



MORDECAI LINCOLN PROPERTY COMMITTEE*

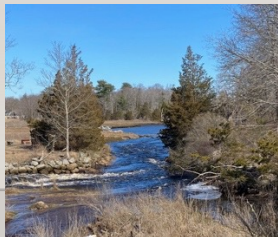
INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE SCITUATE SELECT BOARD

APRIL 23RD, 2024

*Committee Members: Jim Dishong (Chair), James Glinski (Vice Chair), Elise Beaulieu (Clerk), Kevin Kelly (Facilities Rep), Penny Scott-Pipes (Conservation Comm. Rep), Alexander Paine, Jane Buettner, Susan Harrison (Liaison to the Select Board), Karen Canfield (Liaison to the Select Board)

INTRODUCTION

16 score and 12 years ago (in 1692), the great, great, great grandfather of Abraham Lincoln, Mordecai Lincoln, built a mill and homestead on approximately 5+ acres of bucolic land bordering the Gulph River and a tidal marsh in what is now North Scituate. In 2022, the Town of Scituate acquired the property and commissioned a committee to explore alternatives for the use of the truly unique land and buildings.



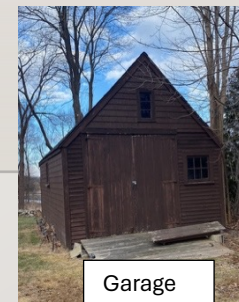
Gulph River to Marsh



Main House



Small House



Garage



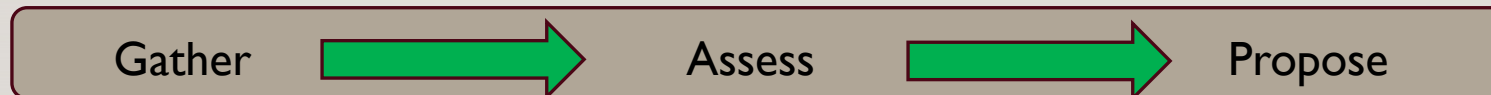
Mill

THE CHARGE TO THE COMMITTEE

- Review and evaluate all relevant materials including CPC application, Historical Commission memo, and Inspection Report
- Interview relevant boards and committees and consult with experts in historical properties and open space
- Conduct an online survey of Scituate residents
- Investigate possible funding sources, both public and private
- Recommend a course of action, including, if applicable, short, medium and long-term steps, to the Select Board for their consideration

INITIAL MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

- ✓ • Review and evaluate all relevant materials including CPC application, Historical Commission memo, and Inspection Report
- ✓ • Interview relevant boards and committees and consult with experts in historical properties and open space
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FUNDING STRATEGY- THREE PILLARS

- **Grants**
 - Highly dependent on making the case for the unique/historic character of the property
 - A credentialed Historical Architect brings the most rigor to our case
 - Where do we get the “biggest bang for the buck” on restoration investments?
 - Which building(s) are truly “historic” and WHY?
 - How much of the story/value is in the site/land, the building(s) or is it an integrated value proposition?
- **Alliances**
 - Initial research shows substantial interest from a range of local organizations
 - See back-up memo from James Glinski
 - Key challenge- turn ”interest” into \$\$\$
- **Individuals-** enable tax deductible donations via 501(c)(3) : Friends of Mordecai Lincoln

STRONGEST MESSAGES FROM TOWN SURVEY*

Q5: Support the installation of public walking trails?

(91% strongly agree/agree)

Unlock the natural beauty of the open spaces to the community

Simple trails, parking

Utilize existing, approved CPC funds for Phase I

Q3: Use one or more buildings as a public historic site?

(84% strongly agree/agree)

Good general support **but specifics of costs/benefits needed, long-term vision unclear**

Q17: Support sale of the property with restrictions?

(70% disagree/strongly disagree)

→ Retain Town Ownership

Q13: Support one or more buildings for on-site caretaker and/or rental income?

