

# Roxbury Heritage State Park Signature Park Project



## DCR Community Planning Workshop #2

April 24, 2014, 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm  
First Church of Roxbury, Roxbury, MA



# Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Governor

Deval L. Patrick

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary

Richard K. Sullivan, Jr.

Department of Conservation and Recreation Commissioner

John P. Murray

# DCR MISSION STATEMENT



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



# MEETING PURPOSE

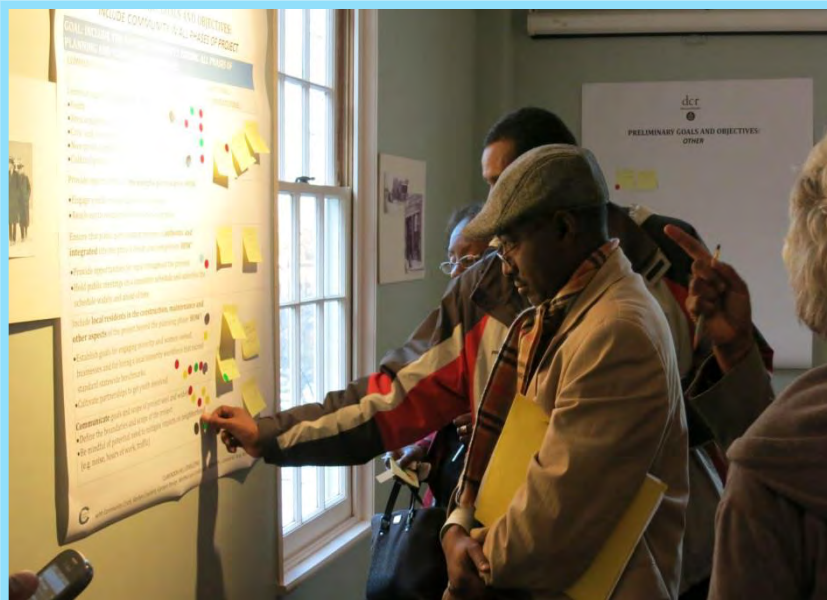


To invite the community to respond to alternative scenarios for an improved Roxbury Heritage State Park.

# Roxbury Heritage State Park Project

## PUBLIC PROCESS TO DATE

- Public Workshop #1
- Meetings with Stakeholder Groups
- Youth Roundtable
- Seniors Roundtable





# Roxbury Heritage State Park Project

## WHAT WE HEARD

### Public Workshop and Stakeholder Meeting

#### APPRECIATE

- Location (walking, land and open green space)
- Opportunity to tell history of site
- Availability for community events
- Accessible (proximity to transportation)

#### NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Unknown or under-utilized or lack of promotion
- Gate and entrance are not inviting
- Programs are inconsistent or uninteresting
- Under-staffed or under-funded
- Closed or short opening hours
- Inadequate signage and informational displays
- Limited (outdoor) seating



## Roxbury Heritage State Park Project

# WHAT WE HEARD

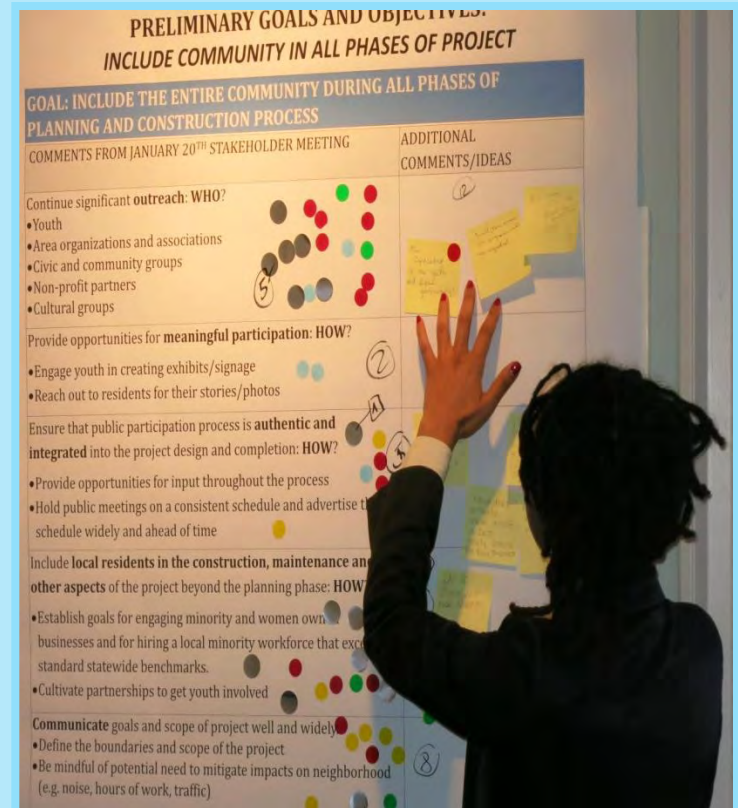
## Public Workshop and Stakeholder Meetings

