



AREA OF REFLECTION FOR ENSLAVED
PEOPLES

JOHN DICKINSON PLANTATION, DOVER, DE

LARC467: SENIOR CAPSTONE SEMINAR

SPRING 2021

BRANDON MOORE

William was not hiding in a world of his own making. Rather, he inhabited a system of trails and spaces known to and apprehended by other slaves.

enslaved people read the slave landscapes they inhabited through a set of markers that were indecipherable to most whites and that spoke of black occupation of the land—a loose board they pried open to enter a storehouse, for instance, or spots associated with secret ritual activity

Dell Upton (1985) describes the cognitive slave landscape as a static network composed of discrete places. Enslaved people experienced the plantation and its surroundings as a set of immovable barriers. They tended to relate all points to their customary location rather than regard them as components of a dynamic system. In the schema of twentieth century psychologist Warner Brown, who identified four different kinds of orientation, the slave form of cognition corresponded to that mode in which people comprehend their environments as a memorized sequence of movements (Lynch 1960).

this is to let you know that the dwelling house has got so bad that with out thee will get it repard or alow me out of the Rent for getting it don I must leve the place this faul for I nor no one else can live in the house another winter Please to rite back what you intend to do...

In order to begin reflecting on how enslaved individuals may have perceived the landscape in the 18th century, I had to understand what it may have felt like to live and work on the land.

CONTENTS

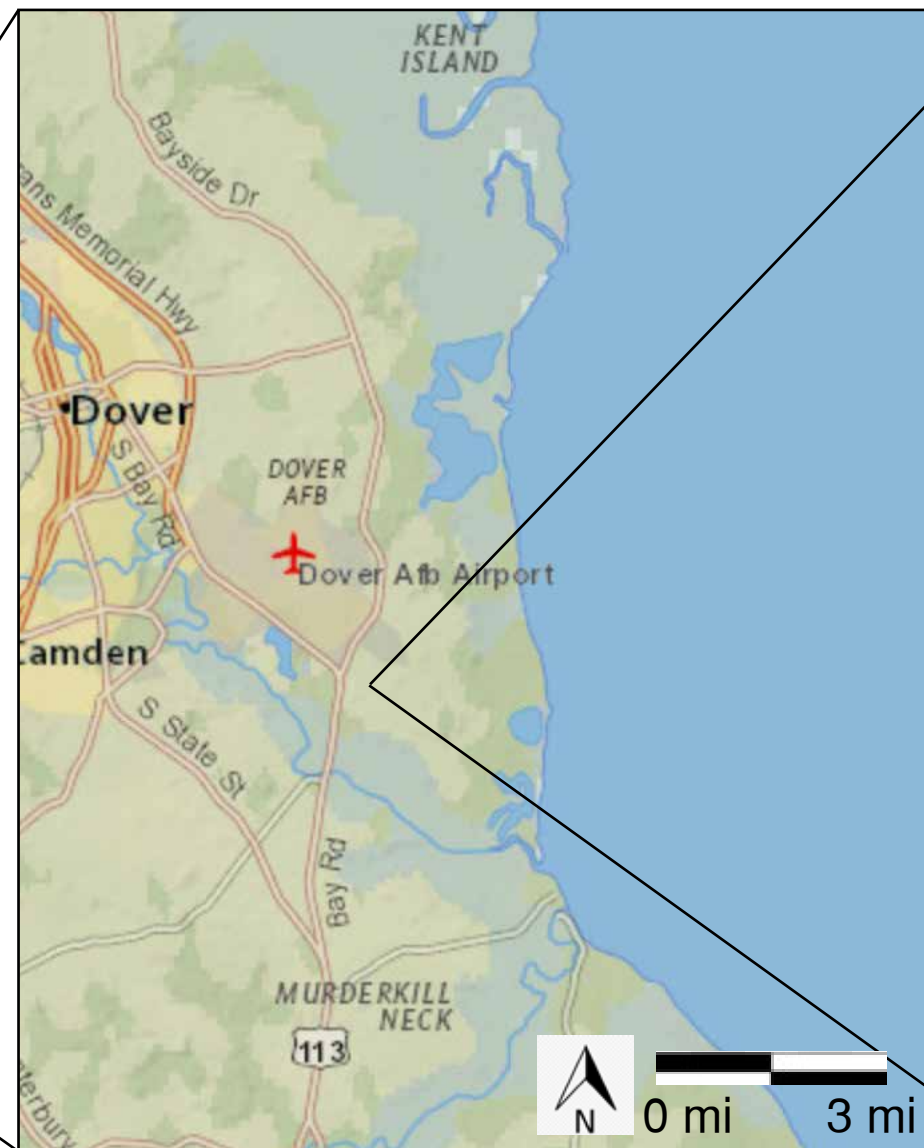
4	INTRODUCTION
5	PROPOSED MASTER PLAN
6	OBJECTIVES
7-8	EXISTING CONDITIONS
9-10	HISTORIC CONTEXT
11-12	PRECEDENT STUDY
13	CASE STUDY
14	RESEARCH BRIEF
15	CONCEPT DIAGRAMS
16-18	SITE ANALYSIS
19-25	PROPOSED CONCEPT PLAN
26	CONCLUSION
27	REFERENCES

INTRODUCTION

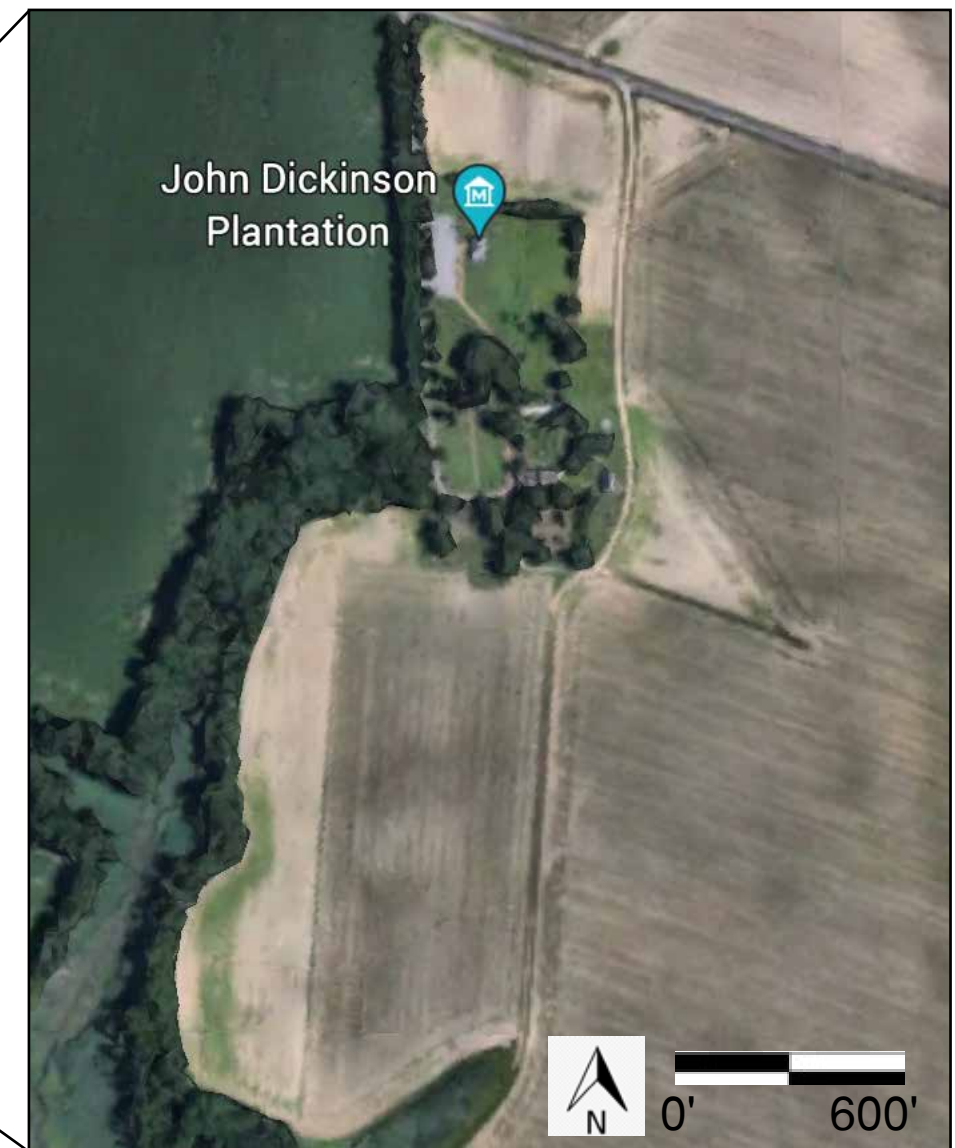
During the course of a semester, the historic land of the John Dickinson Plantation was studied. In the late 18th century, the morality of owning slaves was rarely questioned. Enslaved individuals were viewed as property simply because of the pigment of their skin, and were horribly oppressed. I was assigned to create an Area of Reflection to honor the Enslaved Peoples that once lived and worked on the land.