Most undecided → 30%

Need more specific scenarios, detailed cost/benefits (in retrospect, question was too general/vague)

Committee proposes detailed focus first on small house rental/caretaker scenario

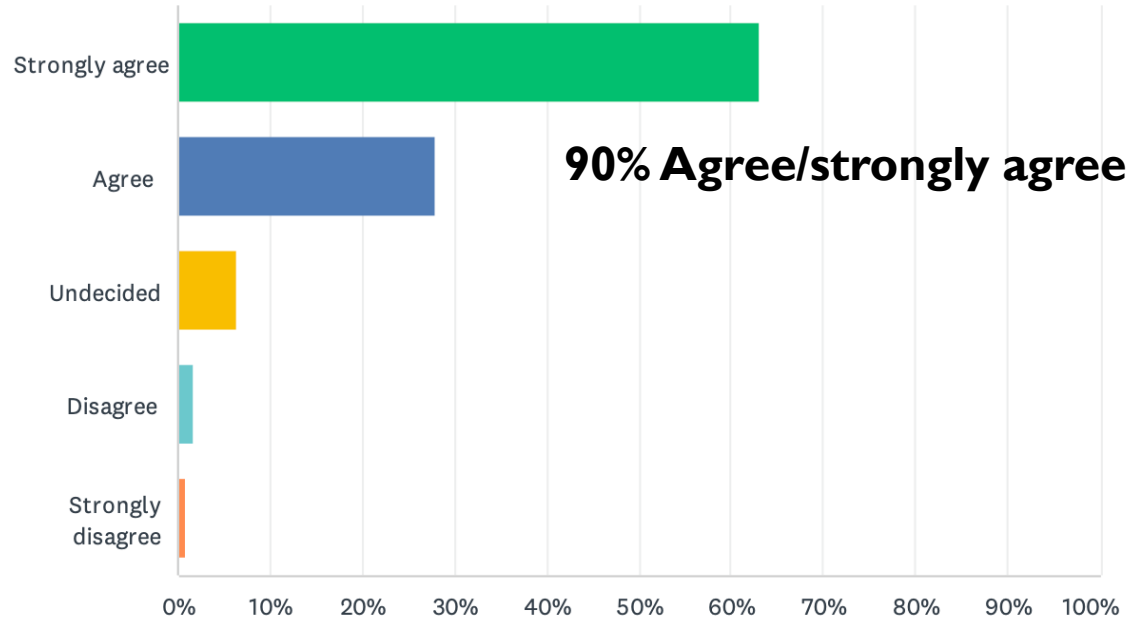
Learn from other examples in town (caretaker role/responsibilities, rental income, oversight)

Proposal to Select Board planned for late July after due diligence

STRONGEST SUPPORT- WALKING TRAILS

Q5 Install public walking trails.

