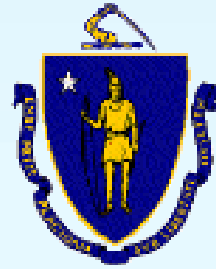


Walden Pond Main Beach Accessibility Improvements



**DCR Preconstruction Meeting
November 18, 2024**



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Governor

Maura T. Healey

Lieutenant Governor

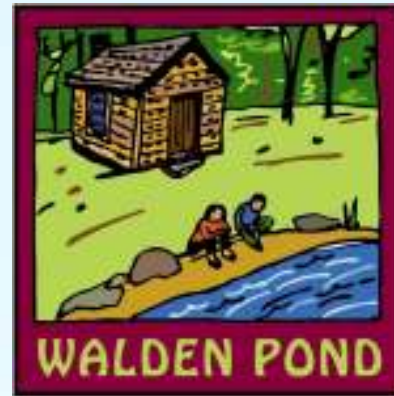
Kimberly Driscoll

Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary

Rebecca L. Tepper

Department of Conservation and Recreation Commissioner

Brian Arrigo



DCR Mission Statement

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

Meeting Logistics

- Two ways to ask questions during the meeting
 - Use chat feature
 - Raise your hand using the Zoom function, and you will be given permissions to unmute and speak.
- Please keep comments limited to two to three minutes.
- *Please note that this public meeting will be recorded; the recording will be a public record.*

Purpose

Update on the Main Beach Accessibility Improvement Project, including:

- Bathhouse replacement and relocation
- Boardwalk
- Proposed project schedules
- What to expect during construction

Agenda

- Overview of Project process and history
- Main Beach Accessibility Improvement Project
- Questions/Comments

Tonight's Meeting

The logo for Maryann Thompson Architects, featuring the company name in a bold, black, sans-serif font on a white rectangular background.

**MARYANN THOMPSON
ARCHITECTS**

Maryann Thompson Architects

Architecture, Prime Consultant (Bathhouse)



Ray Dunetz Landscape Architecture

Landscape Architect, Prime Consultant (Site)



Nitsch Engineering

Civil Engineering



BSC Group

Environmental Engineering & Permitting

Consultant Team

2013: Recommendations from a planning effort included improving universal accessibility at Walden Pond, prioritizing the Main Beach.

- Main Beach does not comply with federal or state accessibility law.

2018: Universal access design for the Main Beach began.

2019: Two public meetings were held.

- January 30. Reviewed alternatives to renovate the existing bathhouse for accessibility vs. building a relocated bathhouse.
- November 19. A proposal was presented that would construct a relocated bathhouse and universally accessible boardwalk.

2021: Citing capital priorities, funding for the construction of the bathhouse was repurposed to other projects.

2024: Funding was restored for bathhouse construction.

Construction bids for the bathhouse were recently received.

Accessibility Improvements Background



1924

Since the 1900s, the east bank of Walden Pond has been used for water-based recreation, predominantly for swimming.

1922 map of Walden Pond shows recreational infrastructure including two bath houses, a boathouse, and two toilets.