Dover, Delaware



Kitts Hummock Rd



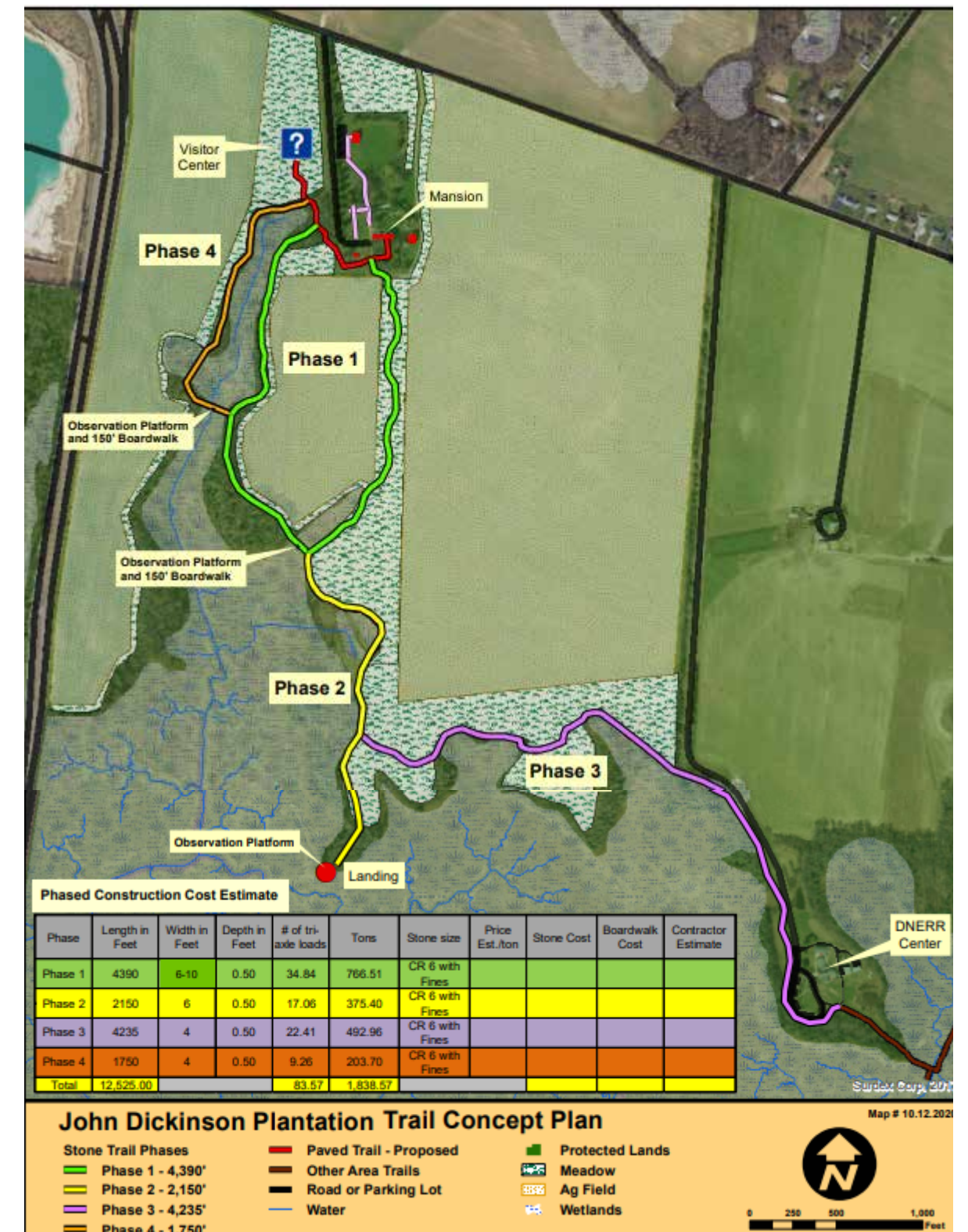
Location of Site

PROPOSED MASTER PLAN



Master Plan done by Bernardon

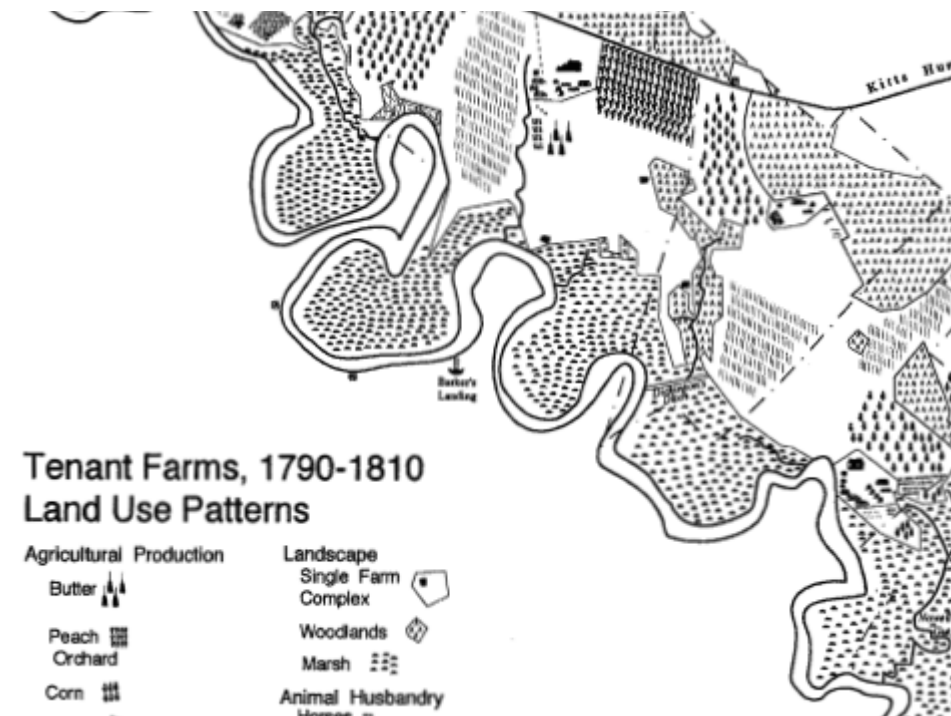
Currently, staff are organizing a master plan and students are asked to create an Area of Reflection that will be implemented to the master plan for the entire John Dickinson Plantation.



Trail Concept Plan completed by David Bartoo, Delaware State Parks

MISSION:

Use historic representation to understand how an enslaved individual perceived the landscape at John Dickinson Plantation.



John Dickinson Plantation Tenant Farms and Land Use Patterns, 1790-1810.

GOALS:

Promote 18th century practices, differentiating from historic core's Colonial Revival planting style.

Address the economic standpoint that landowners had over enslaved individuals.

Promote circulation throughout the site to highlight different modes of experience.

OBJECTIVES:

Incorporate fruit orchards, sited from Rachel Siders' research

Establish a separate path that would have been used by Enslaved Peoples

Create an Area of Reflection that is monochromatic and discrete; representative of an enslaved path

Encourage community engagement with opportunity to create murals depicting the trades of the enslaved

Include names of manumitted slaves, leaving opportunity for exploration and implementation of new discoveries

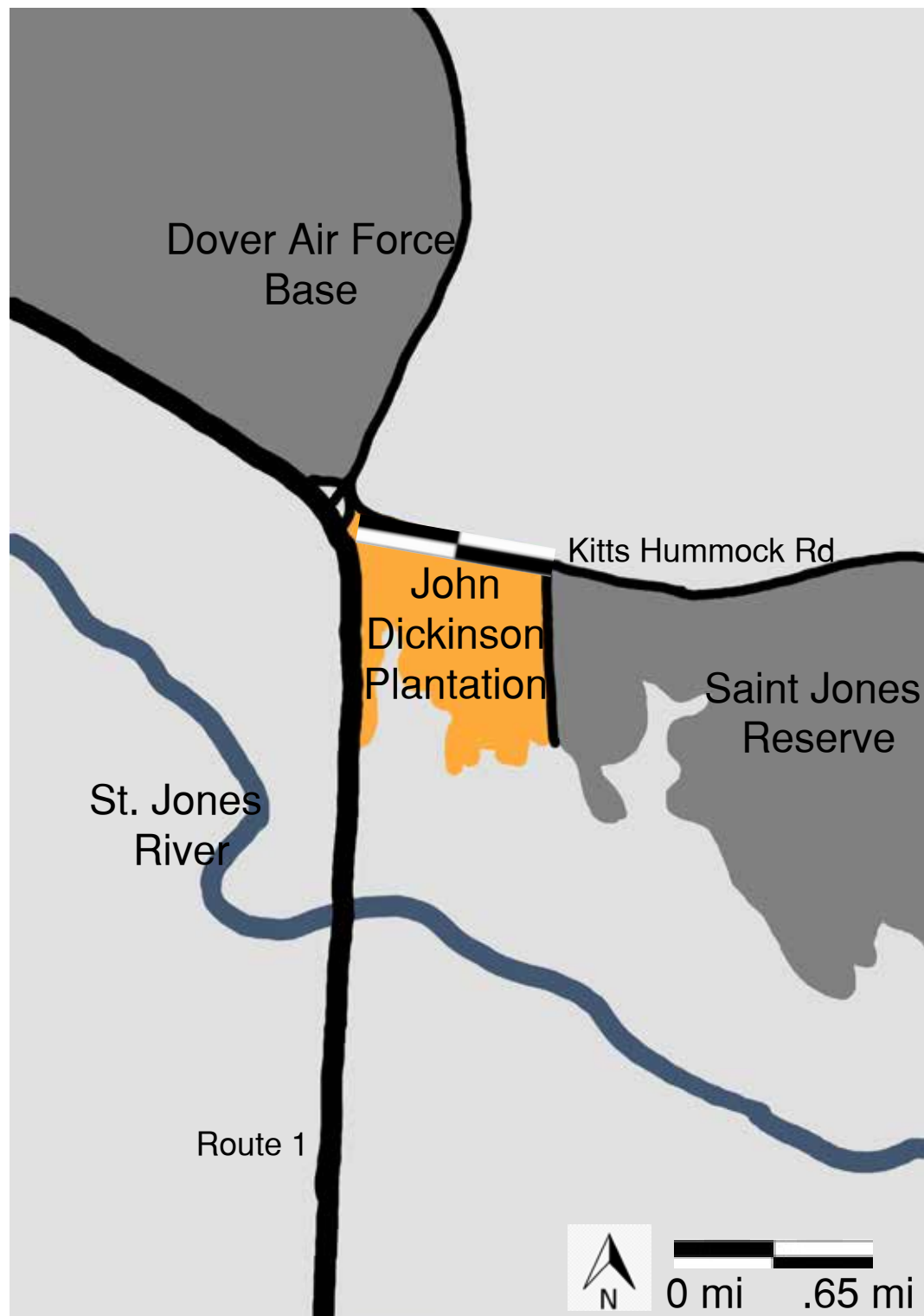
Site seating area oriented towards the sunrise on August 28, 1777

Establish a path to the Burial Grounds

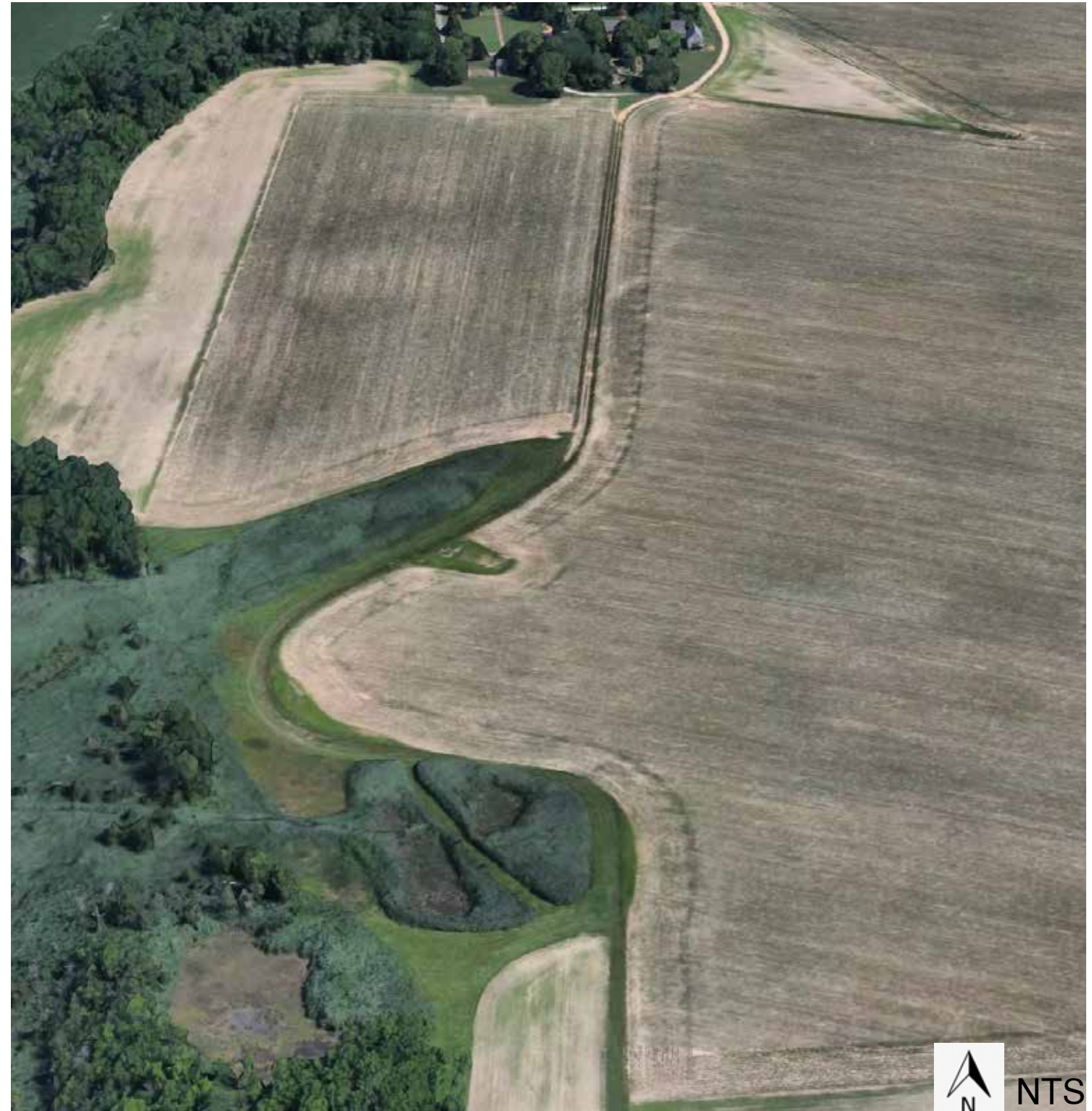
Create ADA accessible paths using fine compacted gravel and brick

Include concepts that appeal to the multiple intelligences of the Spectrum Matrix

EXISTING CONDITIONS

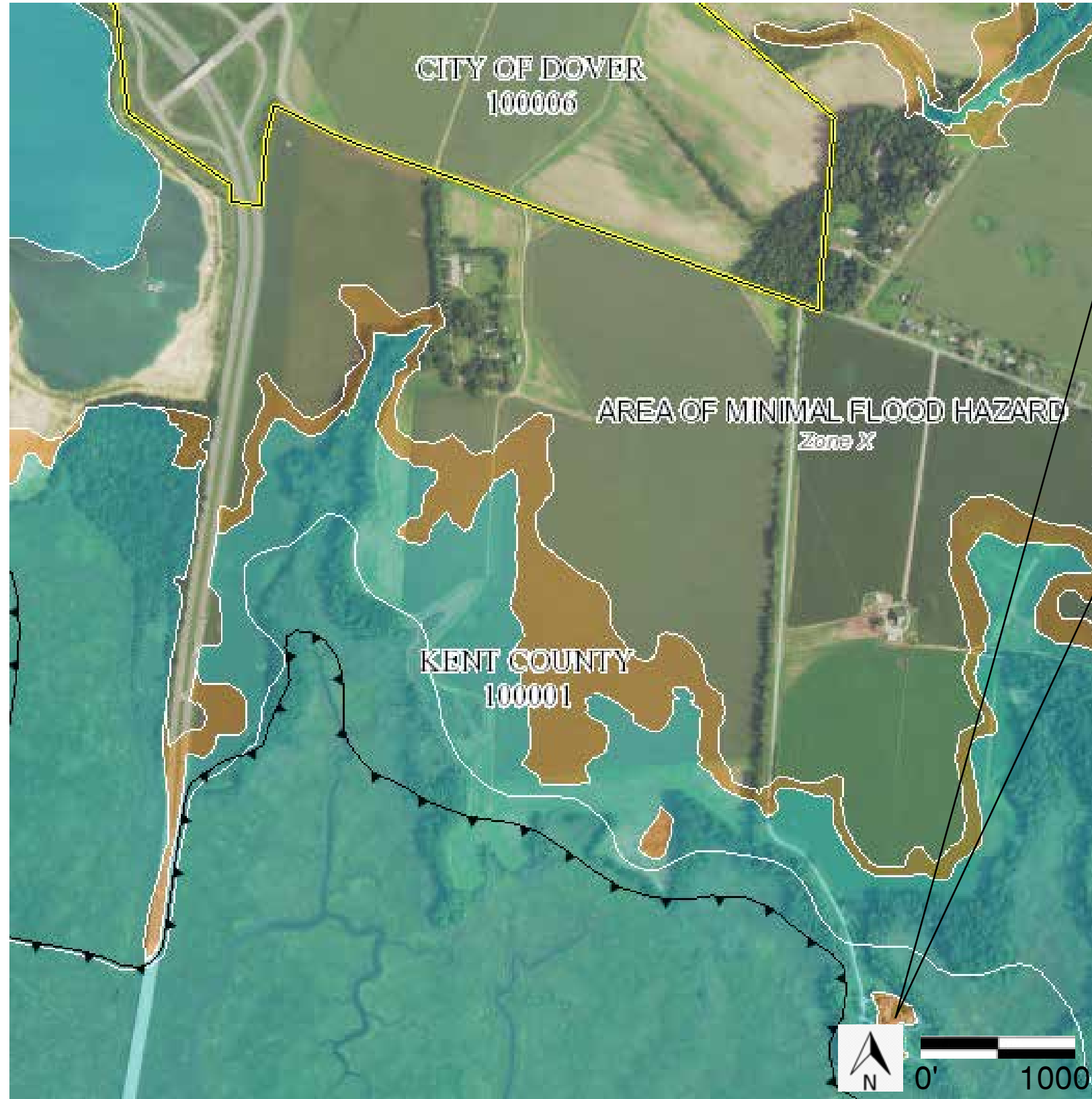


John Dickinson Plantation is located in Dover, DE.