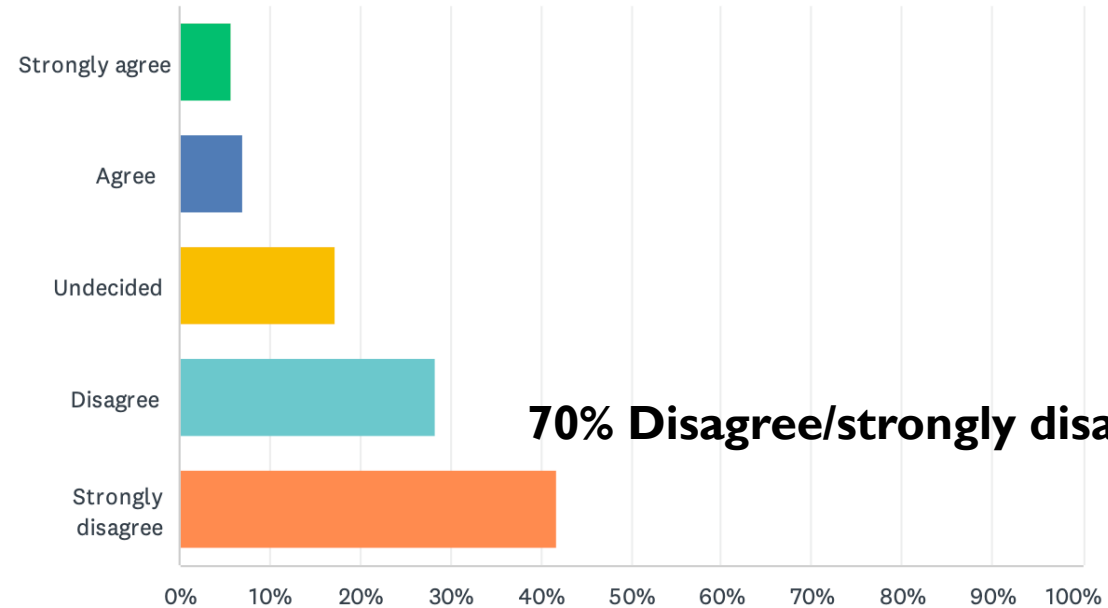
Answered: 802 Skipped: 23



BIGGEST CONCERN-SALE OF PROPERTY

Q17 Sell the property with strict conservation restrictions, ensuring maintenance of historic structures and eliminating the risk of property subdivision.

