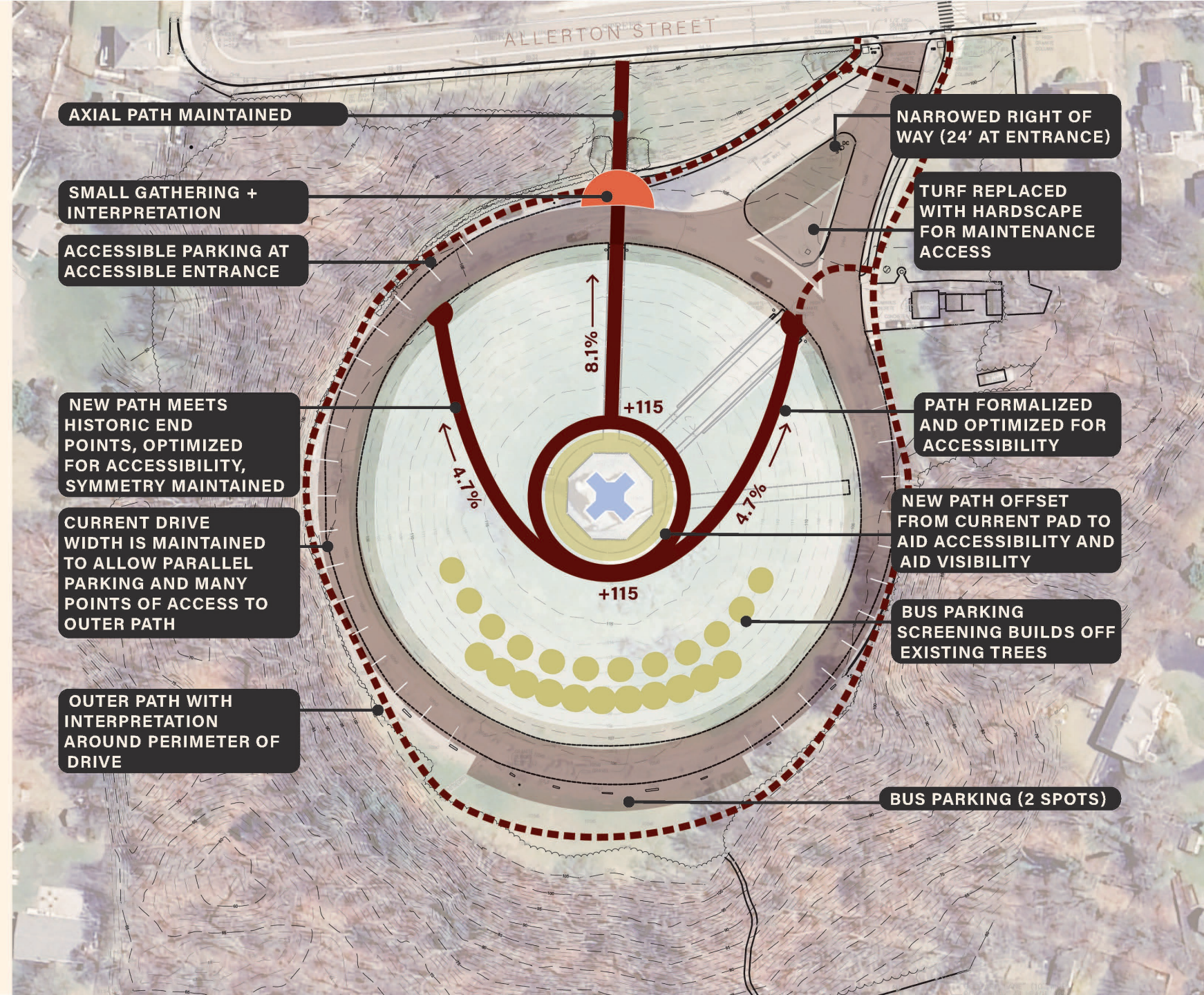
- Symmetrical form is enhanced by reestablishing the historic path and keeping the other two paths.
- On top of the historic footprint, an accessible loop is added that starts at the back of the site.
- Gathering and interpretation at the north and south sections of the site.
- Bus parking at the front of site away from the line of site to the monument.
- Narrowed right of way to reduce pavement, which includes angled parking and bus pull offs.
- No additional trails outside circle.