Existing Conditions, Google Earth 2020

EXISTING CONDITIONS



FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer, 2020.



Boardwalk from St. Jones Reserve nature trail that is 1/4 mile over the salt marsh

Since John Dickinson Plantation is located just 2 miles from the Delaware Bay, and adjacent to the St. Jones River, JDP is partially in a hazardous flood zone.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Samuel Dickinson died in 1760, the Delaware lands and the enslaved men women and children were divided between his sons, John and Philemon Dickinson.

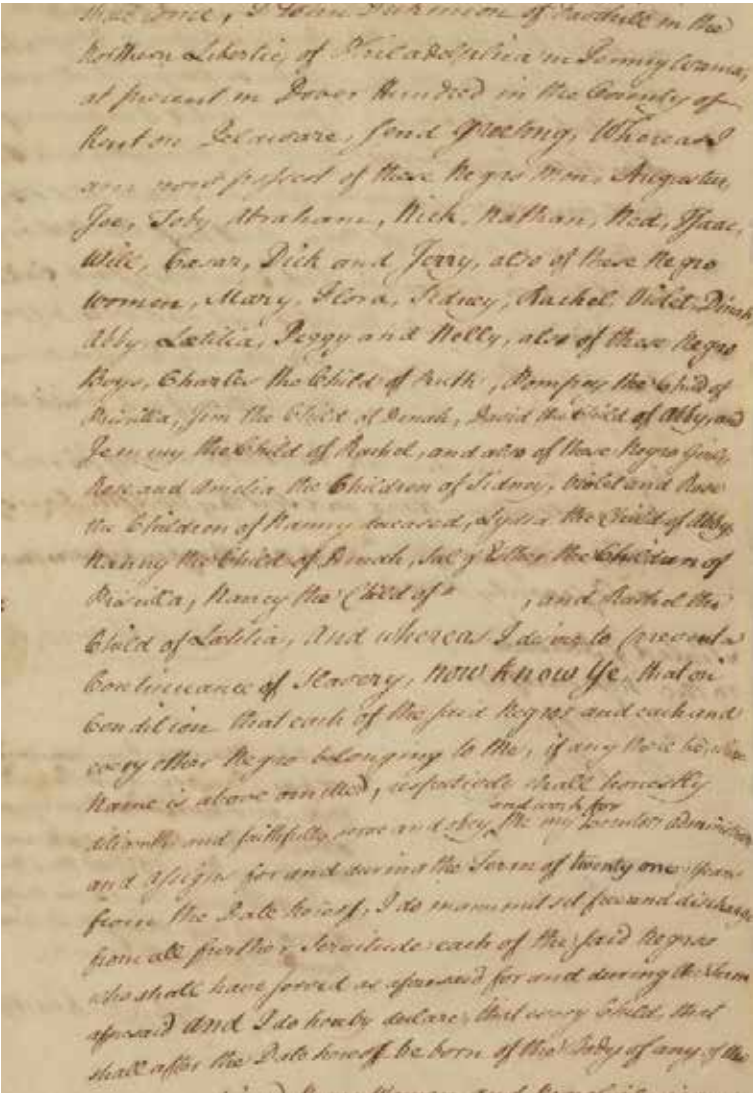
August 28, 1777, John Dickinson enacted the first conditional manumission of African American held in bondage.

In 1804, the interior of the main house (Block 1) is destroyed by fire.

In 1954, Alden Hopkins, a landscape architect from Colonial Williamsburg to design a formal garden to enhance the grounds in front of the mansion. The restoration of the mansion was completed in 1956 and it opened to the public in May of that year.

In 2017, Five Stories, an exhibit highlighting the lives of the Dickinson family, the tenant farmers, the enslaved individuals, and the free Blacks was installed in the visitor center.

In 2021, the discoveries of an estimated 400 graveshafts were found approximately 1/2 mile south of the plantation house



Manumissions from 1777

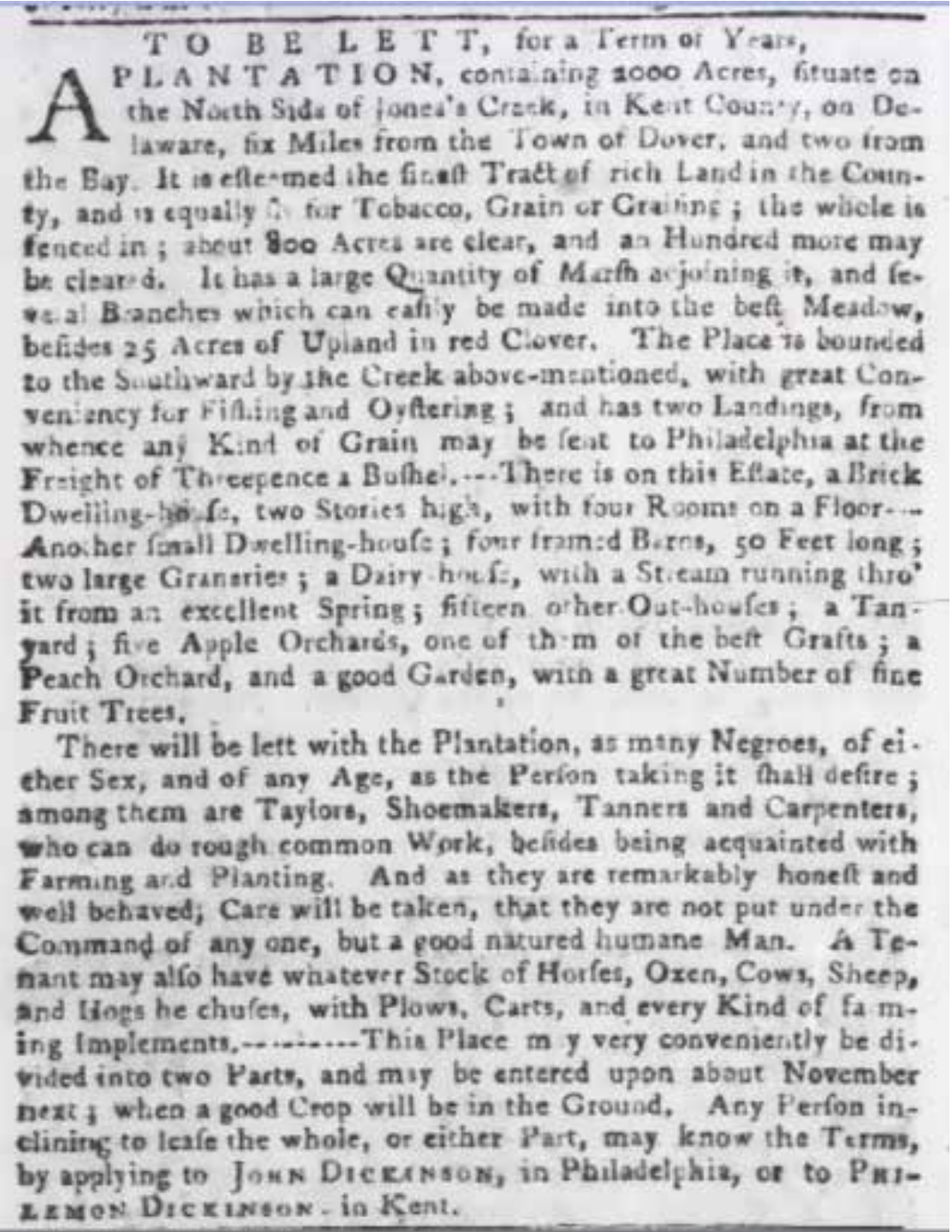
1760 1777 1804 1954 2017 2021

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Translation of a newspaper print from late 18th century describing the historic land use:

"To be lett, for a Term of Years, a plantation, containing 2000 acres situated on the North Side of Jone's Creek, in Kent County, on Delaware, six miles from the town of Dover, and two from the bay. It is the finest tract of rich land in the county, and is equally for tobacco, grain or graining, the whole is fenced in; about 800 acres are clear, and an hundred more may be cleared. It has a large quantity in red clover, the place is bounded to the southward by the creek above-mentioned, with great conveniency for fishing and oystering; and has two landings, from where any kind of grain may sent to Philadelphia at the freight of threepence a bushel. There is on this estate, a brick dwelling-house, four framed barns, 50 feet long, two large graineries, a dairy house with a stream running through it from an excellent spring; fifteen other out-houses, a tan yard, five apple orchards, one of them the best grafts; a peach orchard, and a good garden, with a number of fine fruit trees.

There will be lett with the plantation, as many Negroes, of either Sex, and of any age, as the person taking it shall desire; among them are taylors, shoemakers, tanners and carpenters, who can do rough common work, besides being acquainted with Farming and planting. And as they are remarkably honest and well behaved, care will be taken, that they are not put under the command of any one, but a good natured humane man. Tenant may also have whatever stock of horses, oxen, cows, sheep, and hogs he chooseshm with plows, carts, and every kind of farming implements. This place may very conveniently be divided into two parts, and may be entered upon about November next; when a good crop will be in the ground. Any person inclining to lease the whole, or either part, may know the terms by applying to John Dickinson, in Philadelphia or Philemon Dickinson, in Kent."



TO BE LETT, for a Term of Years,
A PLANTATION, containing 2000 Acres, situate on
the North Side of Jone's Creek, in Kent County, on De-
laware, six Miles from the Town of Dover, and two from
the Bay. It is esteemed the finest Tract of rich Land in the Coun-
ty, and is equally fit for Tobacco, Grain or Graining; the whole is
fenced in; about 800 Acres are clear, and an Hundred more may
be cleared. It has a large Quantity of Marsh adjoining it, and se-
veral Branches which can easily be made into the best Meadow,
besides 25 Acres of Upland in red Clover. The Place is bounded
to the Southward by the Creek above-mentioned, with great Con-
veniency for Fishing and Oystering; and has two Landings, from
whence any Kind of Grain may be sent to Philadelphia at the
Freight of Threepence a Bushel.---There is on this Estate, a Brick
Dwelling-house, two Stories high, with four Rooms on a Floor---
Another small Dwelling-house; four framed Barns, 50 Feet long;
two large Granaries; a Dairy-house, with a Stream running thro'
it from an excellent Spring; fifteen other Out-houses; a Tan-
yard; five Apple Orchards, one of them of the best Grafts; a
Peach Orchard, and a good Garden, with a great Number of fine
Fruit Trees.
There will be lett with the Plantation, as many Negroes, of ei-
ther Sex, and of any Age, as the Person taking it shall desire;
among them are Taylors, Shoemakers, Tanners and Carpenters,
who can do rough common Work, besides being acquainted with
Farming and Planting. And as they are remarkably honest and
well behaved; Care will be taken, that they are not put under the
Command of any one, but a good natured humane Man. A Te-
nant may also have whatever Stock of Horses, Oxen, Cows, Sheep,
and Hogs he chuses, with Plows, Carts, and every Kind of fa-
ring Implements.---This Place may very conveniently be di-
vided into two Parts, and may be entered upon about November
next; when a good Crop will be in the Ground. Any Person in-
clining to lease the whole, or either Part, may know the Terms,
by applying to JOHN DICKINSON, in Philadelphia, or to PHI-
LEMON DICKINSON, in Kent.