Answered: 774 Skipped: 51



70% Disagree/strongly disagree



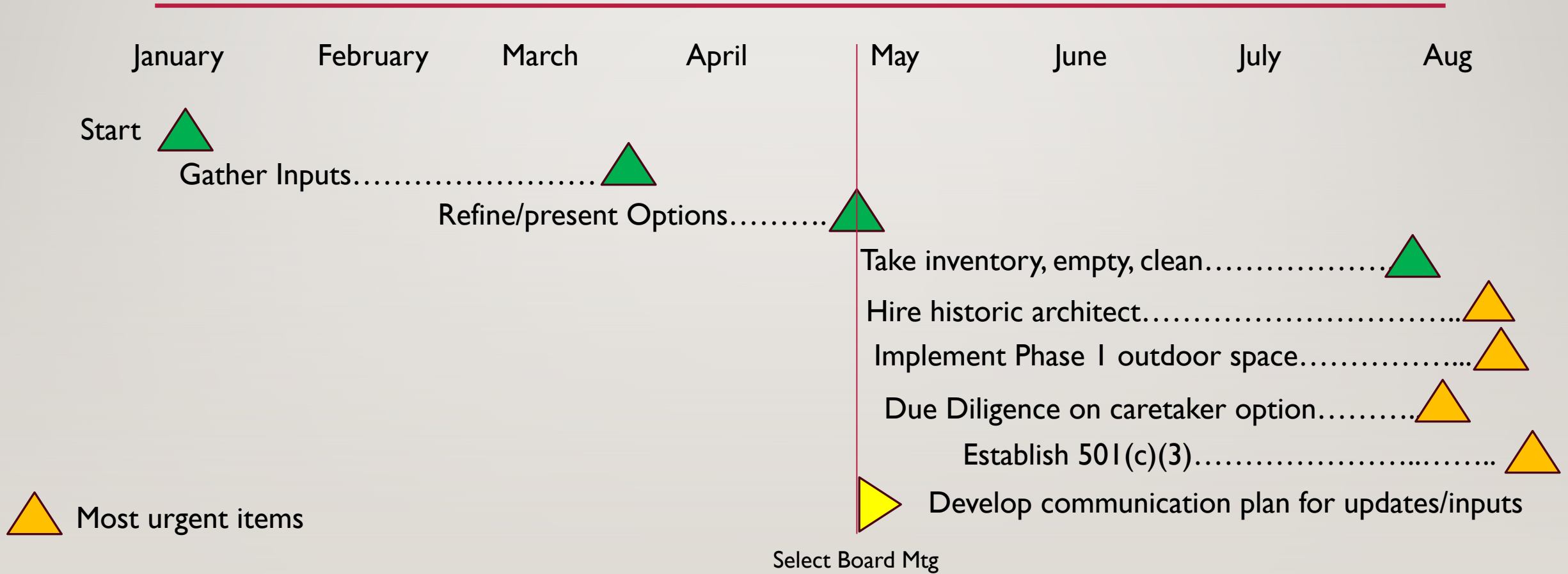
Maintain Town
Ownership

SUMMARY TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Category	Next 6 months- firm	Longer term- conceptual
Outdoor open space (CPC funds already approved)	Create drive/parking area, design and implement simple trailways, consider simple kayak/canoe launch area, picnic table(s) and bike rack	Monitor utilization, gather costs/benefits to other options for dock, viewing areas, etc.
Main House Architect fees and critical maintenance \$ proposed in next CPC funding window (July/2024)	Inventory, clean and empty*. Perform only most critical maintenance items (safety, pest control, etc.). Hire historic architect to validate/prioritize needs for a registered historic property/landmark	Based on architect inputs, explore the cost/benefits of various historic restoration/museum/educational options and align plans with progress on funding strategy
Small House	Perform due diligence on caretaker option (costs/benefits/concerns). Target a Select Board decision late July	Assess inputs from historic architect for any important restoration needs to enhance overall site value
Mill-	Perform only most critical repairs (pest control, repair broken glass, winterize/seal, etc.)	Assess inputs from historic architect for any important restoration needs to enhance overall site value
Garage	Seal, pest ctrl to enable storage of equipment, mat'ls worth retaining	Maintain as useful site storage
6. Funding- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize approved CPC funds • July request of CPC TBD 	Pursue approval of Town funds for the short-term items noted. Establish a 501(c)(3) to enable tax deductible charitable contributions.	Pursue funding from other organizations who share the passion for protection of natural open spaces and/or recreational uses and historic education

* Inventory, clean, empty applies to all structures → determine what to keep, toss, sell, donate

HIGH LEVEL TIMELINE- SHORT TERM WITH FUNDING



SUMMARY

- SPEED to initial utilization of outdoor space (simple trails, parking)- Let's Go!
- SPEED to a specific decision on the caretaker option for the small house
 - 90-day due diligence phase → proposal to Select Board late July
- BUILD a sustainable funding strategy
 - ACCESS some town funds (mainly already approved CPC funds in the short term)
 - PARTNER with organizations with a shared vision (preservation, history, recreation)
 - ENABLE individual/estate contributions via 501(c)(3)
- CRAFT a long-term plan with a pragmatic vision that embraces the generational opportunity for the open space and the Main House

BACK-UP INFORMATION

People and Organizations Consulted Regarding the Future of the Mordecai Lincoln Property

The members of the Scituate Historical Commission have been involved with the Mordecai Lincoln Property throughout the process of purchasing the property and providing options for its use. The Commission has discussed the property at almost every meeting since June 2022.

Commission Chair Doug Smith and Vice Chair Stephen Litchfield have been most helpful in keeping the ball rolling. Stephen is also a member of the trustees of the Scituate Historical Society, and along with Archivist Mary Porter, has offered valuable input about the property and its future use from the Historical Society's point of view. All three of the above people have toured the property and were instrumental in contacting historical preservation consultants and antique experts who toured the property, including Jeff Gonyeau from Preservation Massachusetts and Chris Barber from Doyle's Auctioneers and Appraisers.

The Gulf River Association has expressed great interest in the property and offered its support and assistance for the committee's work. Board member Beth Corry has kept the Gulf Association's board up to date on the work of the Committee and arranged for a tour of the property by members of their board this past January.

The environmental organization, the North and South Rivers Watershed Association (NSRWA), provided their input on the property. In an interview, their Executive Director Samantha Woods, expressed the organization's strong interest in the preservation of open space on the property and its recreational and educational potential.

The Town's Recreation Department Director, Nick Lombardo, expressed interest in using the property for some of the department's programs, including potential kayak/canoe launches.

Through her seat on the Committee, Penny Scott-Pipes has developed the Conservation Commission's Open Space plan for the property.

Several historical preservation consultants have been contacted by the committee and given their input on what steps they see as important for the preservation and future use of the property. These include Brian Pfeiffer from Historical New England, Jeff Gonyeau from Preservation Massachusetts, and independent historical preservation consultants Edward Dray, and Wendy Frontiero. All of them have recommended the hiring of a historical preservation consultant as an important early step in the process of determining the future of the Mordecai Lincoln property.