Liberty Ledge / Sewataro:
Sudbury's Opportunity to Preserve What Works and Enhance What Is Possible

A story of an enduring legacy we leave future generations

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary…….……4

Introduction…….……5

1. The Evidence ……...5

2. The Mandate ……6

3. The Land …….…… 7

4. The Judgment …….…….7

5. The Action ……..…….8
   - 5.1 The Transition from Evaluation to Leadership ….……8
   - 5.2 The Missing Question …….…..8
   - 5.3 The Specific Aim Test …….....10
   - 5.4 Prioritization …….…..10
   - 5.5 Liberty Ledge as Evidence …….….11

6. The Solution-- Sewataro Plus ……12

7. The Value Proposition ……13
   - 7.1 The Taylor Legacy ……...14
   - 7.2 The Opportunity the Town Acquired ……..14
   - 7.3 A Sequence of Wise Decisions ……14
   - 7.4 The Management Agreement ……..15
   - 7.5 Liberty Ledge as a Mixed-Value Asset ……....16
   - 7.6 The Confidence Dividend ……18
   - 7.7 The Second-Generation Opportunity …….....18

8. The Opportunity …….……18

9. The Vision …….…….....19

10. The Outcome ……..20
    - 10.1 Recommendation 10: Camp Is a Good Use … ……..20
    - 10.2 Recommendation 12: Long-Term Commitment…….20
    - 10.3 Recommendation 6: The Continuing Challenge…….21
    - 10.4 Flexibility Versus Direction ……. …..21

11. The Legacy …...……..23

Acknowledgement and Personal Reflection …….....24

Appendix A - October 8 Public Remarks …….25

Appendix B - A Photographic Essay: An Invitation to Sudbury ..26

Executive Summary

The opportunity presented by Liberty Ledge did not emerge spontaneously. It was created over decades through the vision, stewardship, and success of Camp Sewataro. Recognizing its environmental, recreational, and community value, the Town chose to preserve that opportunity through acquisition, public ownership, selection of an experienced operator, and establishment of a productive Management Agreement. Through a sequence of prudent decisions, Sudbury preserved not simply a property, but a proven institution and a unique community resource. Those actions created the foundation for a new opportunity.

The Liberty Ledge/Sewataro Advisory Committee undertook an extensive process involving public meetings, surveys, stakeholder outreach, site evaluations, and public comment. Throughout that process, residents consistently expressed support for Camp Sewataro, environmental stewardship, recreation, public access, accessibility, and community benefit. The Committee obtained a clear mandate from the residents of Sudbury. The priorities did not emerge; they were revealed and repeatedly reinforced. The Committee's work culminated in a series of recommendations that now place responsibility squarely on the Select Board to exercise judgment, establish priorities, and move from evaluation to implementation. The challenge facing Sudbury is no longer one of discovery. It is one of leadership.

The opportunity before Sudbury is no longer preservation alone, but thoughtful enhancement. The Committee's recommendations affirm the importance of camp as a beneficial and appropriate use of the property, support continued efforts to seek a camp operator in future procurement processes, and recognize the value that may be created through longer-term operating agreements. Camp Sewataro remains the foundation. It is the engine of value creation. Sewataro Plus is the amplifier, providing a framework for expanding recreation, accessibility, stewardship, community engagement, and year-round public benefit while preserving the essential character of Liberty Ledge. The first-generation opportunity was preservation. The second-generation opportunity is enhancement. The challenge before us is to preserve what works, enhance what is possible, and leave future generations a resource even stronger than the one entrusted to us today.

Introduction

The story of Liberty Ledge is about far more than a parcel of land. It is about community priorities, responsible governance and environmental stewardship. Most importantly, it is about what kind of legacy Sudbury intends to leave for future generations.

Over the course of the Liberty Ledge/Sewataro Advisory Committee process, residents, Town officials, subject matter experts, committee members, stakeholders, and community organizations invested significant time and effort in considering the future of Liberty Ledge. Public meetings were held. Surveys were conducted. Written comments were submitted. Expert testimony was received. Competing perspectives were presented and debated. Taken together, those efforts reveal a remarkably consistent and compelling narrative-- **a story about opportunity.**

The community of Sudbury long ago recognized the value of Liberty Ledge/Sewataro, and time and again has demonstrated the wisdom to preserve it. Most importantly, Sudbury has chosen to move forward with purpose and confidence to build upon that opportunity for generations to come.