### PRIORITIES

- Involve youth and develop youth programming
- Long term operating budget and qualified staff
- Programming and accessibility for seniors
- Open the gate
- More cultural, art, and entertainment programs
- Make RHSP a portal for Roxbury's history, culture & education

### WHAT MAKES RHSP UNIQUE?

- Views of Boston
- *"It is part of my history"*
- Location, location, location (proximity to important landmarks & institutions)
- Connection with past and future
- Potential to connect to area educational institutions (schools, universities & colleges)



# WHAT WE HEARD

## Youth Roundtable

### Appreciate

- Fireplace
- Puddingstone
- Historic nature of the house
- Apple trees
- Theater

### Needs Improvement

- More furniture & exhibits
- Doesn't seem public
- Needs more activity
- Fun & interesting things for youth to do
- Make it more welcoming
- Add attractive signage





## Roxbury Heritage State Park Project

# WHAT WE HEARD

### Seniors

#### Appreciate

- Community room
- Location and access by bus
- Historic nature of the house
- Beautiful and clean grounds
- Possibilities for picnics

#### Needs improvement

- More displays and exhibits
- Doesn't seem public
- Entry difficult & bathrooms not accessible to those with disabilities
- Fun and interesting things for seniors to do ("seniors night")
- Make it more welcoming
- Add color to building and garden



# Roxbury Heritage State Park Project

## LANDSCAPE PROGRAM

### Goals & Opportunities

- Make point(s) of arrival clear and welcoming
- Make park landscape more conducive to community gathering
- Emphasize the view
- Integrate the house with the landscape and exhibits
- Provide multi-generational opportunities
- Use native plants and building materials
- Accommodate maintenance and management capabilities





# Roxbury Heritage State Park Project

## LANDSCAPE CONCEPT A



- Main entrance to house located between house and annex
- Performance space located near front door of house, outside perimeter fence, oriented toward the street
- Perimeter fence lowered to 4' ; extended full length of park property
- Parking area set back from street; resized to minimize pedestrian conflicts along Gay Street walkway
- Orchard set along north side of property line as screen for middle ground views (O' Bryant School roof)
- Looping walkway through park, with stops at View Master site, and at focal point
- Urban agriculture area on east side of property expanded



# Roxbury Heritage State Park Project

## LANDSCAPE CONCEPT B



- Paved gathering space between front of house and street
- Main entrance to house through new welcome space (addition to existing annex)
- Performance space in existing location but expanded to include several walled seating terraces
- Perimeter fence lowered to 4' and extended full length of park property
- Parking re-sized to minimize pedestrian conflicts
- Expanded community gardening area to north of parking lot
- Looping walkway through park passing View Master and stage

# Roxbury Heritage State Park Project

## LANDSCAPE CONCEPT C



- Historic front walk to front door of house retained and enhanced
- Performance space close to house and annex
- Perimeter fence lowered to 4' and extended full length of park
- Parking area set back from street; re-sized to prevent pedestrian conflicts along the Gay Street walkway
- Existing fruit orchard retained and supplemented
- Natural inclusion-style playground constructed at former amphitheater site
- Central feature (sculpture, View Master, interpretive element located on park lawn, and accessed by walkways from parking area, performance space, and Roxbury Street sidewalk

