

Potential Non-Residential Uses

for the

Governor Stoughton Land Trust Property

Poor Farm / Town Farm

Town of Milton, Massachusetts

MLT.S Mass. Hist. Comm. Inventory Designation

K-6-2 MACRIS Database

Summary of Findings

In open meeting discussions with the town at large and with adjacent neighbors from the Indian Cliffs neighborhood at the committee's regular open meeting sessions, one unifying theme stands out.

There is a fondness for the site's current open space use, for its historic farm buildings, boulder-strewn forest land, aging orchards and stone-walled pastures. The site has a rural character that all residents treasure. Its adjacency to the Blue Hills Reservation makes the site a natural extension of the park.

There seems to be no disagreement among Milton residents that an important part of developing the site would be to maintain as much of this character as possible, through connections of trails, buffer zones from surrounding properties, reuse of pastures, and the renovation of the barn and three houses on the site.

The concept of retaining and restoring the 4 primary historic buildings and orchard land, in fact, is present in the residential development schemes studied in this report. The 3-4 acres of open pasture land in the center of the site, and around the existing compound of buildings, is ideal for many of the uses.

Immediate stabilization of the existing deteriorating buildings, particularly the barn, is imperative while development decisions are being contemplated, in order to leave these many options open.

Below are suggestions for alternate uses, as well as simple residential conversions, that would add value to the property, and strengthen the sites ties to the town, the schools, and the abutters.

Open Space Uses:

- **Agricultural Use:**
 - Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) to involve local residents in locally-grown produce. Existing programs such as the Brookwood Farm CSA use as little as 2 acres of leased land, and provide produce to over 360 residents in Milton currently (1.3% of population).
 - CSA's provide 20-50% of product to local Food Banks to benefit poor of Milton and surrounding areas. Brookwood Farm, for example, donates 20% of its crop surplus to several local food banks, where fresh vegetables used to be non-existent.
 - Employ student interns/volunteers from local schools
 - Restore fruit orchards and stone walls through preservation grants

- **Covenanted Public Park / Trail Use**
 - Connect high school and center of the town to the 125-miles of MDC trail systems.
 - Provide as an amenity to residential development
 - Conserve as a land-swap for affordable housing units elsewhere in town

- **Restore Buildings for Museum Use:**
 - As one of only several “Poor Farm” sites in Massachusetts, with original structures standing, the buildings could be renovated and operate as non-profit museum property
 - Utilize barn for site or community event space, or as teaching tool for adjunct farm or equine operations.
 - Renovate the two Almshouses and the Pest House for museum, caretaker, building steward (see historic restoration funding) or farm/equine management staff use
 - Use Massachusetts DCR or Historic New England Curatorship Programs for restoration.

- **Equestrian Use:**
 - The existing paddocks and barn stalls could be refurbished for continued use, possibly using preservation grants. This site ties directly into the 125-miles of horse trails in the Blue Hills Reservation, and the farm site could extend it to the center of town and the Milton High School programs.
 - Private lessee could manage barn, creating income for development, and provide riding lessons, boarding and trail riding in adjacent Blue Hills Reservation.
 - Discounted rates could be offered for town’s low-income residents. Trail-riding could be an amenity for residential development in the site buffer areas.
 - Connection with adjacent High School programs for interns, after-school programs
 - The Milton Animal Shelter, if continued on the site, could use the lower two floors of the barn for animals, and the upper floor for offices, and accommodate large animals from the 3 major equestrian establishments in Milton and surrounds. It could also accommodate mature horse pasturing for Milton horse owners for fee.
 - Equestrian use could tie into composting for agricultural usage as well.

- **Wind Power Production for the Site or Town Usage**

- Site is large and higher than surrounds, with wind speed potential, and may support a wind turbine for electricity production for on-site or town use.
- Currently, state and federal grants will pay for approximately 50% of the cost. Wind analysis studies for the site are inexpensive, and would be recommended for site development consideration.

Housing Uses:

- **Market-Rate or Affordable Housing Units**

- Use Massachusetts DCR Historic Curatorship Program, or Historic New England Curatorship Programs for restoration funds.

- **Affordable Housing Units**

- Build and finance housing units through the South Shore Habitat for Humanity program.
- Use Massachusetts DCR Historic Curatorship Program, or Historic New England Curatorship Programs for restoration funds in conjunction with other funds, private or public.