1. The Evidence

Through public meetings and input sessions, surveys, written comments, stakeholder statements, site visits, public testimony, and approximately 190 written communications submitted directly to the Committee, residents repeatedly expressed support for:

- Camp Sewataro
- Open-space preservation
- Environmental stewardship
- Recreation
- Expanded public access
- Community enrichment

At the same time, housing proposals consistently ranked among the least favored alternatives. Residents did not ask for Liberty Ledge to be reinvented. Residents asked that it be protected, enhanced, and enjoyed. While people approached the property from different perspectives, the central themes remained remarkably consistent throughout the process.

Residents recognized that Liberty Ledge already possesses substantial value. They did not seek transformation. They sought preservation and enhancement. The evidence therefore

supports a simple over-riding recommendation: **Preserve what works. Enhance what is possible.**

2. The Mandate

As repeatedly emphasized by the Committee Chair throughout the process, public input was intended to play a central role in the Committee's work. The Committee's responsibility was not merely to gather public sentiment; it had a duty to ensure that its recommendations aligned with the prevailing point of view expressed in the broad Sudbury community. In this way, the ultimate actions taken by the Select Board would have broad and deep support in the community. In essence, a process that meaningfully seeks public input must ultimately be prepared to respond to what it learns.

The survey data and public comments did more than measure opinion. They revealed a collective judgment. Residents consistently expressed support for:

- preserving Camp Sewataro,
- protecting open space,
- strengthening recreation,
- improving accessibility,
- expanding appropriate public access,
- protecting environmental resources,
- and increasing community benefit.

Different questions, different audiences, and different engagement methods repeatedly produced similar outcomes. The priorities did not emerge. They were revealed and repeatedly reinforced.

The public process did not produce uncertainty regarding the future of Liberty Ledge. It produced clarity. The challenge facing the Town is therefore not one of discovery. The challenge is one of implementation.

The Liberty Ledge/Sewataro Advisory Committee was asked to help identify a path forward. The public made clear what that path should emphasize:

- community benefit,
- recreation,
- environmental protection,
- stewardship,

- and Camp Sewataro.

The mandate is not mysterious. It has already been provided.

3. The Land

Understanding Liberty Ledge requires understanding what it already is. Liberty Ledge is not vacant land awaiting a purpose. It is a functioning natural system--forests, wetlands, ponds, trails, waterways, and wildlife habitats form an interconnected landscape whose environmental value extends well beyond the property boundaries. The headwaters of Pantry Brook originate here. Groundwater recharge occurs here. Natural stormwater management occurs here. Wildlife habitat exists here. Important ecological functions occur here every day regardless of whether they are formally recognized in a report or a designation as conservation land.

Clearly, the land already possesses value. The question is not how to create value where none exists. **The question is how to preserve, strengthen, and thoughtfully enhance the value that already exists.**

Current uses of Liberty Ledge as a summer camp and open-space recreational resource are particularly well-suited to the natural characteristics of the property. Recreation, environmental stewardship, education, and community enrichment can coexist with protection of the watershed and surrounding natural resources.

Liberty Ledge is not a blank slate. It is a living landscape that has already demonstrated its importance to the community. Its current use as a summer camp and open-space recreational resource is not accidental. It is a natural expression of the property's unique characteristics.

4. The Judgment

The role of the Liberty Ledge/Sewataro Advisory Committee was not to engineer every future detail of the property. Its responsibility was to gather information, evaluate competing viewpoints, exercise judgment, and recommend direction. By the latter stages of the process, several realities had become clear.

The public's priorities were understood. The environmental significance of the property was understood. The operational success of Camp Sewataro was understood, as were the legal and practical constraints associated with competing alternatives. At some point information gathering must give way to decision-making. The challenge ceases to be one of investigation, and becomes one of judgment. The Committee's role was not to defer difficult decisions indefinitely. It was entrusted to evaluate information, exercise judgment, and provide meaningful guidance.