Article describes the trades of the enslaved individuals. There were Tailors, Shoemakers, Tanners, and Carpenters

PRECEDENT STUDY: Enslaved Laborers Memorial, University of Virginia



The 80 ft memorial is in a shape that resembles a broken shackle, which signals the end of a physical bondage of enslavement. The two tangential paths lead to the North Star, and to the sunset on March 3rd (Liberation and Freedom Day). Visitors are encouraged to feel the stone, see the timeline, and reflect honor. Written on the wall are names of the enslaved that helped build the UVA's campus. The timeline ends with Isabella Gibbons' death in 1889.

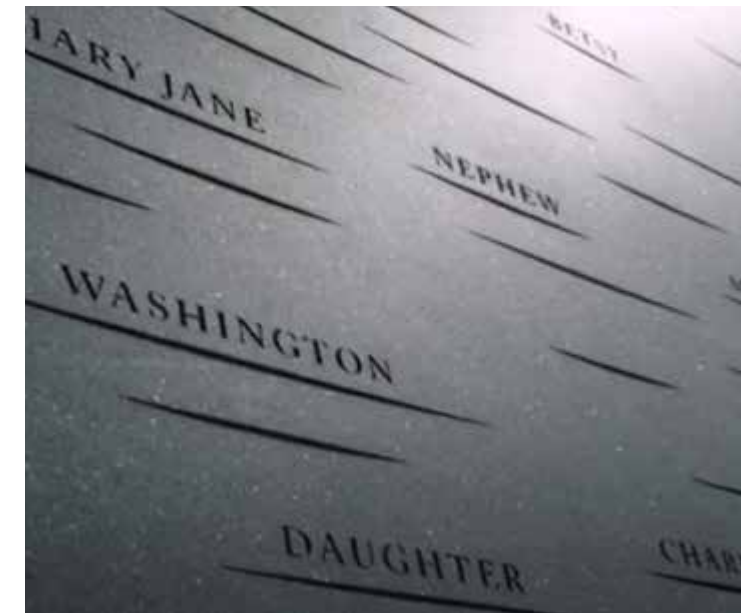
Enslaved Laborers Memorial, UVA



Gravel Edge Landscape Detail/
Path Leading to North Star



Water Table with Timeline



Names of Enslaved

PRECEDENT STUDY: Enslaved Laborers Memorial, UVA



The project was designed in a collaboration between Howeler + Yoon Architecture, Dr. Mabel O. Wilson (Studio), Gregg Bleam Landscape Architect, and Dr. Frank Dukes.

Can we forget the crack of the whip, cowhide, whipping post, the auction-block, the hand-cuffs, the spaniels, the iron collar, the negro-trader tearing the young adult from it's mother's breast as a whelp from the lioness?? Have we forgotten that by those horrible cruelties, hundreds of our race have been killed? No, we have not, nor ever will.

-Isabella Gibbons, 1867



Isabella Gibbons (circa 1836)

CASE STUDY: Sam Houston Memorial Museum, Huntsville, Texas



Research was obtained on the Sam Houston Memorial in Huntsville, TX, assessing different ways slavery is represented. During the John Dickinson Plantation design process, we want to ensure that we do not represent slavery in this way.

There are 3 different representations of slavery.

Trivialization and Deflection -

"Slavery was different here" or "slaves were members of the family".

Segregation and Marginalization -

Devoted to illustrating the lifestyle of plantation owners.

Relative Incorporation -

Often fails to fully engage visitors with the issue of slavery, implies that histories of the enslaved are simply added to existing narratives.

RESEARCH BRIEF: Spectrum Matrix: Landscape Design and Landscape Experience

The article by Terry Clements presents a matrix of design considerations relating an individual's perceptual and cognitive capacities to the programming and design of landscapes. The spectrum matrix is a tool that can be used during the site inventory and analysis of a project's program in order to develop a meaningful landscape experience. Designers are reminded to look closely at room for opportunity to engage with the landscape across multiple intelligences.

DESIGN IMPLICATIONS

Logical/Mathematical Intelligence

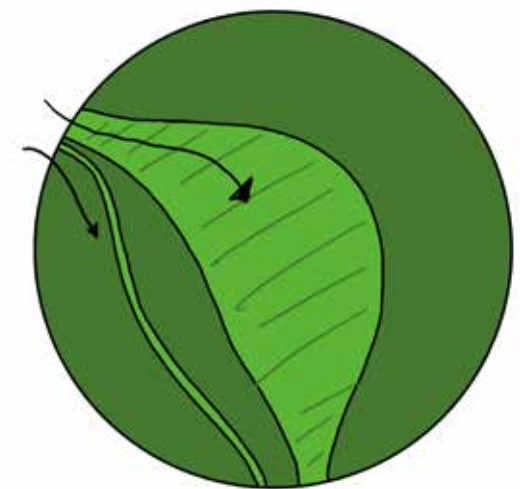
Discerning relationships and connections with patterns that use mathematical concepts.

Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence

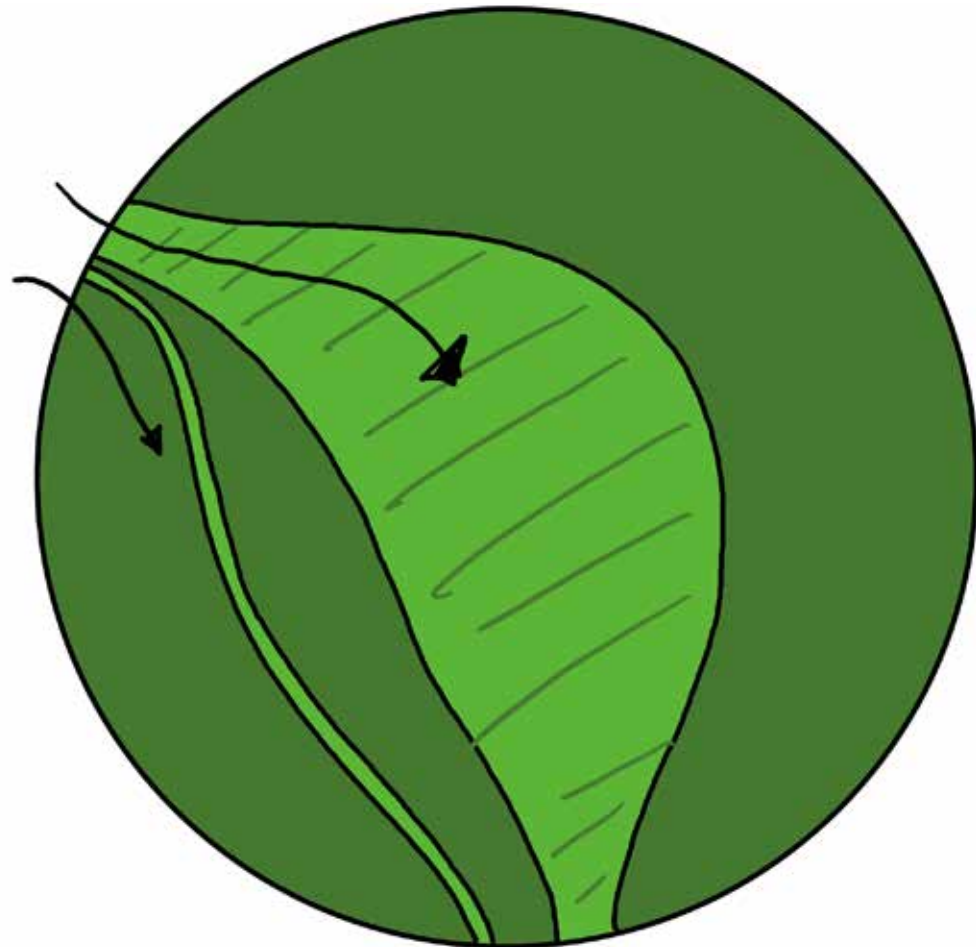
The use of objects that give management opportunity for object narratives. Objects are a good starting point to narrate a story about the enslaved. In the absence of a "tour-guide", written information can also be implemented into the site that tells the historic story of the enslaved

Visual/Spatial Intelligence

Manipulation of form, finding your way in space. Use of discrete pathways that represent how an enslaved individual would have been using the site.



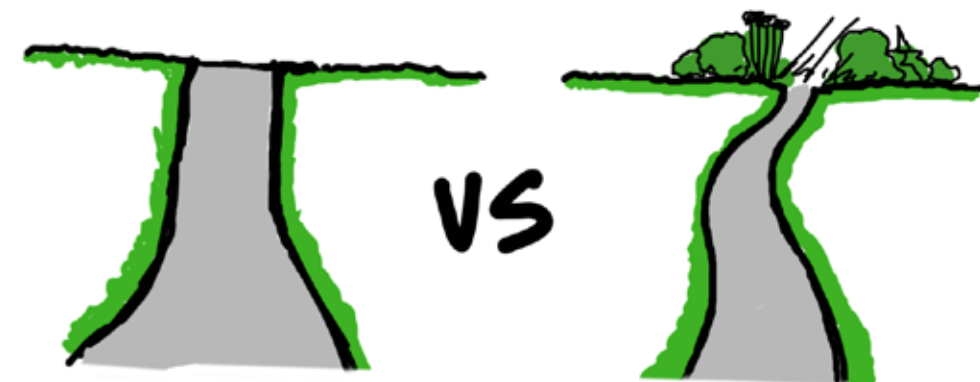
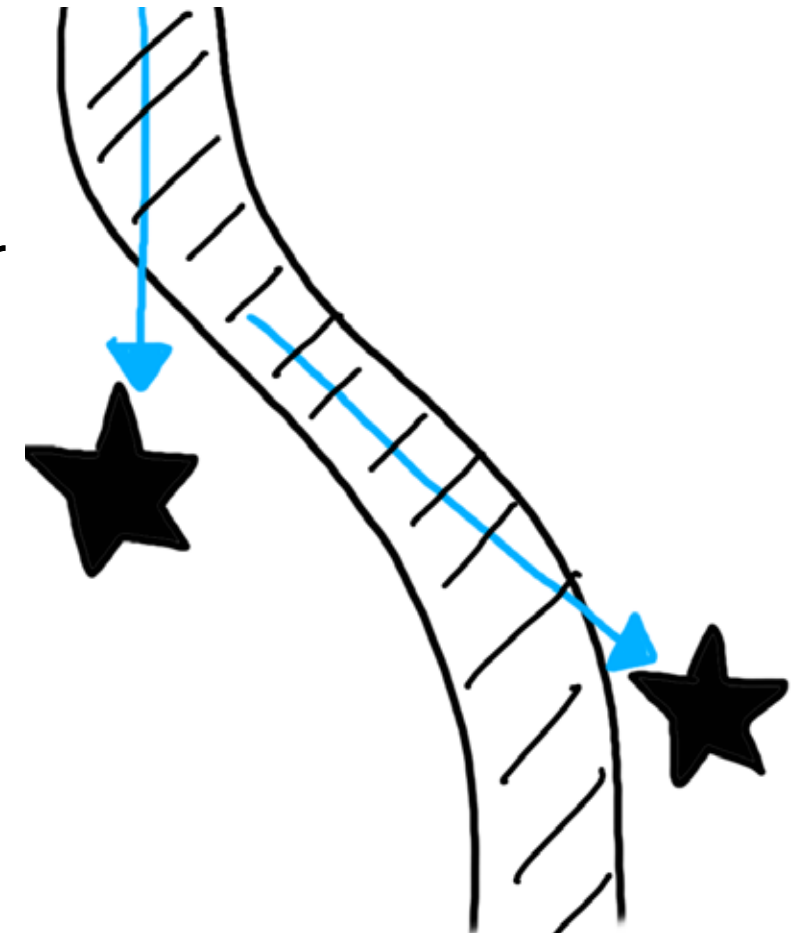
CONCEPTUAL DIAGRAMS



VISUAL-SPATIAL

A "discrete" pathway that is off of the "main" pathway, which outlines the dynamic difference of how enslaved individuals would use the site.