# ARCHITECTURE

## Goals & Opportunities

- Link to the historic house, its location to the history of Roxbury, the land & surrounding landmarks
- *“The house is an exhibit”*
- Create an easily identifiable entryway that is part of the visitors’ experience
- Integrate the house, physically & programmatically, to the landscape & outdoor programs
- Support the building's use as a community resource
- Combine public uses & DCR uses in a harmonious & flexible manner
- Build repairs & upgrades to further attract area residents & visitors

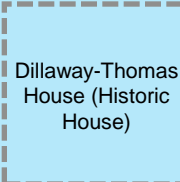
## Constraints

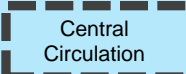
- Modifications to the historic house are limited given:
  - historic status of the house
  - original residential use
  - age of the structure
  - budget limitations



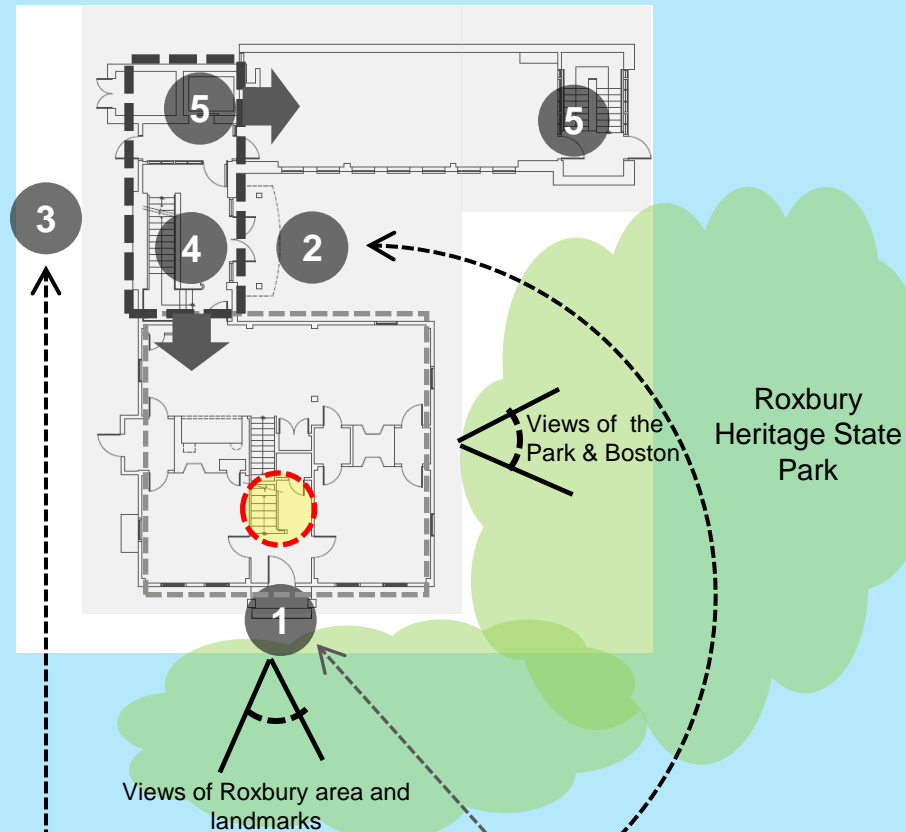
## 1<sup>st</sup> FLOOR

 Historic House  
Front Stairs

 Dillaway-Thomas  
House (Historic  
House)