1933

Historical Context – Walden Pond Main Beach

Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements



1946



1970s

Historical Context – Walden Pond Main Beach

Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements



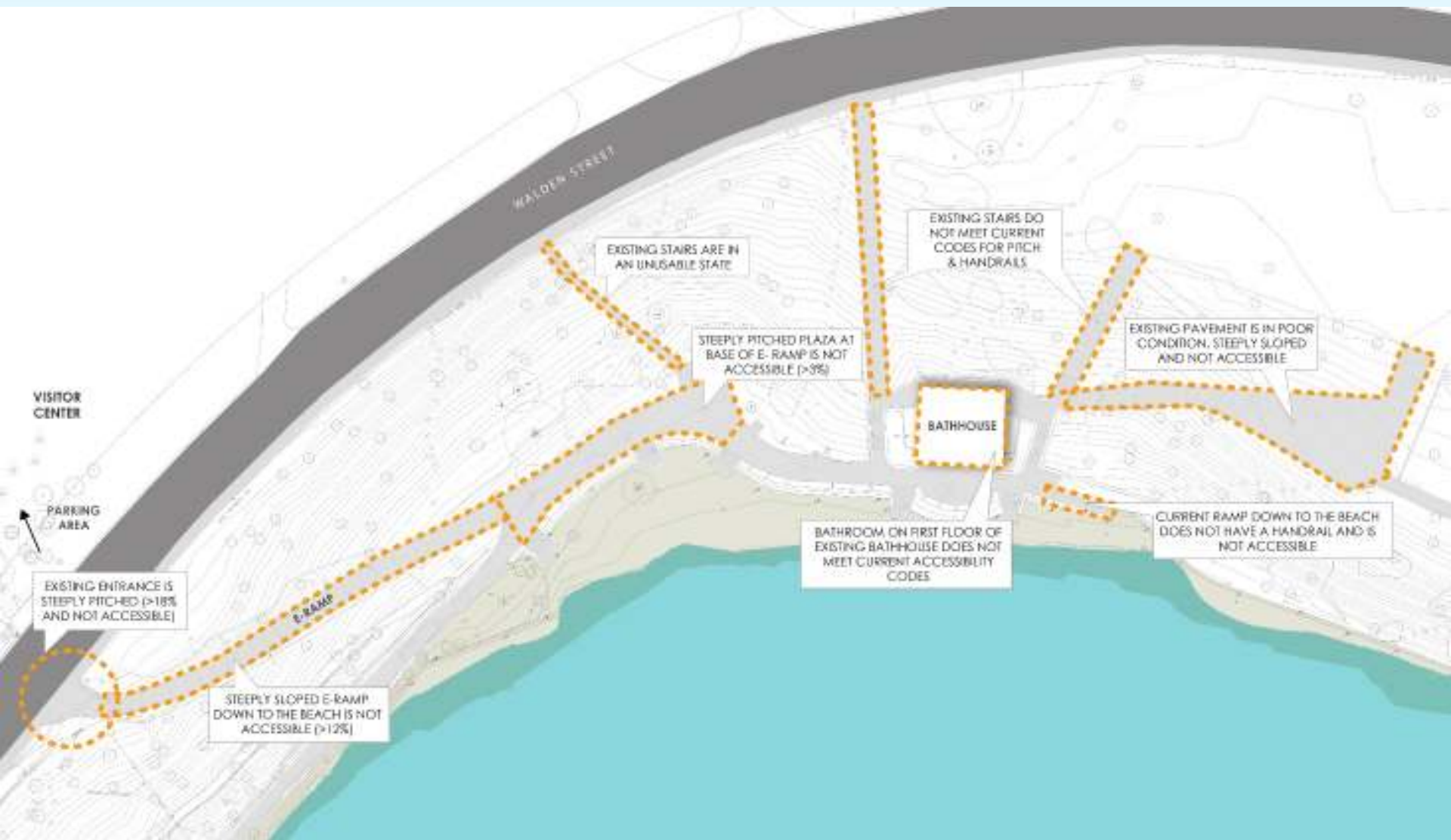
Historical Context – Walden Pond Main Beach Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements

- Provide universally accessible arrival sequence and pathway to the beach and bathhouse that can be maintained year-round.
- Incorporate Universal Access Design principles that will provide convenience to all visitors.
- Minimize the length of accessible routes to the greatest extent possible.
- Minimize the visual impact of the new pathway from the pond and trails around Walden Pond.
- Minimize land alteration in Walden Pond State Reservation, a National Historic Landmark.



Project Goals

Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements



Existing Accessibility Issues

Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements

The existing entrance is very steeply pitched and not accessible



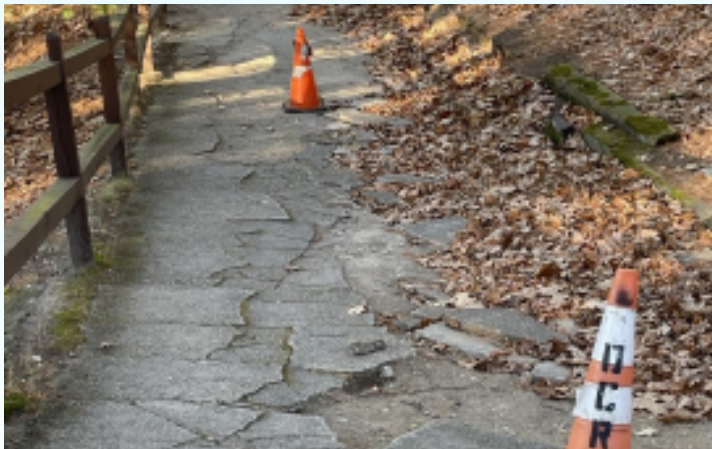
The cross-slope on the existing plaza does not meet accessibility requirements