## OPTION B

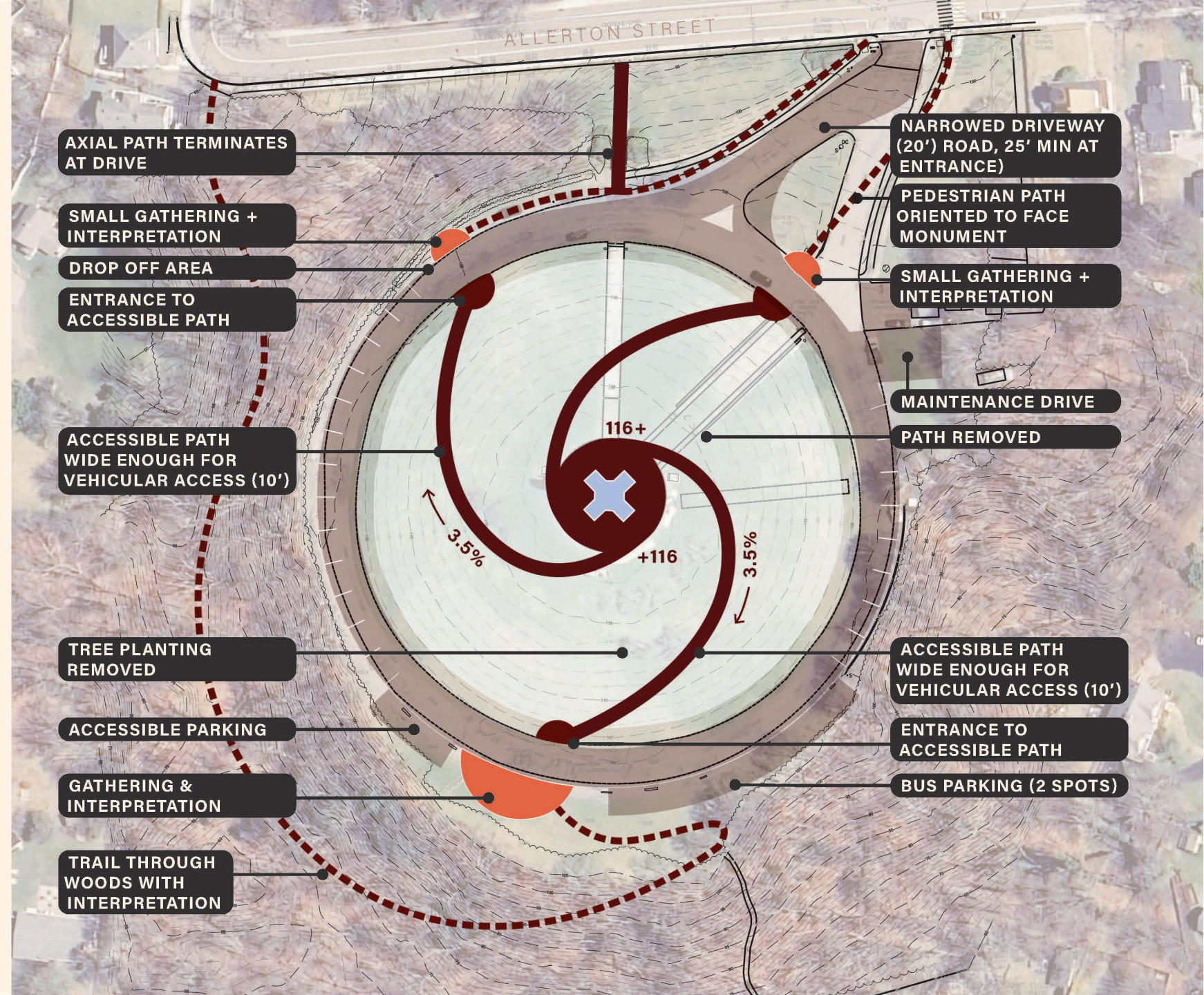
- Inner circle is pulled away from the monument to allow better visibility to the statues but does not exceed the width of original pad. Also allows easier accessibility by lowering the elevation.
- Symmetry maintained but altered for accessibility. Realigned and rounded paths allow gentler slope.
- Gathering and interpretation concentrated at the entrance of the site to introduce the narrative.
- Wide right of way is maintained with parallel parking.
- Bus parking is at the back of the site, including screening to improve views from the front that builds off the existing crabapples.
- Outer path created to accommodate pedestrians.