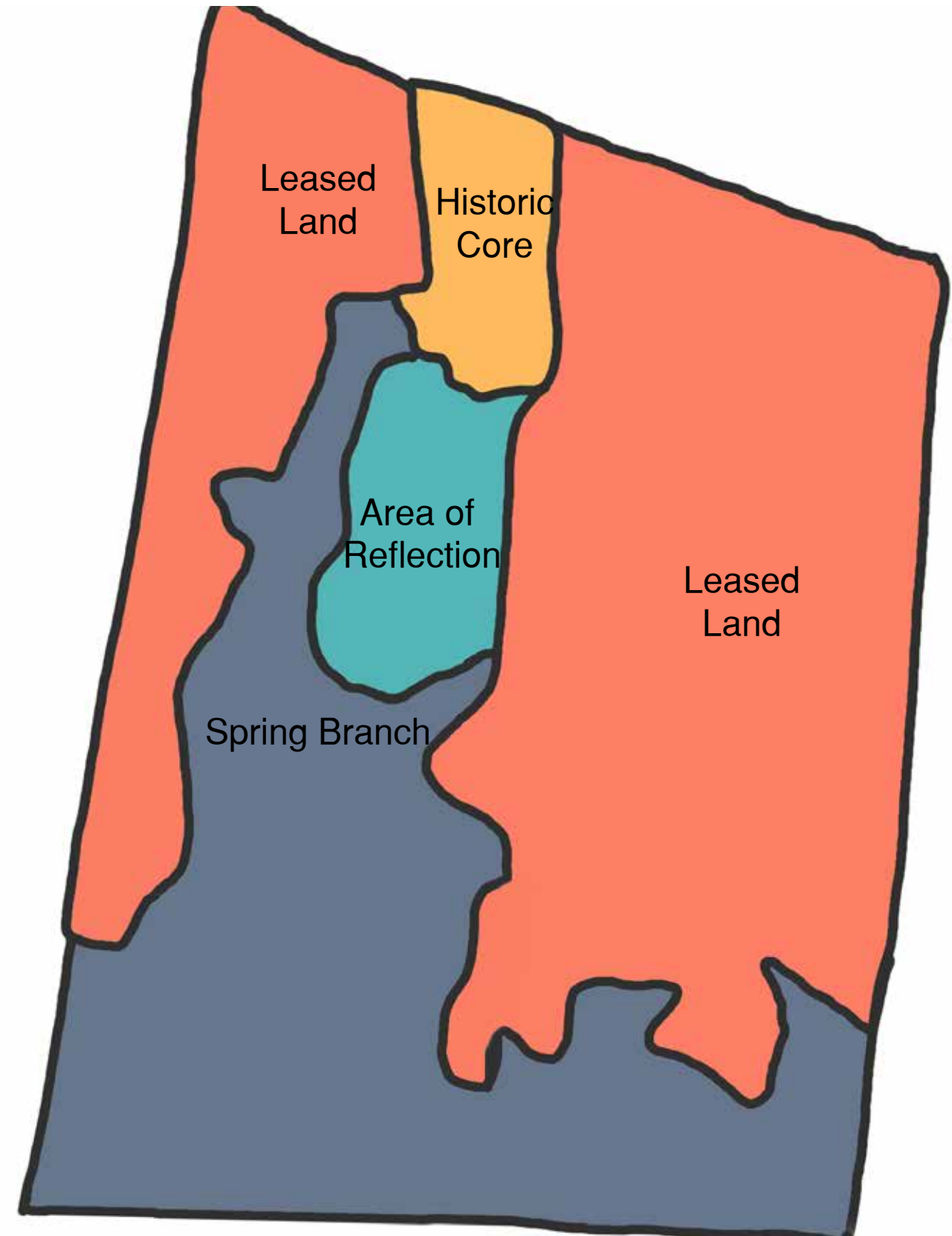
LINGUISTICS/VERBAL
The use of focal points to dictate object narratives for guided tours.



VISUAL-SPATIAL

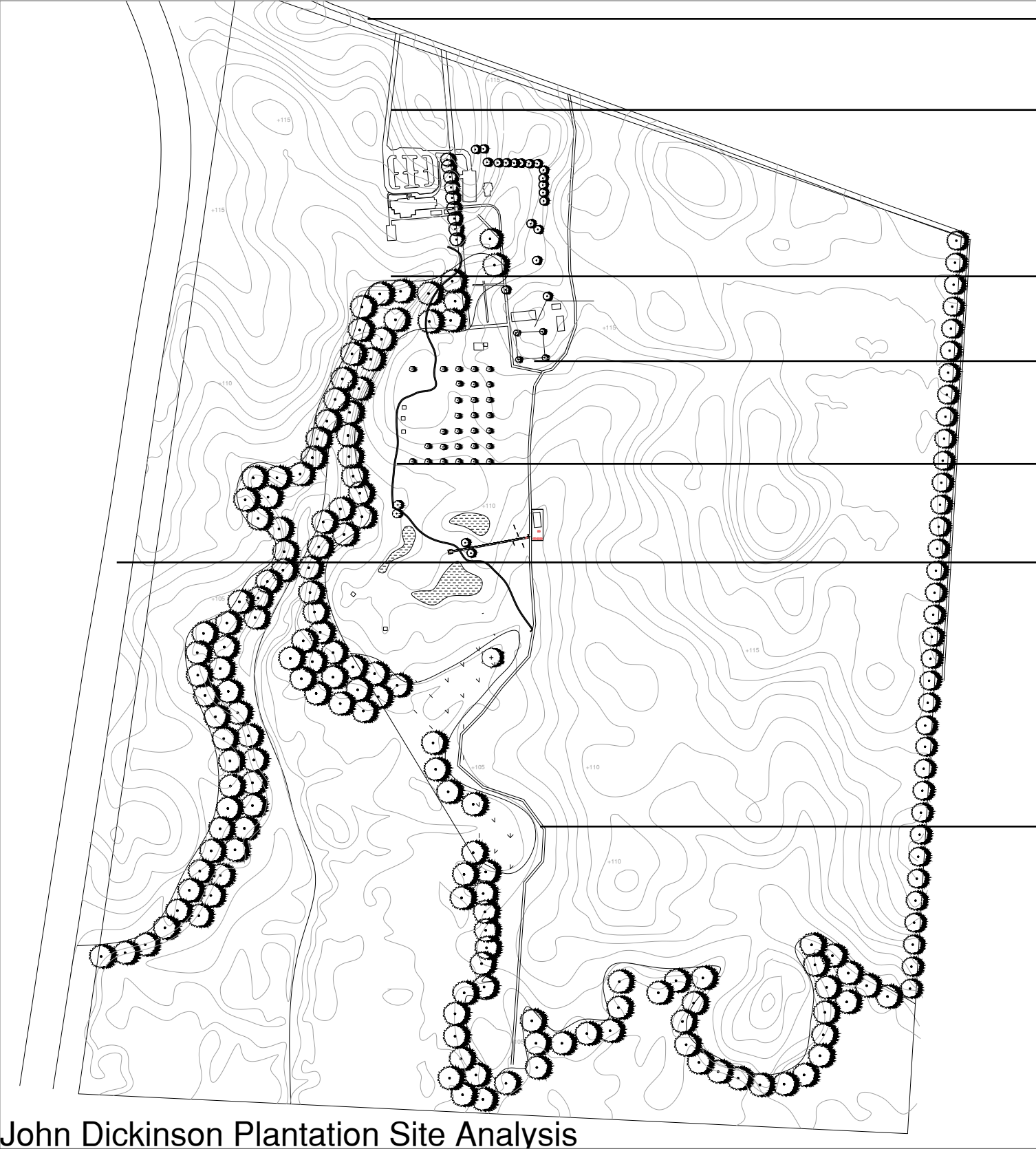
"Staging" an entrance.

SITE ANALYSIS



Overlay of Google Earth and Spatial Diagram for John Dickinson Plantation

SITE ANALYSIS

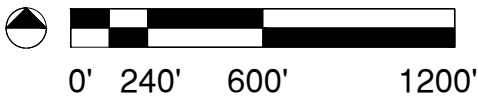


Kitts Hummock Road
Proposed Visitor's Entrance

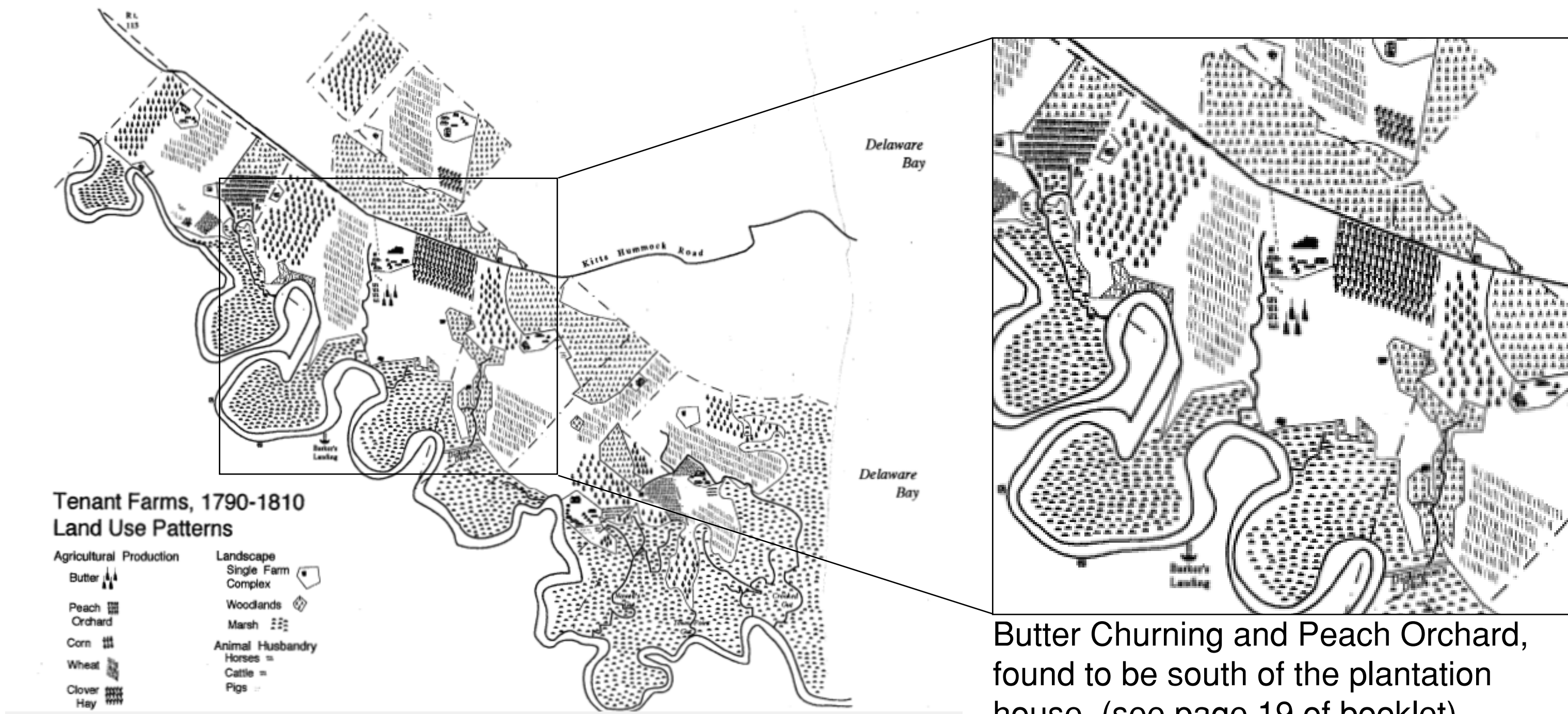
Slaking Pit
Historic Core
Proposed Paths
Rt. 1

Access to Historic
Landing

John Dickinson Plantation Site Analysis



SITE ANALYSIS



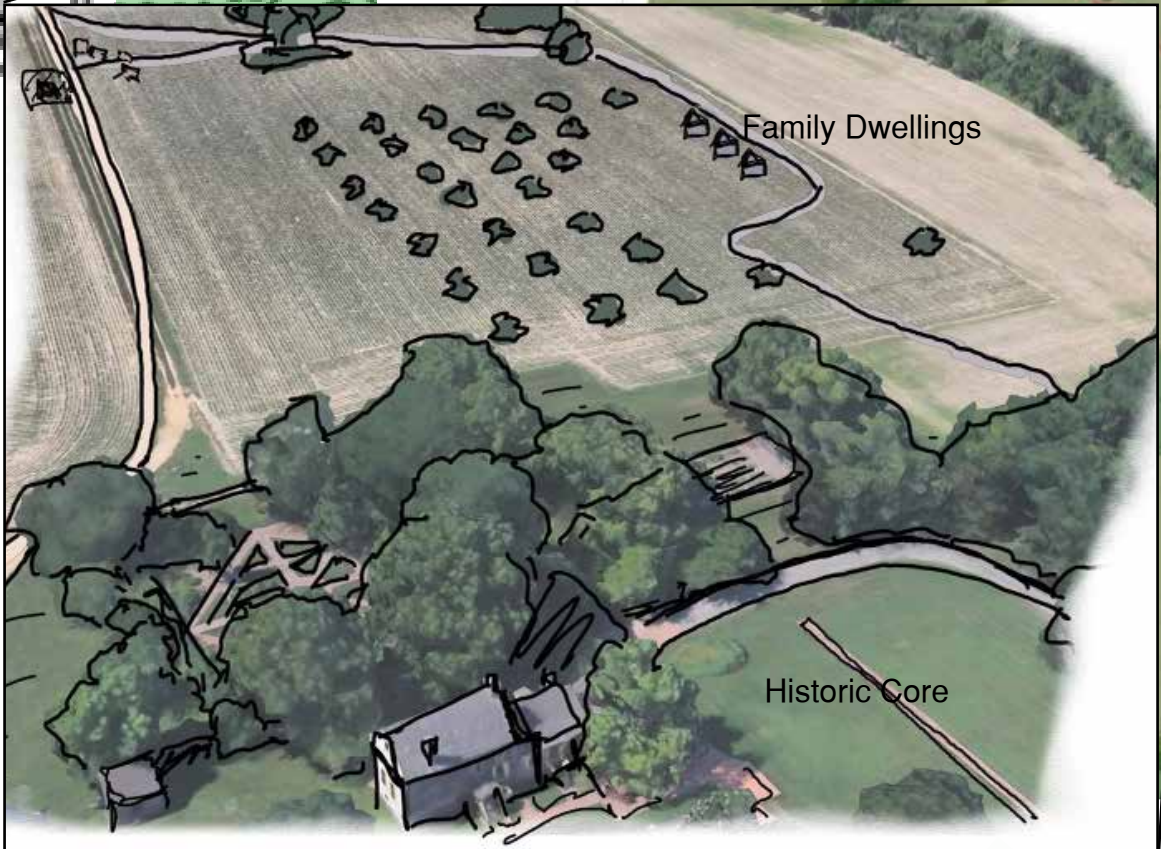
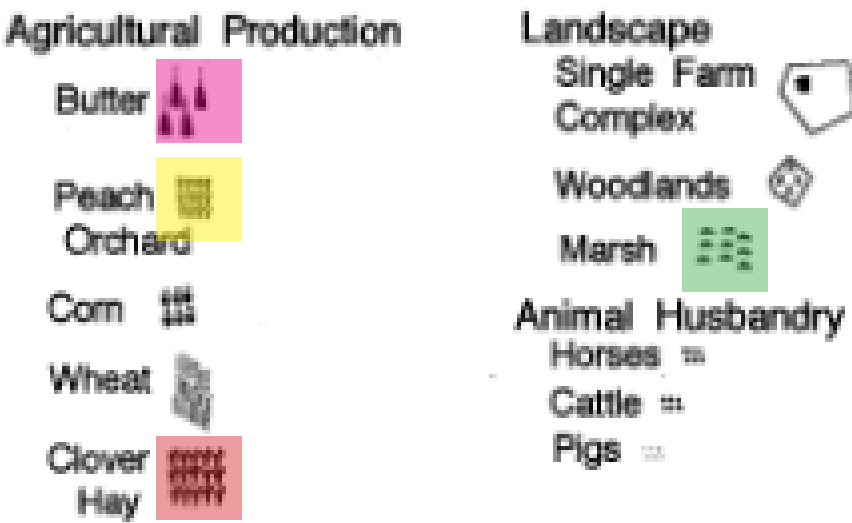
Butter Churning and Peach Orchard, found to be south of the plantation house. (see page 19 of booklet)