Existing stairs are unusable



The primary access path down to the beach is steeply sloped and not accessible



The existing pavement in other areas is in poor condition and not accessible

Existing ramp does not have a handrail



Existing Accessibility Issues

Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements

Bathhouse restrooms are on the second level and only accessible by stairs and a narrow walkway behind the building



Entrances to the restrooms have a step at the threshold of the doorway



Single accessible bathroom doesn't conform to current accessibility code in configuration or quantity

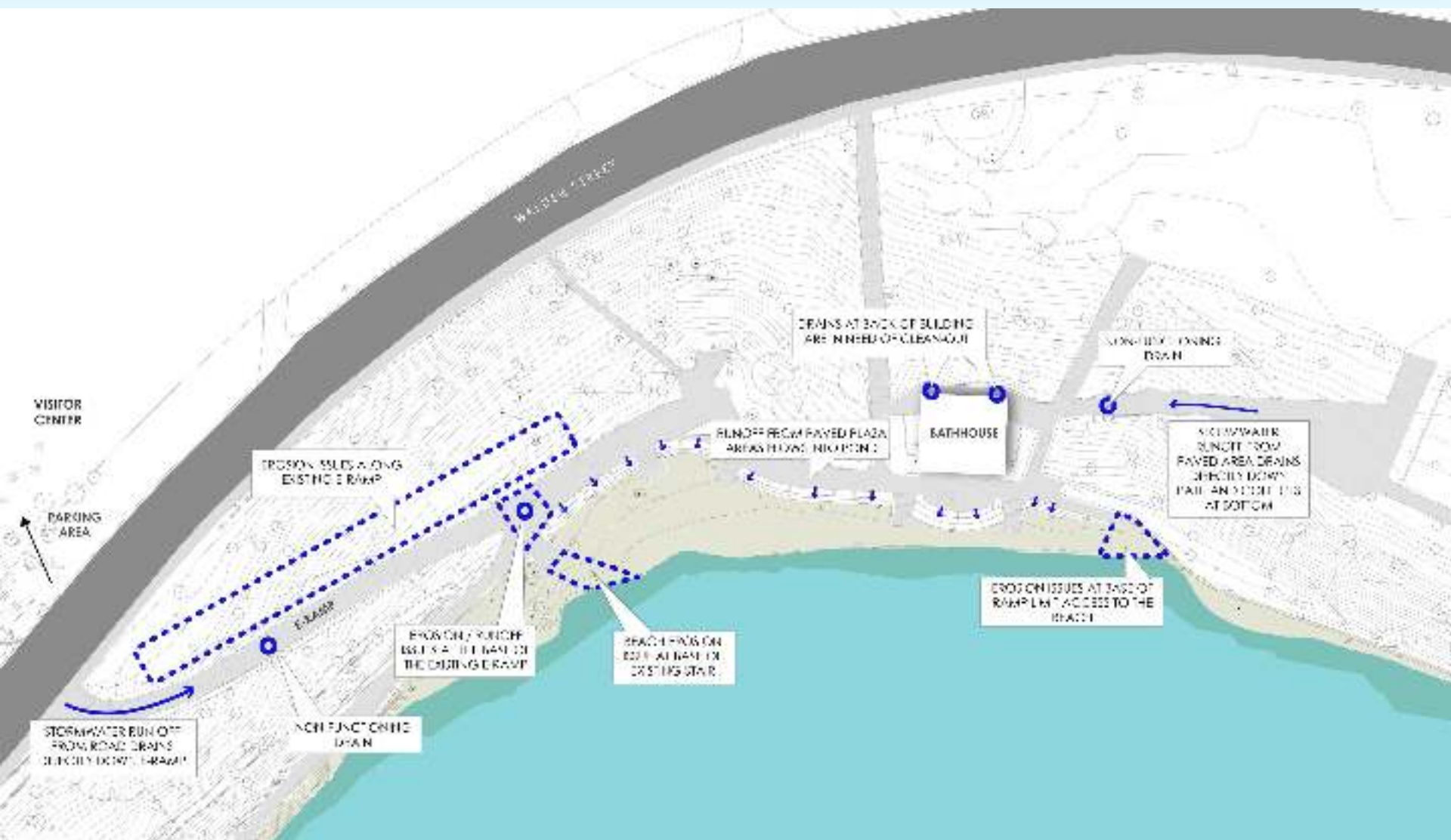


Main bathrooms do not contain any accessible toilet stalls



Existing Accessibility Issues

Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements



Existing Drainage / Water Quality Issues

Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements

Run-off and sediment issues on E-ramp



Eroding soils add to run-off sediment from road along the E-ramp



Sediment filled catch basin on E-ramp



Drainage issues at E-ramp lead to erosion of beach at the base of the steps

Plaza run-off flows directly into the beach area and pond



Erosion of the beach at bottom of the existing access ramp

Existing Drainage / Water Quality Issues

Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements



Proposed Site Plan Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements



Proposed Site Plan - Sequencing Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements

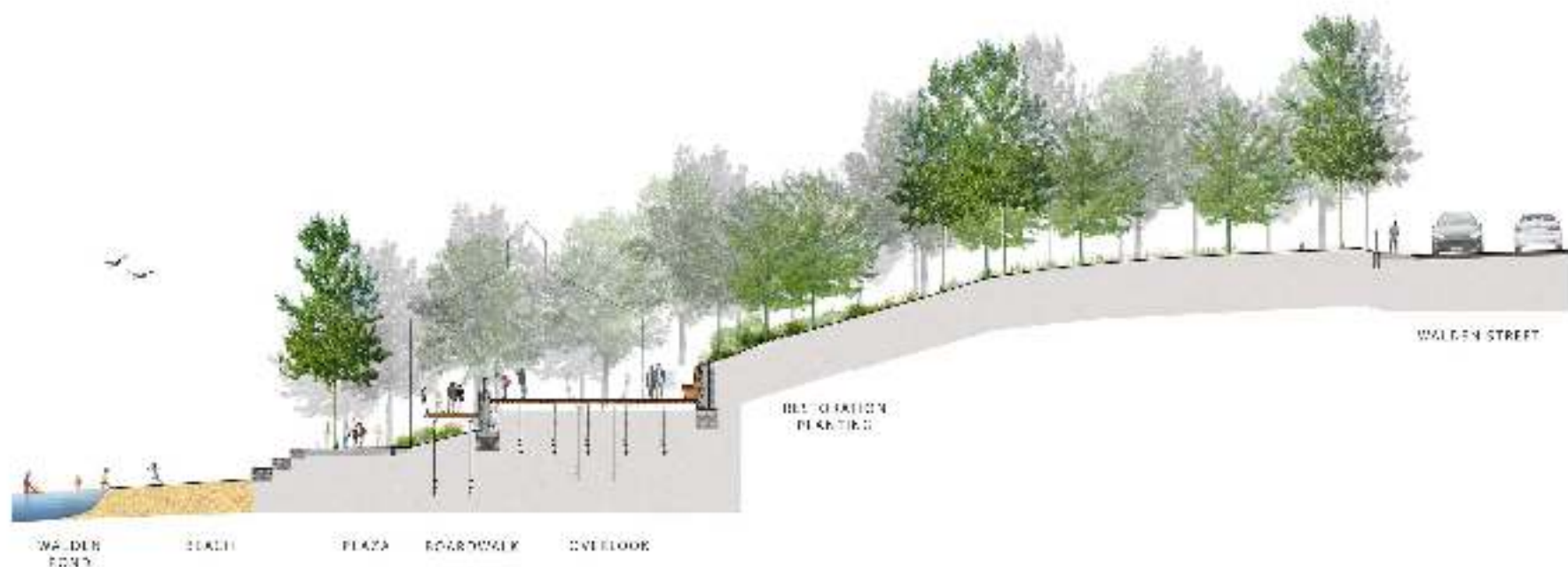


Site Removals

Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements

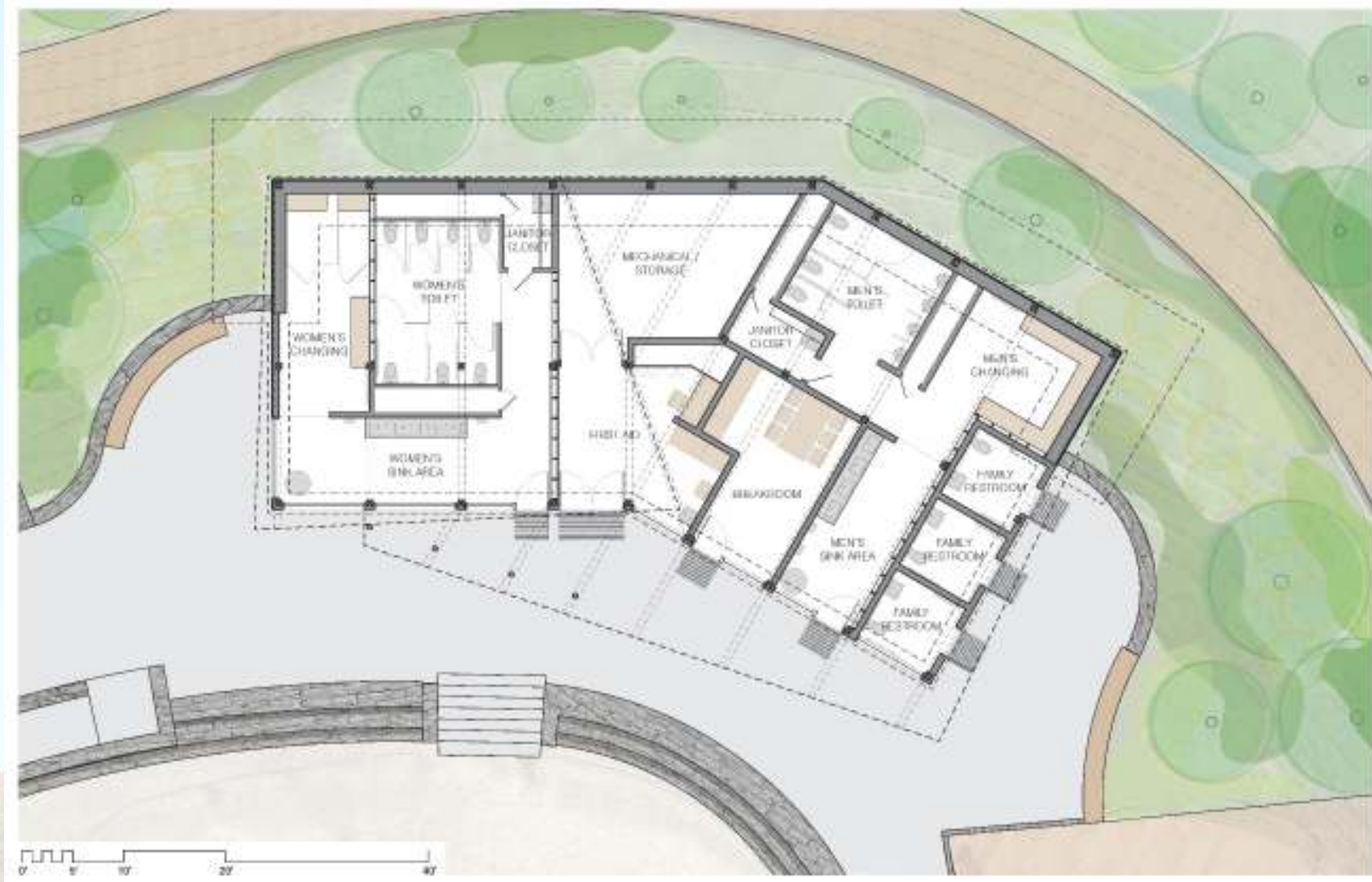


Landscape Restoration Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements



Site Section/ Elevation

Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements



Bathhouse Plan
Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements



**Perspective: New Bathhouse
Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements**



Site Section/ Elevation
Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements



**Perspective: Arrival at Walden Street
Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements**



**Perspective: New Bathhouse
Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements**



Design Character

Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements



Perspective: Main Beach Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements

- Improves accessibility from the main entrance to the Bathhouse, beach plaza and beach area and realizes DCR's commitment to making Walden Pond universally accessible to all visitors.
- Takes advantage of project opportunities to improve drainage and erosion issues site-wide and reduces the impact of park recreational use on Walden Pond.
- Limits tree removal as much as possible. The project seeks to reuse existing felled trees to the extent possible on site for building interior finishes.
- Fully restores site disturbance to a level of planting variety and abundance over and above that which presently exists on the heavily used eastern bank.
- Ensures all species planted are specifically selected to be native to the upland Kettle Pond plant communities of Massachusetts.