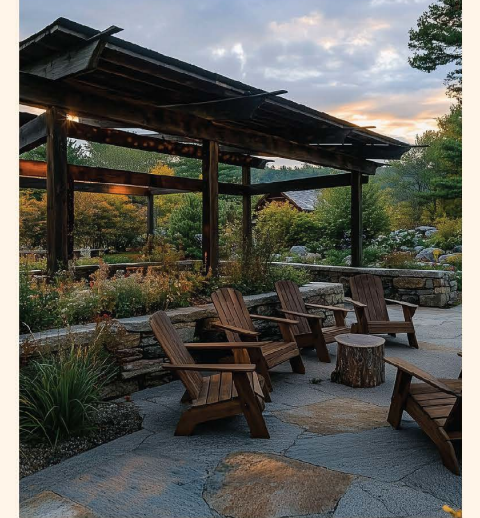
## OPTION C

- All paths are graded for accessibility. Paths start at three different points, maximizing the opportunity for entry to the accessible paths.
- Gathering areas with interpretation at the north and south sides of the site.
- Bus pull off and accessible parking at the back of the site.
- Wide right of way is maintained with parallel parking with dedicated bus pull off and accessible parking.
- Trail through the woods to connect Allerton to the backside of the site with interpretation. Full accessibility for the trail may be difficult.





# GATHERING SPACE PRECEDENTS



THE NATIONAL MONUMENT TO THE FOREFATHERS



# GATHERING SPACE PRECEDENTS

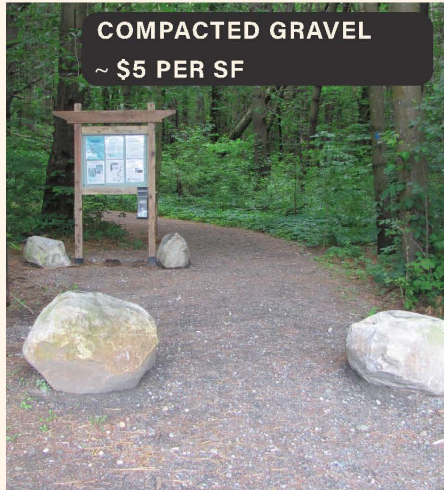
## Exploring Interpretive Approach

- Didactic, Reflective, Playful
- Set, Open-ended, Evolving
- Architectural, Natural
- Focused, Distributed