Not every viewpoint deserves equal weight. Not every possibility deserves equal attention. Good governance requires distinguishing between ideas that are merely conceivable and ideas that are compelling.

While stakeholder perspectives from organizations such as the Housing Trust, Council on Aging, Parks and Recreation, and others were appropriately included in the process, not all perspectives were subjected to equivalent scrutiny. Operational, financial, environmental, and stewardship aspects of Camp Sewataro were repeatedly examined in considerable detail, while some stakeholder assertions regarding future possibilities were often accepted primarily as expressions of interest rather than being subjected to comparable analysis of feasibility, public support, cost, operational impact, or demonstrated community benefit.

The responsibility of leadership is not simply to collect viewpoints. It is to evaluate them. All of them--with equal rigor and clarity.

5. The Action

5.1 The Transition from Evaluation to Leadership

The Advisory Committee's responsibility was to gather information, assess alternatives, and develop recommendations. This phase is largely complete. Residents have made their priorities known, the Committee has completed its work, and recommendations have been submitted.

The Select Board's responsibility is different. This next phase requires leadership: recognizing when sufficient information is available and acting with purpose. The challenge now is to move from evaluation to implementation by establishing priorities, exercising judgment, making decisions and allocating resources.

5.2 The Missing Question

Overall, the Committee’s recommendations are well-reasoned and responsive to the broad mandate of the Sudbury community. However, Recommendation 6 does not live up to that general standard.

Recommendation 6. Evaluate the Property's Existing Conditions

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

A fundamental weakness of Recommendation 6 is that it never identifies the decisions that supposedly require the proposed evaluations. The recommendation repeatedly calls for additional information gathering but does not clearly identify:

- the decisions being contemplated,
- the projects under consideration,
- the priorities being advanced,
- or the consequences of proceeding without the information.

The stated purpose of Recommendation 6 is to provide the Town with information necessary to support informed long-term decisions. But which decisions?

The universe of realistic possibilities is not infinite. Not only is it finite, but the most likely possibilities can readily be articulated.

Examples include:

- accessibility improvements,
- facility renovations,
- ecological restoration projects,
- trail improvements,
- recreational programming,
- modest camp expansion,
- an indoor recreation facility,
- parking improvements,
- enhanced public access,
- improved signage,
- and other clearly identifiable initiatives.

Yet the question remains largely unanswered.

Which specific decisions require the proposed evaluations?

Which decisions cannot reasonably be made using existing information?

Which decisions justify public expenditures for additional studies?

Recommendation 6 provides little guidance.

Good planning begins with clearly defined objectives, which in turn establishes priorities, defines decisions, and determines what information is needed. Only then can the need for a particular evaluation be assessed.

Recommendation 6 largely reverses this process by beginning with evaluations while leaving the underlying priorities and decisions undefined. **Priorities should define evaluations, not the other way around.**

5.3 The Specific Aim Test

Every proposed study should be required to answer four straightforward questions.

1. What decision is being contemplated?
2. What is the Specific Aim of the study?
3. Why is the information needed?
4. Why can the decision not reasonably be made without that information?

The existence of unanswered questions alone is not sufficient justification for additional study.

No conceivable collection of studies will ever answer every question that might be asked about Liberty Ledge. Public resources are finite and so is time. Decision-making must ultimately proceed using the best information available. Studies should therefore be evaluated according to a simple standard:

Is this information genuinely needed to support an identifiable future decision? Absent a compelling Specific Aim and a demonstrated need-to-know justification, the default answer should be:

No.

The burden of proof should rest with those proposing a study. Not with those questioning it.

5.4 Prioritization

Recommendation 6 also suffers from a lack of prioritization. The recommendation presents a broad list of evaluations but provides little guidance regarding sequencing, urgency, cost, or relative importance. In practice, municipalities do not pursue every project at once. Instead, they prioritize, establish a logical sequence, then focus resources where they can achieve the greatest benefit.