 Central  
Circulation

James P.  
Timilty Middle  
School



### Legend

1. Dillaway-Thomas  
House Entrance
2. Terrace Entrance
3. Service Entrance
4. Multi-Story Vestibule
5. Elevator/ Stairs

ROXBURY STREET

Fence

# Existing Conditions



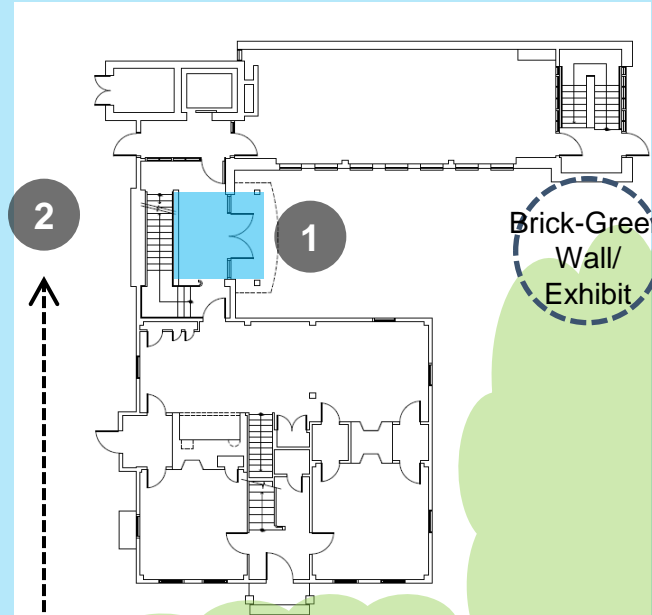
## 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Plan

1 Main Entrance

2 Service Entrance

▲ Park Entrance

James P.  
Timilty Middle  
School



HOUSE OUTDOOR  
EXHIBIT

Brick-Green  
Wall/  
Exhibit

Fence

ROXBURY STREET

## Design Features

- Incorporate brick-green wall by the Annex to the building entrance experience
- Expanded glass vestibule creates new Building Entrance
- Lower fence at existing location
- 1<sup>st</sup> floor is primarily for public use, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor for semi-public use
- Limited public access to the basement and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor
- New Restroom: 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Annex

### Entrance Concept A

**INFO** area:  
Vestibule expanded to  
10'x12'

# CONCEPT A



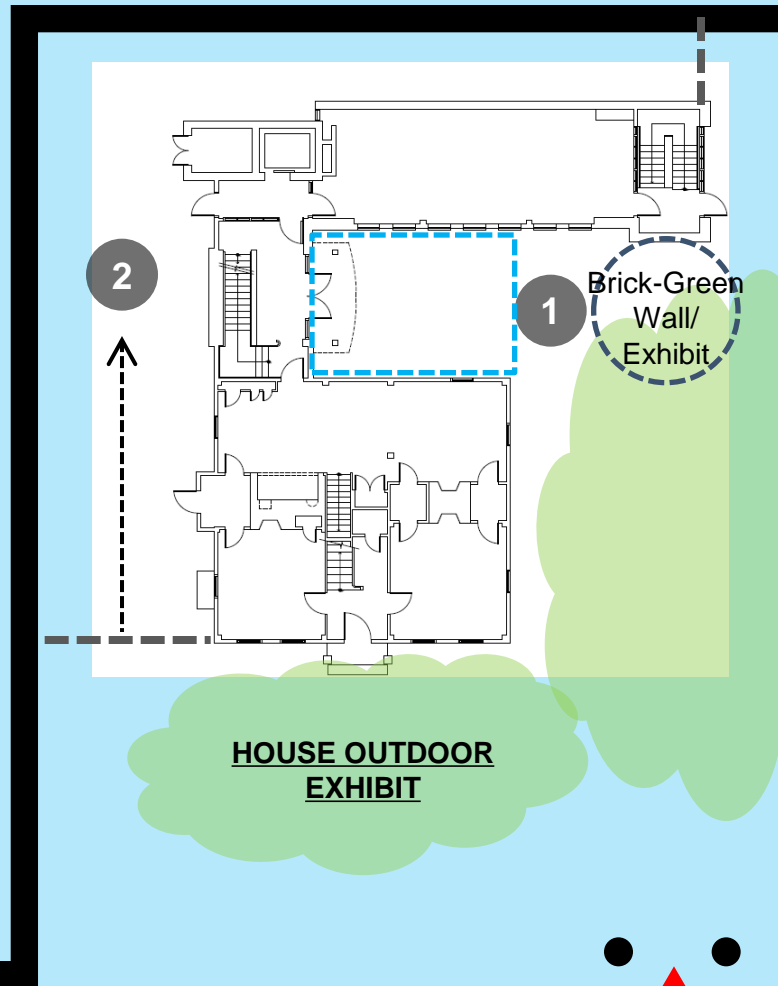
## 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Plan

