

LLSAC Draft Recommendations

Near-Term Recommendations

1. Continue Camp Operations Through the Final Five-Year Extension

The Town should exercise the final five-year extension available under the existing agreement for the operation of Camp Sewataro. The extension period should be used by the Town to better understand the Liberty Ledge property, improve public use of the site, evaluate the Town's long-term needs, and prepare for the next procurement process.

As part of negotiations for the five-year extension, the Town should seek reasonable modifications to the agreement, ~~consistent within the four corners of the~~ with the ori RFP, subsequent management amendments, and applicable procurement requirem that further the recommendations outlined below.

2. Increase the Benefit of Camp Operations to Sudbury Residents

The Town should seek to increase the direct benefit of Camp Sewataro to Sudbury residents as part of the five-year extension with the camp operator.

The Town should negotiate for:

- Priority enrollment opportunities for Sudbury residents that increases enrollment of Sudbury families;
- A reevaluation of the existing fee and scholarship structure, including consideration of a sliding fee scale or other mechanisms to make camp participation more affordable ~~and accessible~~ to Sudbury families; and
- ~~Continued opportunities for Sudbury youth to participate in and benefit from camp programming;~~
- Early, clear communication to families about enrollment, fees, and financial assistance through additional channels of communication beyond the Town website.

The specific mechanisms used to accomplish these objectives should be determined through negotiations between the Town and the camp operator. Any revised enrollment and fee information should be settled and shared before registration opens for the 2028 camp season, so families can make informed decisions when space first becomes available.

3. Establish Clear Municipal Oversight of the Liberty Ledge Property

The Town should designate an existing Town staff member, department, or other municipal entity with responsibility for coordinating and overseeing the Town's interests in the Liberty Ledge property.

This municipal oversight should include coordinating public and municipal use of the property; working with the camp operator and Town departments; monitoring implementation of the management agreement; overseeing studies and long-term planning efforts; coordinating

property maintenance and capital needs (including those identified herein); and ensuring that identified projects and improvements are completed within established timelines.

The individual or entity responsible for oversight need not directly perform each of these functions, but should ensure that the necessary work moves forward.

4. Expand Public Access, Recreation, and Community Programming

The Town should take a more active role in maximizing the use of Liberty Ledge by Sudbury residents when camp activities are not occurring.

The Town should work with the camp operator, Park and Recreation Department, schools, Council on Aging, Commission on Disability, community organizations, and other potential users to expand year-round recreational, educational, cultural, and community programming at the property including, but not limited to:

- Farmers' Markets;
- Outdoor movie nights
- Community concerts

Additionally, The Town should better advertise opportunities for residents and community organizations to utilize the property.

5. Improve Accessibility, Wayfinding, and Public Understanding of the Property

The Town should improve residents' ability to access and navigate the Liberty Ledge property.

This should include appropriate signage and wayfinding identifying public entrances similar to other town properties, trails, facilities, parking areas, and areas available for public use, together with clear information regarding when and how the property may be accessed outside of camp hours.

~~The Town should also complete an ADA self-evaluation of the property and use the findings to develop a prioritized plan for future accessibility improvements.~~

6. Conduct a Comprehensive Evaluation of the Property

During the next five years, the Town should invest in developing a comprehensive understanding of the physical characteristics, infrastructure, opportunities, and limitations of the Liberty Ledge property.

The evaluation should consider, as appropriate:

- ~~Existing buildings~~Buildings, structures and facilities above and below ground;
- Topography, soils, wetlands, vegetation, and other natural resources;
- Water, septic, drainage, stormwater, and other infrastructure;
- Complete an ADA self-evaluation of the property and use the findings to develop a prioritized plan for future accessibility improvements as required by law;

- Accessibility;
- Existing trails, circulation, parking, and connections to surrounding properties nearby walkways and trails;
- Parking and traffic patterns during camp, public events, and other uses including possible uses of Haynes School's parking lot;
- Areas currently used for camp operations;
- Areas that are currently undeveloped or minimally disturbed; and
- Areas where ecological improvements can be made on the property; and
- The suitability of different portions of the property for future municipal, recreational, conservation educational, housing, or other uses.

The purpose of these evaluations should not be to predetermine a single future use, but to provide the Town with the information necessary to make informed long-term decisions about the property.

7. Define the Area Necessary for Camp Operations

During the five-year extension, the Town should work collaboratively with the camp operator to identify and document the portions of Liberty Ledge that are reasonably necessary for current camp operations.