For example, the Town already possesses a prioritized ADA Transition Plan. Known accessibility improvements have been identified, such as access to the fishing pond.

The location is known.

The benefit is known.

The action is known.

The logical question is not whether additional comprehensive property evaluations should occur first.

The logical question is when the project should be implemented.

Known needs should not be delayed by open-ended efforts to gather information about unrelated portions of the property. The most important planning question is often the simplest:

What is the most important thing to do next?

If the answer is signage, begin work on signage.

If the answer is accessibility, begin work on accessibility.

If the answer is trail improvements, begin work on trails.

Effective planning is not achieved by waiting until every conceivable evaluation has been completed. It is achieved by continuous prioritization, disciplined decision-making, incisive cost-benefit analysis and timely action.

Coherent long-term planning is intentional and directed toward identifiable objectives. It is not a random walk through an unlimited universe of possibilities. By necessity, it distinguishes between alternatives, prioritizing those that are well-supported, achievable, and likely to deliver significant public benefit. Not every idea merits equal investment of time, resources, or attention. Keeping poorly-supported alternatives perpetually under consideration consumes governance resources, distracts from higher priorities, and diminishes the effectiveness of the planning process.

Good planning establishes priorities, decisions, and objectives early in the process, then determines what information is required to support them.

5.5 Liberty Ledge as Evidence

Municipal planning and decision making requires judgment regarding when available information is sufficient to proceed. The relevant question is not whether additional information could be obtained; it is whether such information is necessary to support a specific decision. Thus, the pursuit of complete understanding can easily hinder timely action.

The evolution of Liberty Ledge demonstrates just how much can be accomplished through focused, prioritized initiatives and the application of sound judgment. For more than six decades:

- facilities were built,
- programs expanded,
- infrastructure improved,
- natural resources were stewarded,
- recreational opportunities increased,
- and generations of children and families benefited from the property.

None of this required comprehensive site evaluation of every aspect of Liberty Ledge before meaningful progress could occur. Progress was achieved because decisions were supported by information that was sufficient for the task at hand.

This case in point shows that good planning does not require complete understanding. It requires clear objectives, thoughtful prioritization, and the discipline to distinguish between information that is useful and information that is necessary.

The challenge facing Liberty Ledge today is not uncertainty regarding possible futures. It is the exercise of judgment among futures that are already visible.

6. The Solution--Sewataro Plus

Sewataro Plus is not a land-use proposal. It **is a framework for preserving and enhancing a proven community asset.**

The concept emerged naturally from the evidence gathered during the Committee process, the demonstrated success of Camp Sewataro, and the extraordinary opportunities presented by public ownership of Liberty Ledge.

Sewataro Plus rests upon three mutually reinforcing foundations:

Camp Sewataro--the proven and successful core use of the property.

Long-Term Commitment--the stability necessary to support investment, planning, effective collaboration, stewardship, continuous improvement, and the realization of new opportunities for community enrichment.

Community Enrichment--expanded opportunities for recreation, education, accessibility, environmental stewardship, civic participation, and public enjoyment.

Together these three foundations create a path forward that preserves what makes Liberty Ledge special while extending its benefits to a broader segment of the community. Importantly, the recommendations contained within the Final Report are themselves largely consistent with this framework.

Recommendation 1 calls for continued camp operations through the final five-year extension.

Recommendation 10 explicitly recognizes camp as a good use of the property and recommends that future procurements seek a camp operator.

Recommendation 12 contemplates longer-term agreements capable of supporting investment, facility improvements, accessibility improvements, expanded public programming, and other community benefits.

Recommendations 4 and 5 encourage expanded recreational opportunities, community programming, public access, accessibility improvements, and greater public awareness of the property's resources.

Taken together, these recommendations already point toward a future that is broader than camp operations alone while simultaneously recognizing that Camp Sewataro remains central to the property's success.