1 Main Entrance

2 Service Entrance

▲ Park Entrance

James P.  
Timilty Middle  
School



**HOUSE OUTDOOR  
EXHIBIT**

ROXBURY STREET

## Design Features

- Incorporate brick-green wall by the Annex to the building entrance experience
- Atrium between the Historic House and the Annex creates Building Entrance and additional area for exhibits
- Security Fence at building edges only. Ornamental fence along the park edges
- 1<sup>st</sup> floor is primarily for public use, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor for semi-public use
- Limited public access to the basement and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor
- New Restroom: 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Annex

**Entrance Concept B**  
Atrium between the Annex and the House includes **INFO** area, Vestibule and Exhibits

# CONCEPT B





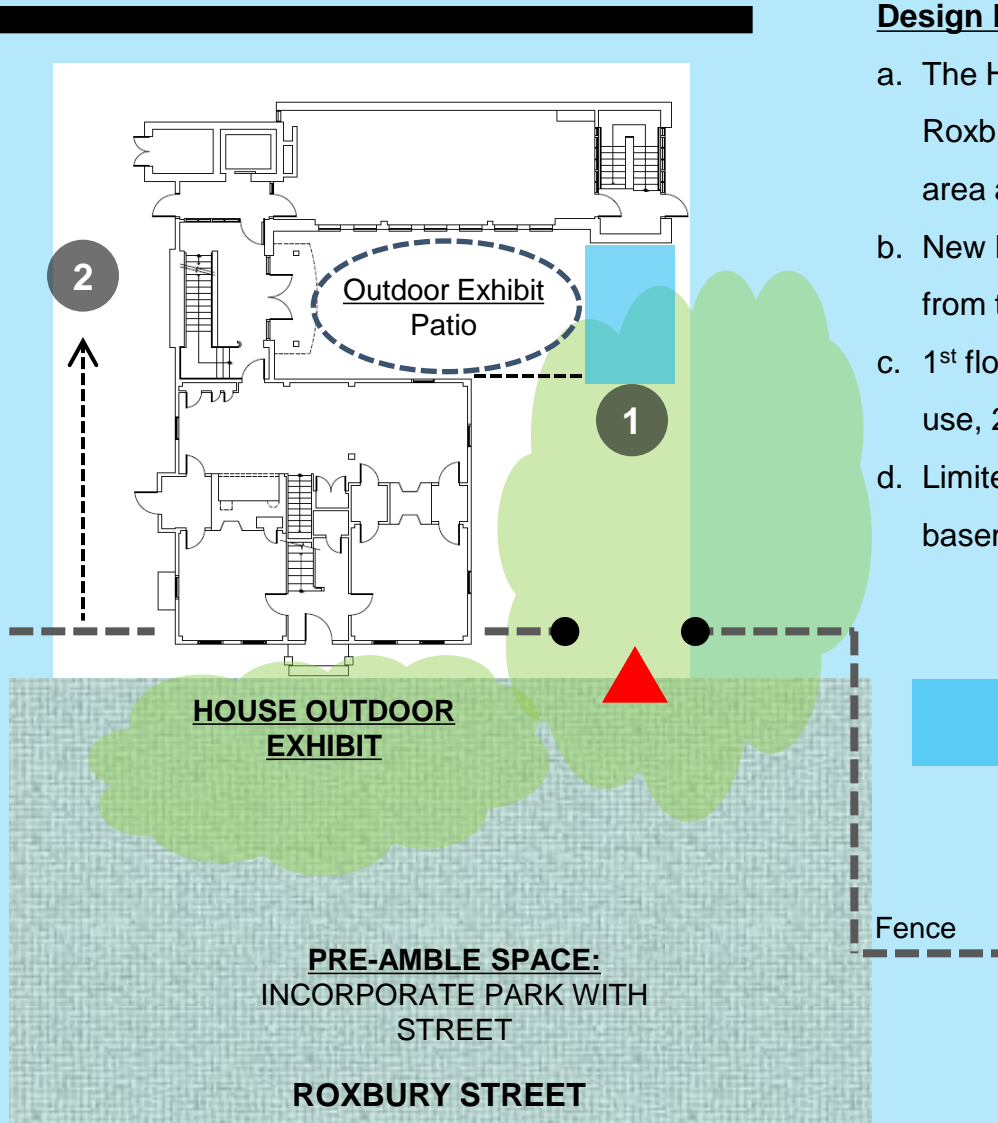
## 1st Floor Plan

1 Main Entrance

2 Service Entrance

▲ Park Entrance

James P.  
Timilty Middle  
School



## Design Features

- The House is incorporated to Roxbury Street by a gathering area at the front
- New Point of Entry is visible from the park and the street