Rachel Sider's research on land use patterns during 1790-1810

PROPOSED CONCEPT PLAN

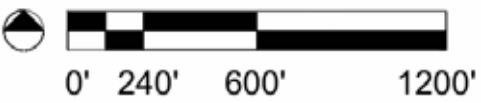
Rachel Sider's historic research containing 75 documents with regard to the plantation describes that "John Dickinson allowed 'several families of negroes' to live near the peach orchard in small dwellings."

Tenant Farms, 1790-1810 Land Use Patterns

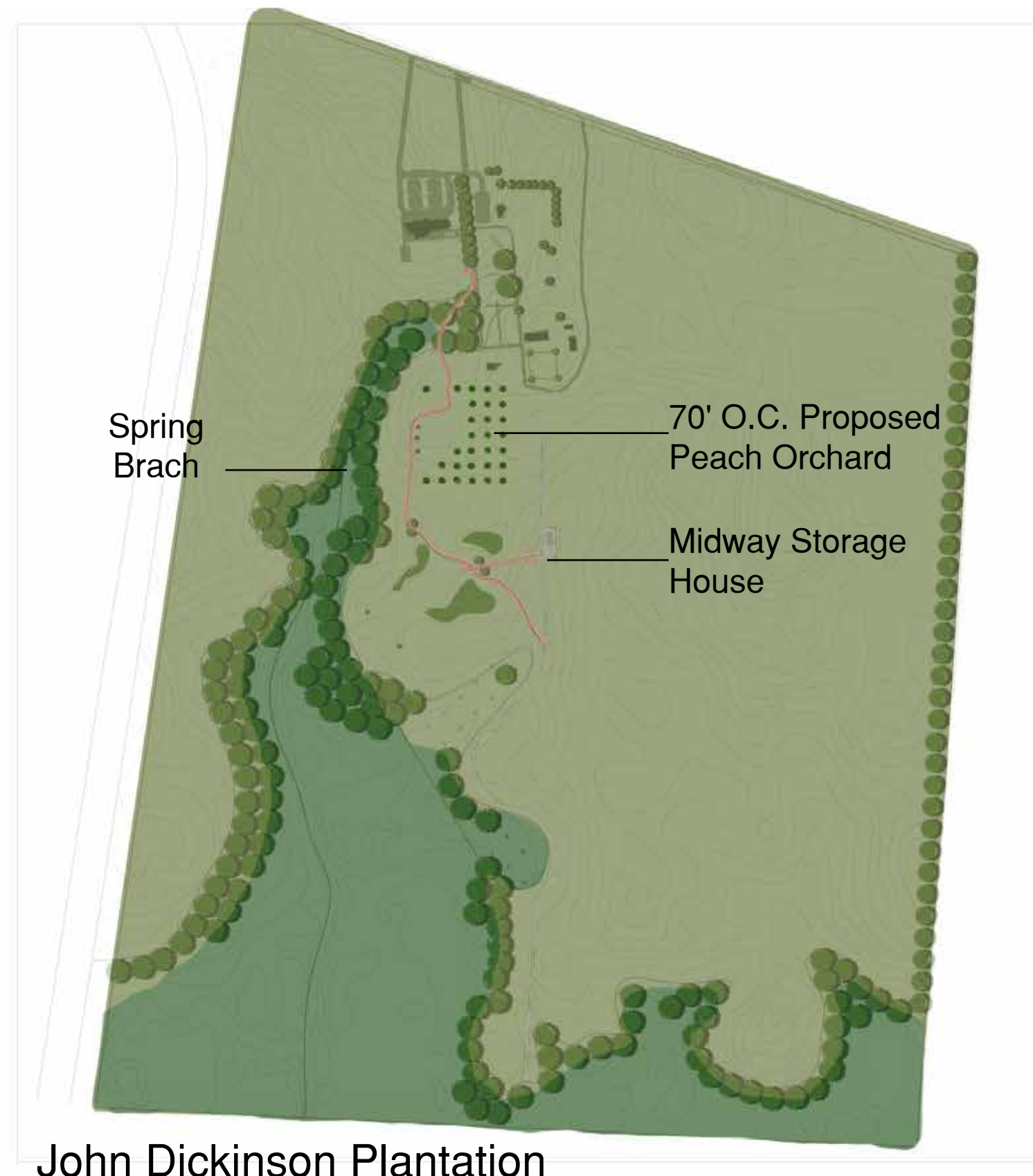


Proposed Aerial View

N  NTS

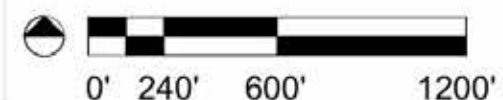


PROPOSED CONCEPT PLAN



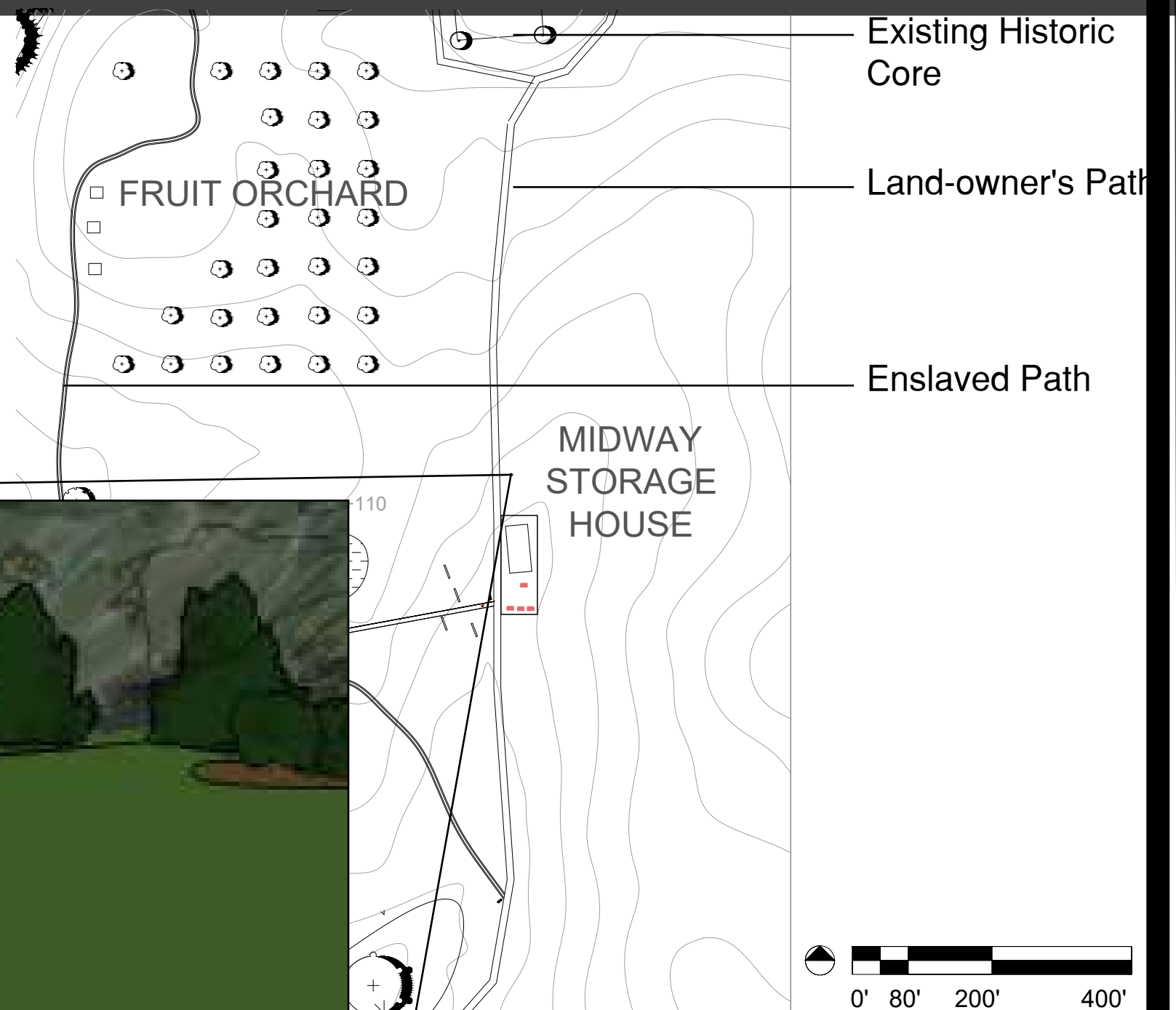
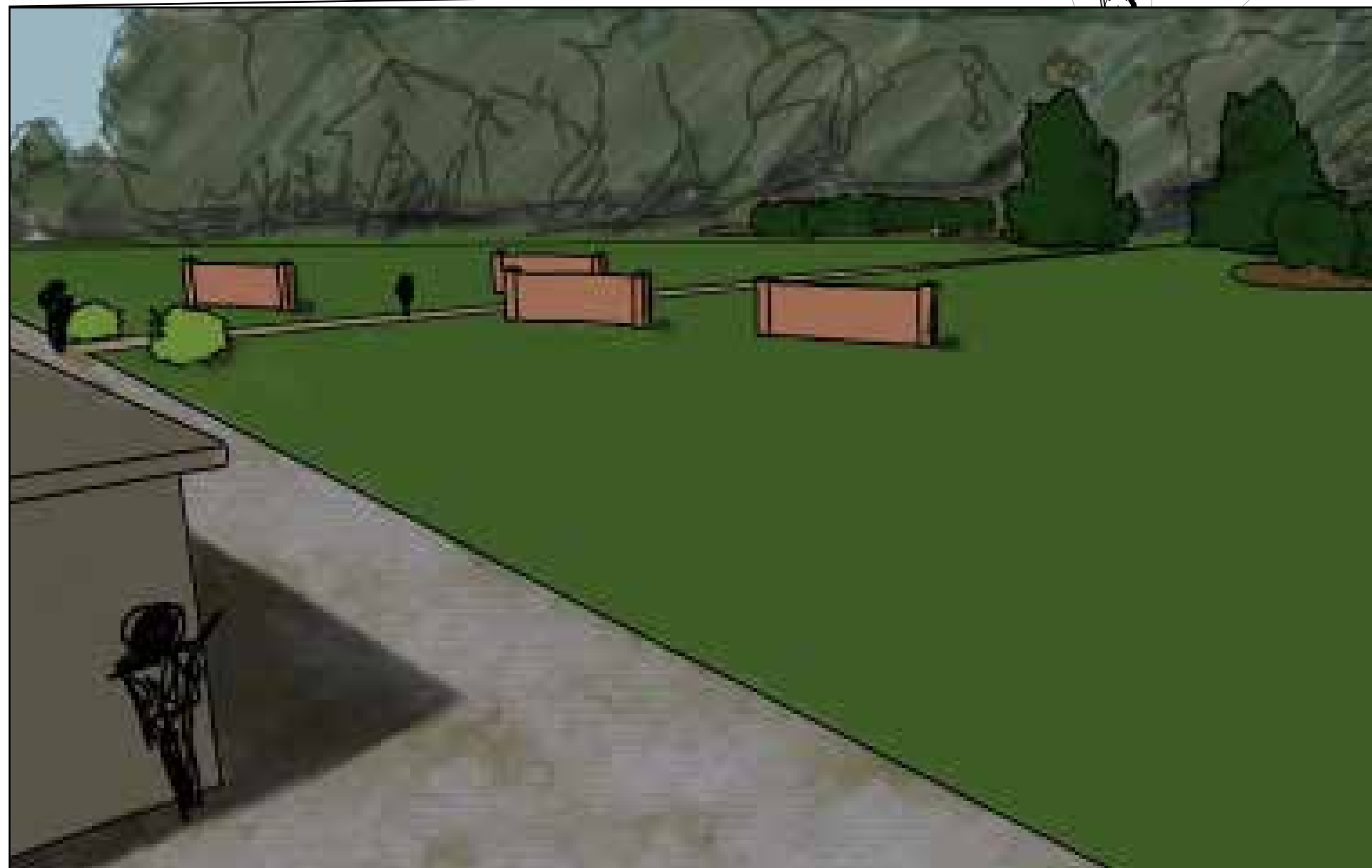
- Enslaved Trail
- Open Grass
- Riparian Marsh
- Land-owner's trail