The camp remains the foundation. Long-term commitment provides stability, enables investment, and maximizes opportunities for enhancement. Community enrichment expands the benefits. **This is the essence of Sewataro Plus: preserving the proven success of today while creating opportunities for tomorrow.**

7. The Value Proposition

The value proposition associated with Liberty Ledge is not theoretical. The Town is not pursuing a speculative vision in hopes of achieving success at some future date. Through a series of prudent decisions, Sudbury has already preserved Camp Sewataro, protected a significant natural resource, retained public ownership, established a productive Management Agreement, expanded public access, and positioned Liberty Ledge to serve residents in new ways.

The question is no longer whether value is being created. The question is how that value can be enhanced. **Sewataro Plus represents the logical next step in that progression.**

The value proposition associated with Liberty Ledge extends far beyond traditional financial analysis. It is rooted in public benefit, preservation, recreation, environmental

protection, stewardship, and long-term opportunity. Most importantly, it is rooted in recognizing what was already present when the Town acquired Liberty Ledge.

7.1 The Taylor Legacy

The opportunity presented to the Town did not emerge spontaneously. It was created over decades through the vision, commitment, stewardship, and investment of the Taylor family.

By establishing and sustaining Camp Sewataro, they created:

- a trusted institution,
- a loyal customer base,
- a recognized community resource,
- a successful operating model,
- and a legacy of environmental stewardship.

The Town's opportunity in 2019 was therefore not merely the acquisition of land. It was an opportunity to preserve something that already possessed substantial value--and the value of Camp Sewataro had already been demonstrated through decades of successful operation.

The community knew it. Families knew it. Children knew it. The Town knew it. This rare opportunity existed because the Taylors created it.

7.2 The Opportunity the Town Acquired

What made Liberty Ledge unique and advantageous to the Town was the existence of a functioning and beloved community institution already serving Sudbury families. The Town was not being asked to create a camp. The Town was being offered an opportunity to preserve one.

Camp Sewataro brought with it:

- decades of operational experience,
- decades of community goodwill,
- a proven business model,
- established facilities,
- an existing customer base,
- and a trusted reputation.

The acquisition included rights to the Sewataro name itself, underscoring the value associated with the institution and brand that had been created over many years.

By acquiring Liberty Ledge, the Town preserved far more than acreage and buildings. It preserved a proven opportunity.

7.3 A Sequence of Wise Decisions

Looking back, Sudbury's current position was far from inevitable. At multiple decision points, different choices could have been made. The property could have been sold into private hands. The Town could have chosen not to acquire it. The Town could have acquired it and discontinued camp operations. The Town could have selected a different operating model. The Town could have managed the property passively following acquisition. **Instead, through a series of prudent decisions, Sudbury positioned itself to preserve and build upon something already proven to have significant value.**

The Town recognized the opportunity presented by Camp Sewataro and Liberty Ledge. It took affirmative action and chose to:

- Preserve the opportunity through acquisition
- Acquire the Sewataro name and brand
- Seek continuity through competitive procurement
- Select an experienced and trusted operator
- Establish a Management Agreement that created revenue, stewardship, maintenance, operational stability, and public benefit.

This sequence of events has demonstrated responsible Town governance in pursuit of significant benefit to Sudbury residents. At each stage, the Town moved toward a stronger position, not a weaker one.

Today Sudbury owns a unique natural resource. It retains full ownership and future equity. It benefits from professional management and stewardship. It preserves an institution that has already demonstrated its value to generations of residents. That outcome was not accidental.

It was the result of a sequence of wise decisions made at critical moments in the property's history.

7.4 The Management Agreement

The Management Agreement reflects the Town's decision to preserve and strengthen a proven community institution while retaining public ownership of Liberty Ledge.

The agreement establishes:

- annual payments,
- revenue sharing,
- maintenance obligations,
- stewardship obligations,
- operational responsibilities,
- and year-round management requirements.

Notably, nowhere in the agreement is the operator required to fully offset the Town's acquisition costs. Any suggestion otherwise is misleading and inconsistent with the actual terms of the agreement.