Establishing a clearer understanding of the camp operational area will allow the Town to distinguish between land needed to support the camp and other portions of the property that may be available for public access, conservation, municipal programming, or other future uses; or suitable for environmental improvements.

Until the Town has completed its property evaluations and determined the appropriate long-term use of currently undeveloped portions of the site, significant expansion of camp activities or other new land disturbance into those areas should be avoided.

8. Protect the Property's Natural Resources While Long-Term Planning Is Underway

The Town should preserve the natural character and environmental resources of Liberty Ledge while it evaluates the property's long-term potential.

Undeveloped and minimally disturbed areas should generally remain undisturbed until the Town has sufficient information to determine their appropriate future use. This recommendation is not intended to permanently designate those areas for conservation or preclude future municipal, recreational, housing, camp, or other uses. Rather, it is intended to preserve the Town's future options while the necessary evaluations and planning are completed.

9. Convert 213 Haynes Road to an Affordable Single-Family Residence

The Town should ~~pursue-explore conversion-converting of~~ the existing home at 213 Haynes Road into an affordable single-family residence. Property boundaries should not infringe upon the access road into the Liberty Ledge property or other land used for camp operations.

The specific mechanism for accomplishing this recommendation should be determined by the Select Board in consultation with the appropriate housing agencies and Town staff.

Long-Term Recommendations

10. Maintain Permanent Municipal Oversight of Liberty Ledge

The Town should maintain an active and ongoing ~~municipal~~ role in the oversight and coordination of the Liberty Ledge property and assets. ~~regardless of the structure of any future agreement with a camp operator.~~

Future agreements should clearly distinguish the responsibilities of the Town from those of the private operator and ensure that decisions concerning environmental stewardship, public access, long-term planning, capital investment, ~~environmental stewardship,~~ and the overall use of the Town-owned property remain subject to ~~appropriate~~ municipal oversight and approval.

11. ~~Use the~~ The Next RFP ~~to Reevaluate~~ should Reference the Defined Camp Operational Area ~~and when Considering~~ the Overall Use of the Property

When the Town undertakes the next procurement for a camp operator, it should use the information gathered during the preceding five years to determine what portion of Liberty Ledge should be included within the camp operational area and what portions, if any, should be retained for other municipal purposes.

~~The Town should not assume that a future camp operator must receive management responsibility over the entire Liberty Ledge property.~~ The scope of the future agreement should ~~instead~~ reflect the demonstrated needs of camp operations, the results of the Town's property evaluations, community priorities, and the Town's long-term goals for the site in the context of the Town's comprehensive planning efforts..

12. Consider a Long-Term Camp Operator Agreement Only When It Produces a Clear Public Benefit

When the existing agreement expires and a new procurement is required, the Town may consider offering a longer-term agreement to a future camp operator only if doing so produces identifiable benefits for the Town and Sudbury residents.

A longer-term agreement could be appropriate where the additional term enables substantial investment in the property, construction or improvement of facilities that also benefit the community, increased revenue or other financial benefits to the Town, expanded public programming, improved accessibility, increased opportunities for Sudbury residents, or other significant public benefits.

The length and terms of any future agreement should reflect the value being provided to the Town. A longer term should not be offered solely for the benefit or certainty of the private operator; it should provide a corresponding long-term benefit to the Town and its residents.

A longer term agreement should require expanded regular reporting

13. Preserve Flexibility for Multiple Uses of the Property

Future planning for Liberty Ledge should recognize that the property is large enough to potentially accommodate multiple compatible uses.

The continued operation of a summer camp should not, by itself, preclude the Town from considering recreation, conservation, community programming, municipal facilities, housing, trails, or other ~~appropriate potential~~ uses on portions of the property that are not necessary for camp operations or on camp property outside of camp season or non-camp hours during camp season.

Future decisions should be informed by the property evaluations, community input, operational experience ~~during the next five years~~, and the needs of the Town at the time those decisions are made.

14. ~~Protect the Natural Character of Liberty Ledge as the Property Evolves~~Preserve Natural Characteristics

Long-term development and use of Liberty Ledge should seek to ~~preserve~~ enhance and restore the property's significant natural features, open-space character, vegetation, trails, ponds, and other environmental resources while allowing appropriate improvements that support the property's public and recreational uses.

New construction or significant alterations ~~should be concentrated, where practicable, within already developed or disturbed areas and~~ should be evaluated in the context of the Town's broader goals for the property. Oversight of all development shall include such inspection and permitting processes typically applied to municipal projects in Sudbury.

This principle should not prohibit appropriate future improvements but should ensure that development occurs deliberately and with consideration for the environmental character that makes Liberty Ledge a unique Town asset.