The path to the midway storage house representing the enslaved perspective is different from the path representing the slave owners' perspective. It is closest to the Peach Orchard and the walk is much narrower, seemingly harder to navigate through. Land owner's don't typically take this path because it is not as convenient for them, but it is more convenient to us who work the land. Spring Branch is the long range of trees to the side where wood is collected, across from the wooded area are dwellings. There is a series of dwellings that we encounter on this path. We can see the plantation house from the first dwelling, and pass by the series of dwellings to enter the area of reflection. The area of reflection sits before the midway house and is oriented so that individuals are able to view the burial ground to honor those before them forced into slavery. The open space is where ritual ceremonies of the enslaved may have taken place, far out and hidden from the plantation house, We can read the names of the manumitted slaves on the back of the brick walls near the storage house, however 75% of the walls are left intentionally blank, to represent all of the others buried in the grounds whose names have been forgotten. We are able to walk through a separation in these walls to enter the main pathway of the plantation owners.



PROPOSED PLAN

An enslaved individual would have alternatively taken the path that passes through the orchard. As they approach the midway storage house, they can read names of manumitted slaves on the back sides of the walls. Each name is to cover 1/100 of the surface area of each 4 walls. Only 105 names were listed on the manumissions lists, however there could be up to 300 names that have been forgotten.



The landowner's view of the proposed walls will engage community artists to depict the economic trades of Enslaved Peoples, including Shoemakers, Tanners, Tailors, and Carpenters.

PLANT SELECTION



Malus sp., crabapple

Since peach trees are susceptible to disease, the alternative on crabapple fruit should be used. John Dickinson had more than one orchard, however the peach orchard was of his finest grafts. Some species of crabapple ripen before the August 28, when the sunrise will align with the proposed path.



Ilex opaca, American holly

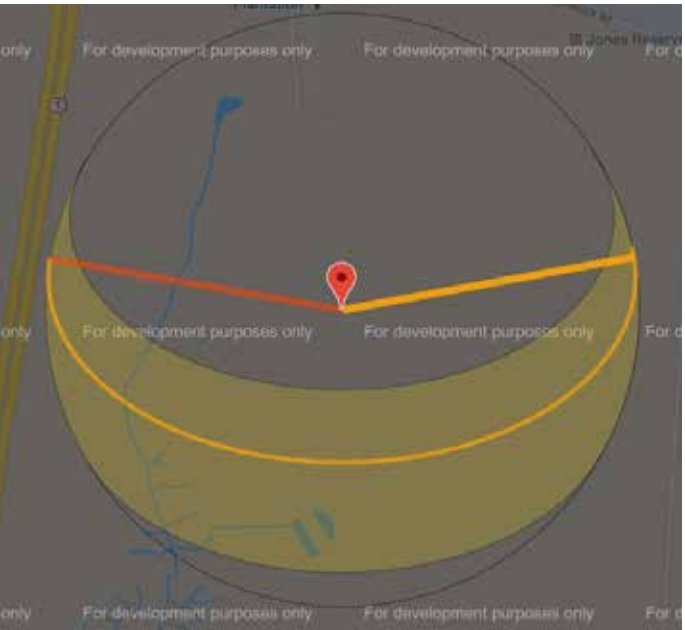
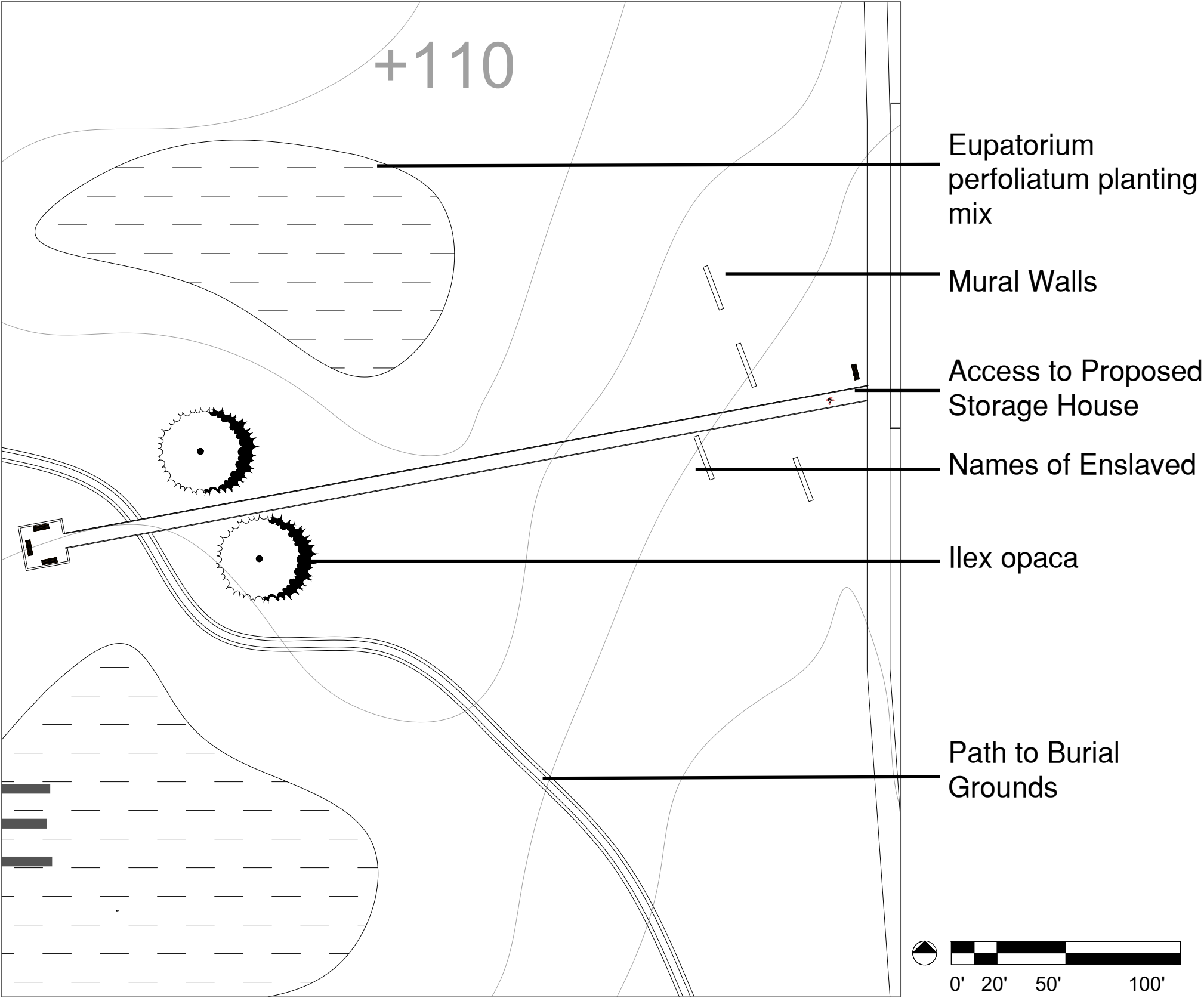
The American holly is an evergreen that matures at about 15'-30' in height. The leaves represent protection.



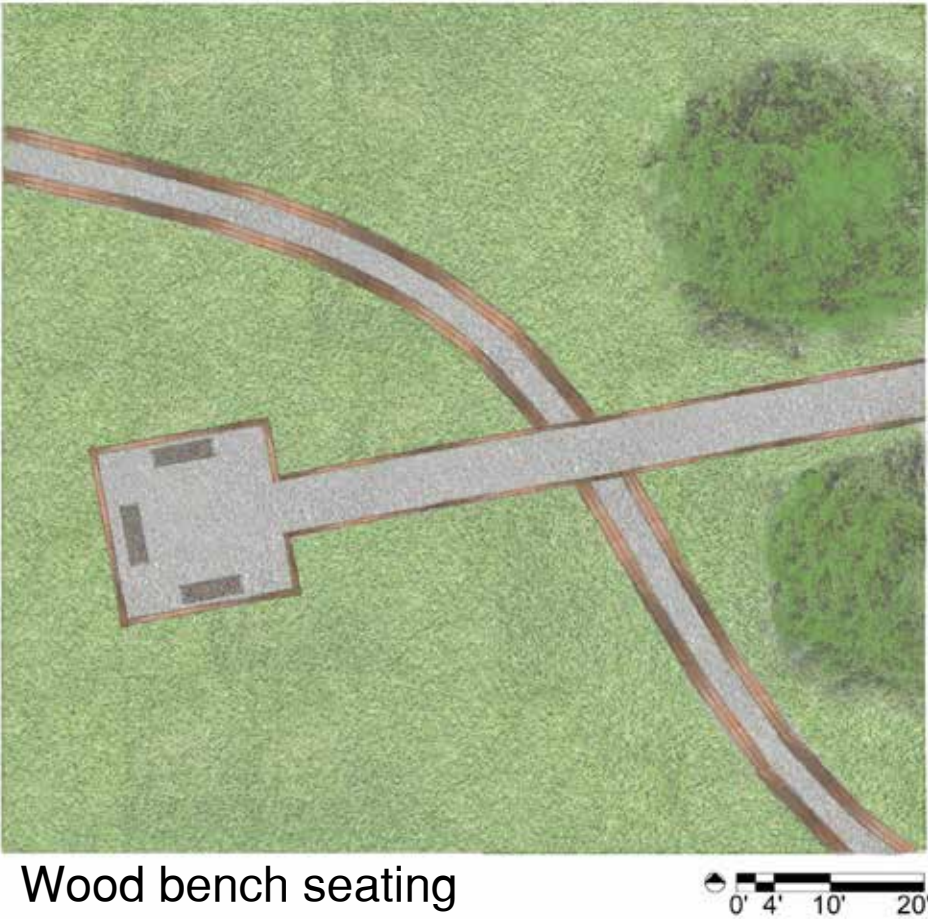
Eupatorium perfoliatum, boneset

Bonesets can be used medicinally. They are a natural ingredient that would have been used in remedies for ailments. As an aggressive plant, it would be better to use in a mixed planting.

SUNRISE ON AUGUST 28, 1777



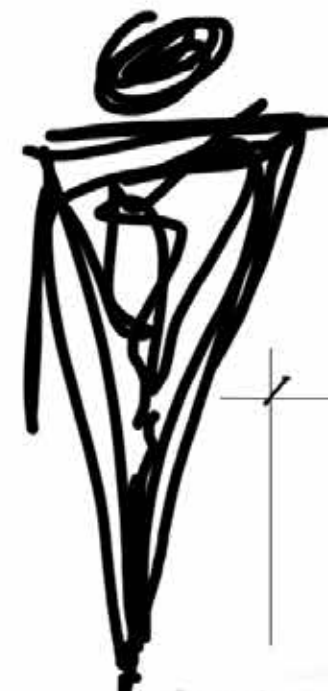
Sun Analysis of August 28, 1777. This angle (11.02 degrees south of west) will be used to orient the continuous path directly to the midway house.