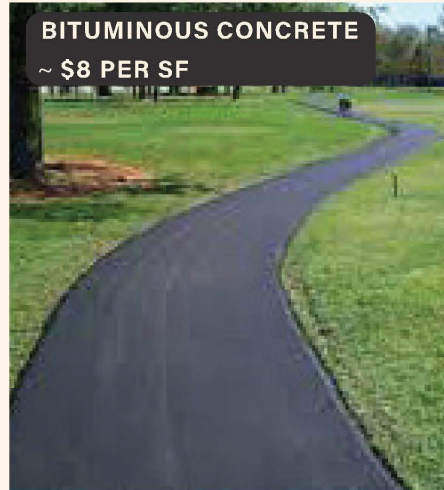




# SURFACE MATERIAL OPTIONS FOR PAVEMENTS (DRIVE & WALKWAYS)



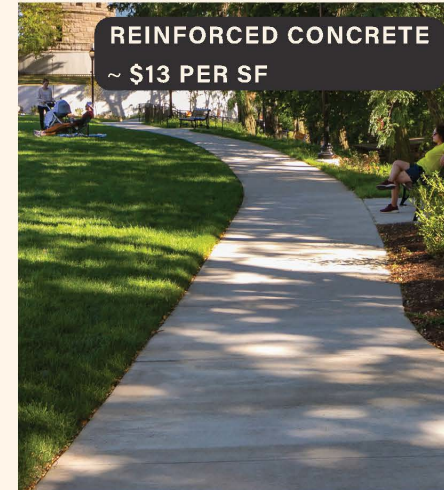
- Surface layer mixed with fine aggregates and angular stones for suitable surface material
- Maintenance: Needs periodic (annually, at least) re-grading, weeding and top-dressing.
- Can be soft in spring thaw.
- Avoid installation on long pitches of 6% or greater
- Accessibility: with considerable maintenance to meet "firm and stable" criteria
- Cross-section: 12"-16" typical
- Pervious



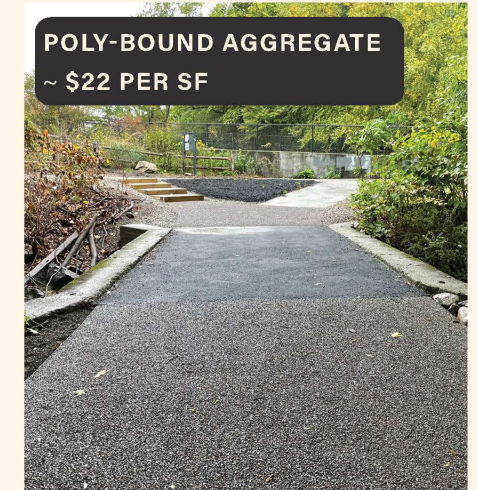
- Can be hot in summer
- Recedes into the landscape
- Accessibility: fully accessible
- Maintenance: minimal
- Suitable for flat surfaces & steeper slopes
- Typically lasts 12-20 years depending on quality of construction & usage
- Cross-section: 12"-16" typical
- Impervious



- Can be hot in summer
- Recedes into the landscape
- Accessibility: fully accessible
- Maintenance: Requires greater maintenance, i.e., vacuuming 2-3 times per year
- Suitable for flat surfaces & steeper slopes
- Typically lasts 12-20 years depending on quality of construction & usage
- Cross-section: Requires a deeper cross-section, typically 21"-24"
- Pervious



- Can be bright in summer
- Recedes into the landscape
- Suitable for flat surfaces & steeper slopes
- Accessibility: fully accessible
- Maintenance: minimal
- Cross-section: 12"-14" typical
- Impervious



- Recedes into the landscape
- Suitable for flat surfaces & steeper slopes
- Accessibility: fully accessible
- Maintenance: Requires greater maintenance, i.e., vacuuming 2-3 times per year
- Cross-section: around 12" deep
- Pervious



# Project schedule



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CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

## *Phase 2 – Design and Research - \$185,000*

Fall/Winter 2025: Development of conceptual plans, draft National Register update, public feedback

Winter 2026: Complete design work on preferred design, share with public and begin permitting, complete National Register nomination update

## *Phase 3 - Construction - \$625,000*

Spring 2026: Complete permitting and put out to bid

Summer 2026: Implement construction



## Next steps

- Outreach to stakeholders & legislators – 12/15, 12/16
- Public Information Meeting – 12/17/25 - followed by a comment period
- Outreach to tribal communities
- Launching a visitor survey to get input on visitor interests to help inform the design





# Visitor Survey - DCR National Monument to the Forefathers





# Additional Information

Recording and tonight's slide deck will be available at:

[www.mass.gov/dcr/past-public-meetings](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/past-public-meetings)

If you have comments on this project:

Submit online: [www.mass.gov/dcr/public-comment](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/public-comment)

Deadline: **Monday, January 5th, 2025**

*Please note: the contents of comments submitted to DCR, including your name, town and zip code, will be posted on DCR's website. Additional contact information provided, notably email address, will only be used for outreach on future updates to the subject project or property.*

If you wish to subscribe to a DCR general information or project-related listserv: contact DCR's Office of Community Relations via email at [mass.parks@mass.gov](mailto:mass.parks@mass.gov)



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