- 1<sup>st</sup> floor is primarily for public use, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor for semi-public use
- Limited public access to the basement and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor

Entrance Concept C  
**INFO/Point of Entry**  
Enclosed vestibule or Pergola

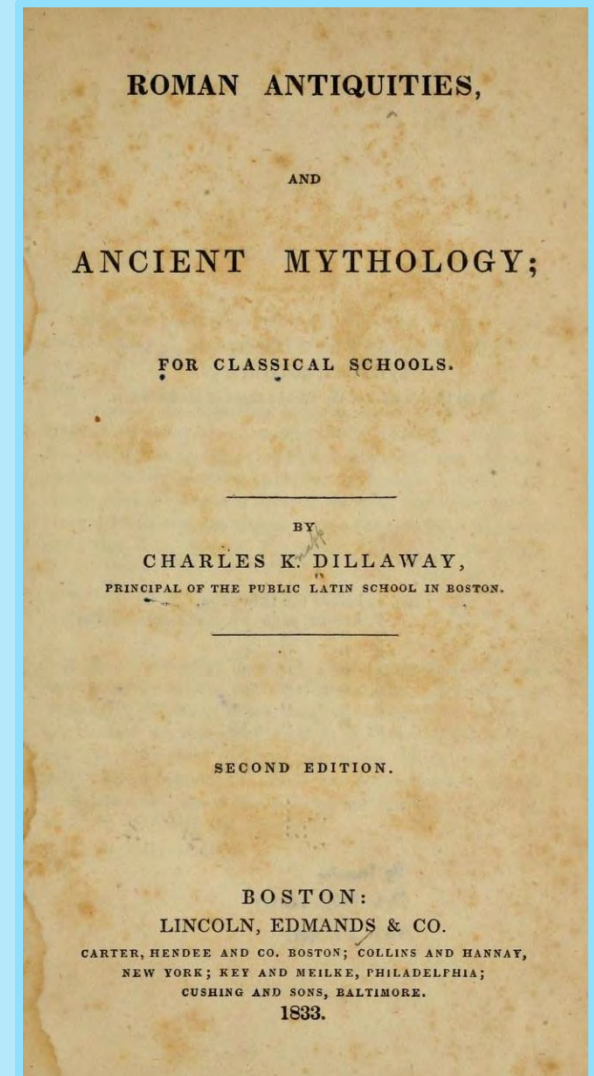
# CONCEPT C

# Roxbury Heritage State Park Project

## EXHIBIT DESIGN

### Goals and Opportunities

- Create an immersive exhibit experience where all visitors feel they are welcomed.
- Honor Roxbury's revolutionary & recent past in exhibits.
- Highlight the community and its efforts to maintain its identity.
- Show the wide diversity of people who have called Roxbury home.
- Create a way for residents to add to a community history database.
- Provide a system for history focused community art exhibits.
- Reinforce the Department identity at the site and house entrance.
- Enhance site experience through selective interpretation.
- Create robust exhibit systems that require little maintenance.
- Provide useful content for interpretive volunteers to engage visitors.
- Use the Heritage State Park as a way to link all of the significant historic sites in Roxbury.