Project Benefits

Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements

- Includes over 190 new trees to help stabilize the slope, infill open canopy, and provide rich diversity of tree maturity for sustained canopy development over time.
- Includes over 7,000 understory shrub, perennial plantings, and plugs to re-establish steep slopes and quickly out-compete potential invasive volunteers.
- Installs an additional 0.5 acres of vegetative restoration outside of project boundary in selected areas around Walden Pond.
- Removes over 2,500 square feet of impervious cover within the natural resource buffer zone.
- Bathhouse to feature natural materials, plenty of natural lighting and improved ventilation.
- Building energy use completely offset by existing Photovoltaic (PV) system behind Visitor Center through the use of energy efficient lighting and building systems.



Project Benefits

Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements

Phase I Construction (New Bathhouse, Associated Landscaping) 2024 Cost Estimate

	2024
Building	\$ 3,100,000
Site Work	\$ 2,900,000
<i>Total</i>	\$ 6,000,000

Funding Source:
American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

Phase II (Boardwalk, Landscape Restoration)
2020 Construction Estimate: \$ 4,383,000

Cost Estimates and Funding
Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements

- Virtual Preconstruction Meeting: November 18, 2024
- Received construction bids for bathhouse phase last month.
- Construction:
 - Bathhouse and related landscape: 12 months (2024-2025)
 - Universally accessible boardwalk and overlook: 12 months (2025-2026)
- Bathhouse contract is close to award.
- DCR will work with the contractor to determine public access of beach & boat ramp during bathhouse construction.
- DCR will provide regular website updates regarding project progress and public access advisories.

Next Steps/ Schedule
Main Beach Universal Accessibility Improvements

Q / A and Discussion



For more information:

Project Webpage

- DCR will publish and regularly update a webpage for construction activities.
- The webpage will include information on project progress, two-week lookaheads of upcoming work tasks, and recreational advisories.

DCR Website

- www.mass.gov/dcr/past-public-meetings

DCR Universal Access

- www.mass.gov/orgs/universal-access-program

If you wish to subscribe to a DCR general information or Walden Pond project-related listserv: contact DCR's Office of Community Relations at 617-626-4973 or Mass.Parks@state.ma.us.

Additional Information

How we got here

What to do with the bathhouse?



Existing bathhouse facility dates from 1947 and was last updated in 1984. The interior spaces do not meet current universal accessibility needs and the finishes and building systems are in need of complete updates to enhance functionality and visitor comfort.

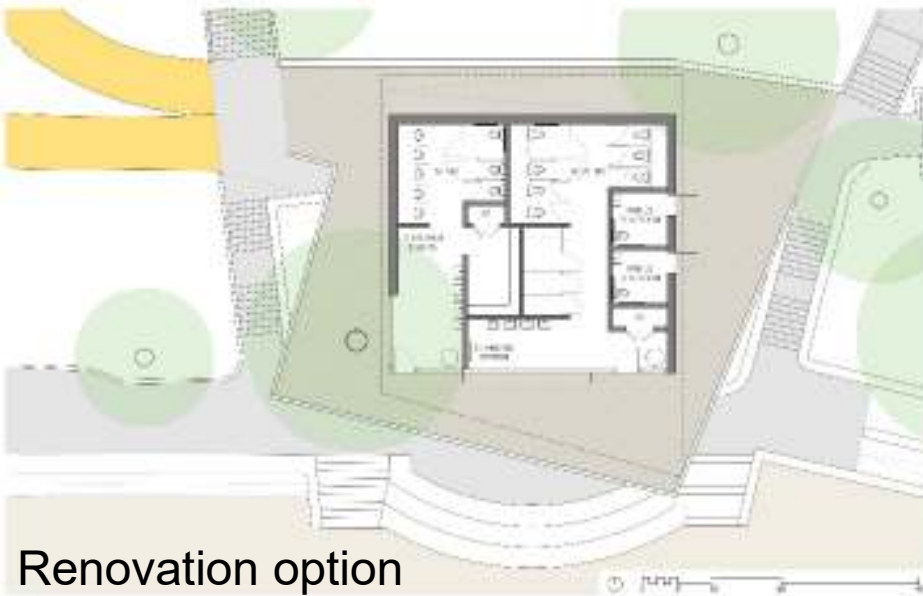
How we got here

Coordination between accessible route and bathhouse improvement options



How we got here

Bathhouse improvement options



Renovation option



Replacement option

Each option includes:

- Fully accessible restrooms and changing areas
- Additional family restrooms
- Completely new finishes and roof structure to coordinate with visitor center
- New fixtures throughout
- New energy efficient lighting and increased ventilation
- Increased natural lighting
- Larger exterior waiting areas outside