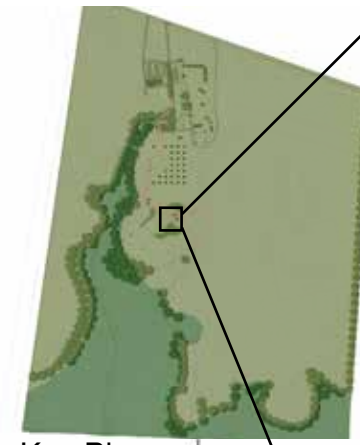
"250 salmon colored bricks in every 1,000"

"Bricks 8 1/2" long
2 1/4" thick, 4 1/4" wide"

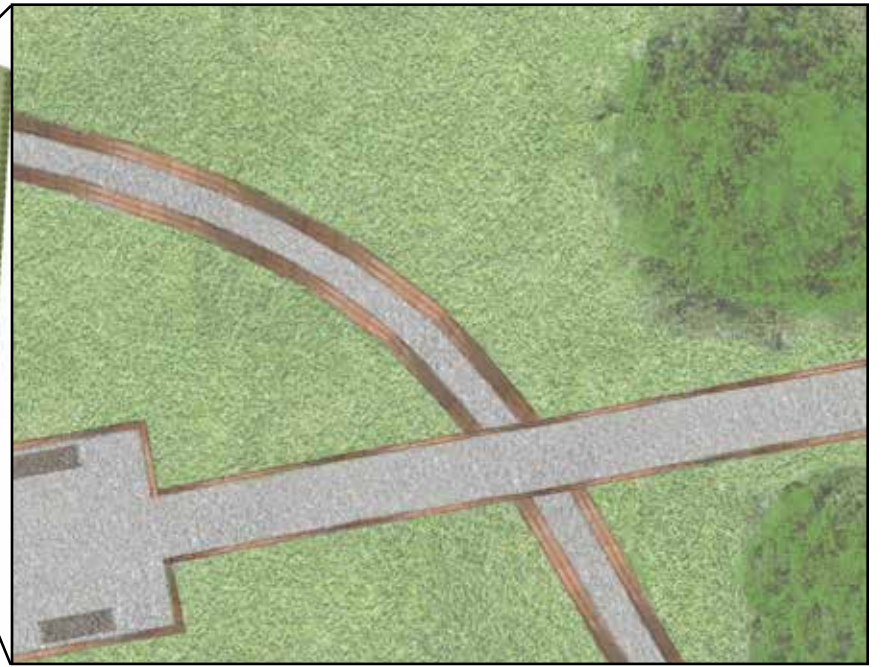
*Specifications from JDP
Bricks and Grounds*



6'



Key Plan



Enlargement Plan

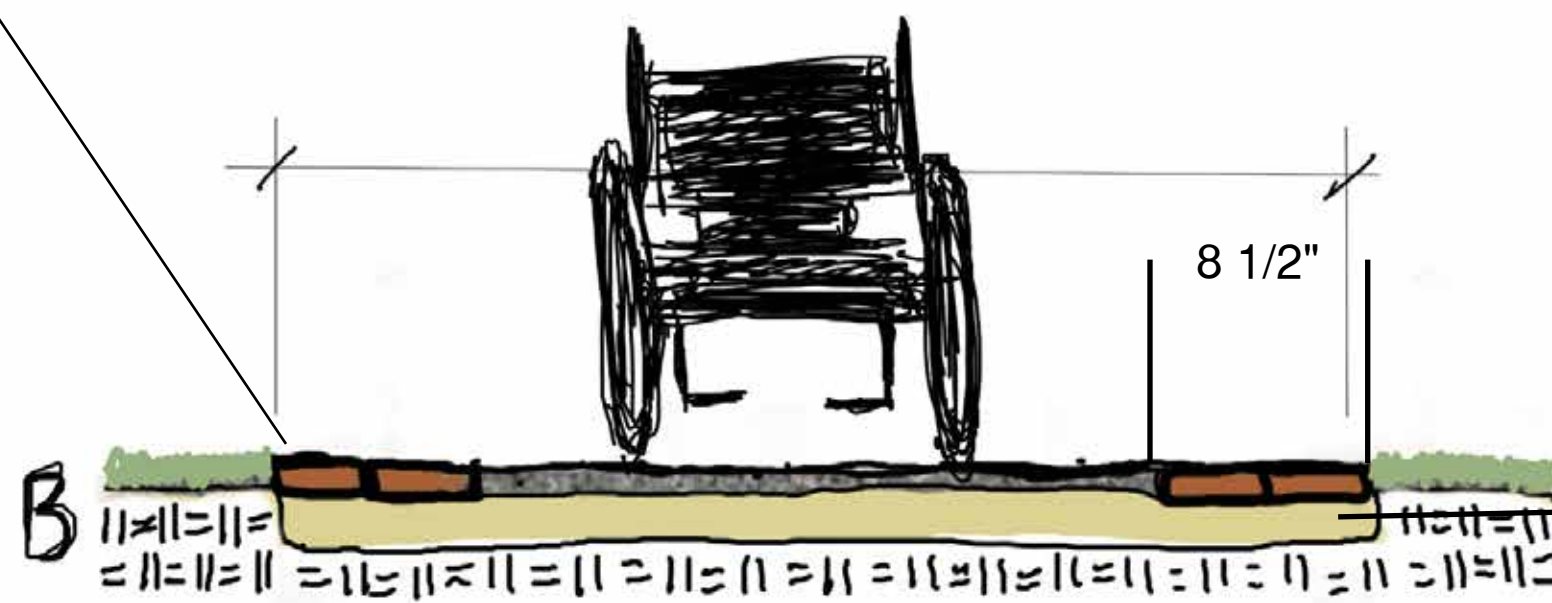
Brick Edging

A



2 1/4" Fine Compacted Gravel

Landscape Fabric

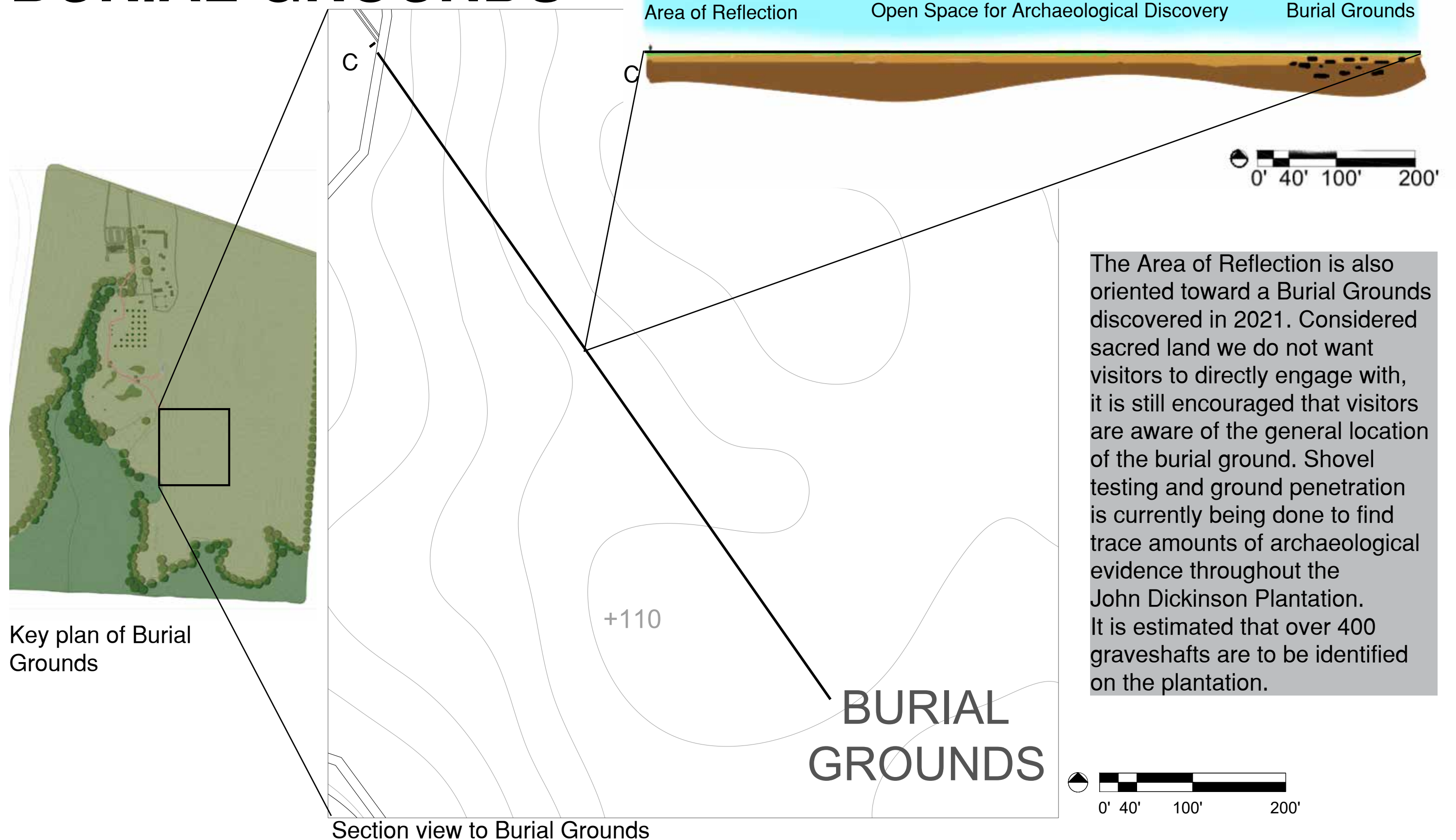


8 1/2"

2" Compacted Gravel

ADA Accessibilty

BURIAL GROUNDS



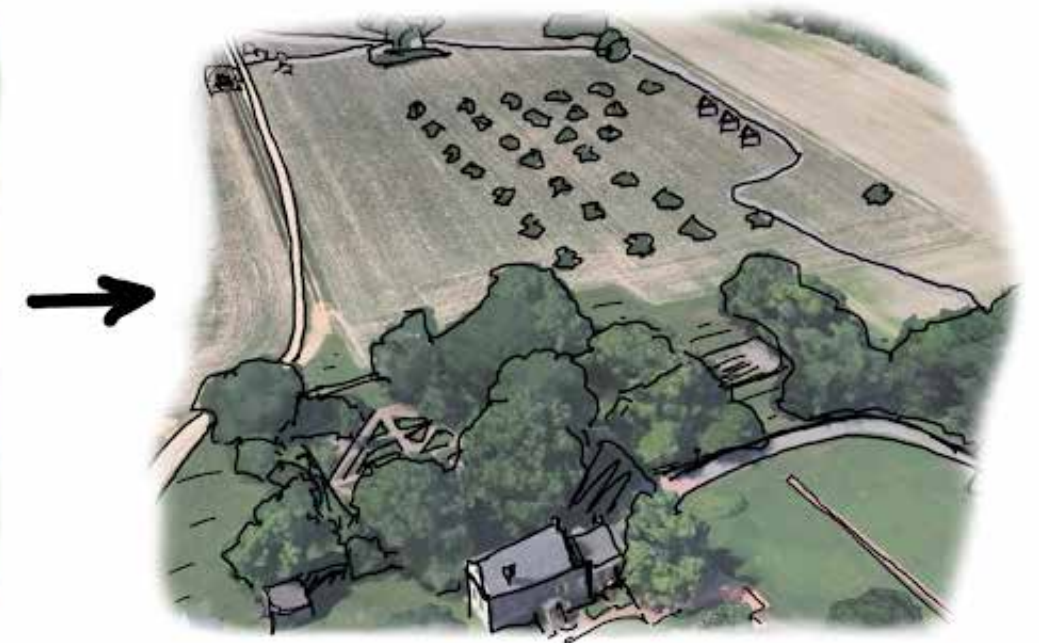
CONCLUSION

By using historic representation to understand how the enslaved community may have perceived the landscape at John Dickinson Plantation, I was able to develop my concept for the Area of Reflection. I would like to thank everyone involved in the design process, and appreciated that we could take time to reflect on the lives of Enslaved Peoples.

CONCEPT → FINAL ITERATION



Midway Review



Final Proposed

bgmoore@udel.edu

(856)-325-8206

REFERENCES

Bartoo, David. John Dickinson Plantation Trail Concept Plan.

Bernardon. Proposed Visitor's Center. Bernardon.

Clements, Terry L, and Sarah J Dorminey. Spectrum Matrix: Landscape Design and Landscape Experience. www.jstor.org/stable/43324377.

Creative Commons. Google Images, Google, images.google.com/.

Dickinson, John. "To Be Lett, a Plantation." 18th century.

Edited by Brandon G Moore, National Geographic Maps, www.natgeomaps.com/.

Edwards, Pamela C., and Rebecca J. Siders (Sheppard). "The Changing Landscape of the St. Jones Neck Under the Influence of the Dickinson Family, 1680-1850: An Exhibit Script." UDSpace Home, 1 Aug. 1994, udspace.udel.edu/handle/19716/1597.

"Flood Maps." FEMA.gov, www.fema.gov/flood-maps.

Manumissions List Image and Transcription Provided by John Dickinson Plantation Staff.

Moore, Brandon G. Google Earth, Google, earth.google.com/.

Moore, Brandon G. "SunCalc Sun Position Calculator." SunCalc, www.suncalc.org/.

Nelson, Velvet. Object Narratives and the Enslaved at Sam Houston Memorial Museum. Nov. 2017, www.researchgate.net/publication/321187850_Object_narratives_and_the_enslaved_at_Sam_Houston_memorial_museum.

University, Sam Houston State. "Museum Grounds." SHSU, www.samhoustonmemorialmuseum.com/grounds/index.html.

"John Dickinson Plantation." Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs - State of Delaware, 21 May 2021, history.delaware.gov/john-dickinson-plantation/. Photographer Unknown

Upton, Dell. "White and Black Landscapes in Eighteenth-Century Virginia." MIT Press, Nov. 1984.