# EXHIBIT DESIGN

## Constraints

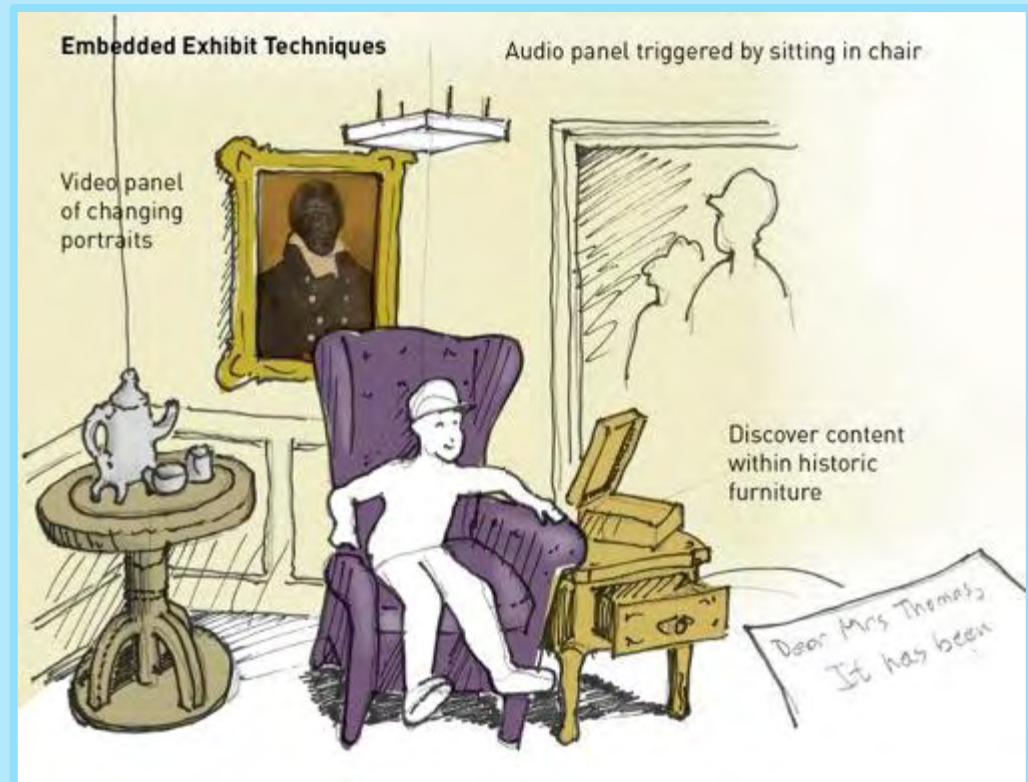
- Limited staff means exhibits must be self-guided and easy to maintain.
- Setting in historic house means limited space as well as constraints on interior remodeling.
- Some of Roxbury's history has limited documentation.



# EXHIBIT DESIGN

## Theme Topics

- Theme A:  
The house and grounds as a central site in the early history of Roxbury
- Theme B:  
This 18<sup>th</sup>-century house as “residential architecture survivor” through the centuries
- Theme C:  
Roxbury Heritage State Park as a natural history site
- Theme D:  
Roxbury Heritage State Park as a portal to and a reflection of present-day Roxbury





# Roxbury Heritage State Park Project

## Tonight: Let us begin...

- Visit stations
- Make comments on post-it notes
- Prioritize preferences
- Listen to Report Back Summary from each station



# Roxbury Heritage State Park Project NEXT PUBLIC WORKSHOP

May 29, 2014:

Public Workshop #3

Public feedback on preferred  
project alternatives

*See you then!*





# Roxbury Heritage State Park Project

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you have questions or comments-

Email: [dcr.updates@state.ma.us](mailto:dcr.updates@state.ma.us)

Call: 617-626-4974

Write: Department of Conservation and Recreation

Office of Public Outreach

251 Causeway Street, Suite 600, Boston, MA 02114

The deadline for public comments on the alternative scenarios is Thursday, May 1.

Note: Public comments submitted to DCR by email or letter will be posted on the DCR website in their entirety, and no content, including personal information, will be redacted.

If you would like to subscribe-

to a DCR project-related or general information listserv, please email

[dcr.updates@state.ma.us](mailto:dcr.updates@state.ma.us), noting in the subject line to which listserv you would like to subscribe.

For more information-

[www.mass.gov/dcr/rhsp-project](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/rhsp-project)