The agreement was not designed as a full cost-recovery mechanism. It was designed as a collaborative framework for public benefit, property management, and value creation--all in support of the long-term success of Liberty Ledge. The collaborative framework has enabled the Town, Parks and Recreation, residents, community organizations, and Camp Sewataro to become partners in the property's future. **That partnership is one of the principal reasons Liberty Ledge has such significant future potential.**

7.5 Liberty Ledge as a Mixed-Value Asset

Liberty Ledge was never acquired as a conventional commercial real-estate investment. Nor was it acquired solely as a passive conservation property. It is best understood as a mixed-value asset. Its value cannot be measured solely through annual revenue or acquisition cost recovery. Instead, value is created across multiple dimensions simultaneously.

Financial Value includes

- Annual payments
- Revenue sharing
- Retained public ownership
- Future equity

Asset Preservation Value includes

- Stewardship

- Maintenance
- Occupancy
- Operational oversight

Recreational Value includes

- Camp programs
- Community use
- Public access
- Outdoor recreation

Environmental Value includes

- Watershed protection
- Open-space preservation
- Habitat protection
- Ecological stewardship

Community Value includes

- Shared experiences
- Civic engagement
- Community identity
- Family traditions

Future Value includes

- Public ownership
- Community enhancement
- Intergenerational benefit

Evaluating Liberty Ledge solely through acquisition cost recovery captures only a small portion of its value.

The broader public benefits are significant, deliberate, and central to understanding why the Town acquired the property in the first place, and why it makes so much sense to continue on this path.

7.6 The Confidence Dividend

Through a series of prudent decisions, Sudbury has steadily increased not only the value of Liberty Ledge but confidence in its ability to steward the property successfully. Each successful step reinforced the wisdom of previous decisions.

The acquisition preserved the opportunity. The operator selection and Management Agreement sustained the opportunity. Public ownership created the opportunity for enhancement and year-round access. Expanded public use continues to strengthen the opportunity. The result is growing confidence that Liberty Ledge can successfully serve multiple public purposes simultaneously while preserving its essential character. That confidence has value of its own.

7.7 The Second-Generation Opportunity

The first-generation opportunity was preservation. The second-generation opportunity is enhancement.

The Town preserved Camp Sewataro and Liberty Ledge. It preserved a trusted institution, a loyal customer base and future opportunities for expansion and greater benefits for Sudbury residents.

Now the challenge is no longer preservation alone. The challenge is enhancement. How can Liberty Ledge better serve residents?

How can recreation be expanded?

How can accessibility improve?

How can stewardship be strengthened?

How can community participation increase?

How can future generations benefit even more than current generations?

The answers to those questions define Sewataro Plus. The camp is the value engine. The Plus is the amplifier.

8. The Opportunity

What truly distinguishes Sewataro Plus from the property's previous mode of operation is the opportunity for year-round active participation by young and old alike. Public ownership creates possibilities that did not previously exist. Residents are no longer merely visitors. They are stakeholders.

The opportunity to realize enhancement extends beyond government. Citizens, families, schools, community organizations, Parks and Recreation, the Council on Aging, volunteers, conservation advocates, educators, and Camp Sewataro all have roles to play. The strongest case for Liberty Ledge will ultimately be built not upon aspirations, but upon experiences.

Future generations will judge success not by the plans we discussed, but by the opportunities we created and the memories that were made. Now comes the essential challenge: determining what Liberty Ledge should become. For this, the community must engage with vigor, imagination, and a spirit of stewardship. The future of Liberty Ledge will not be defined simply by what the Town owns. It will be defined by what the community chooses to build together. **In that spirit, residents should ask not only what Liberty Ledge can do for them, but what they can do for Liberty Ledge.**

9. The Vision

Ultimately, Liberty Ledge should be viewed as a generational asset. Its value cannot be measured solely in acres, facilities, budgets, contracts, or annual revenues. Its greatest value lies elsewhere.

It lies in:

- community participation and experience,
- recreation and education
- environmental protection and stewardship,
- personal growth and opportunity.

It is a place where children discover independence.

A place where families connect with nature.

A place where residents find recreation, learning, reflection, and renewal.

A place where communities gather.

A place where environmental stewardship becomes tangible.

A place where future generations can benefit from decisions made wisely today.

The measure of success is not what Liberty Ledge does for us this year. The measure of success is what it provides for those who follow us. That is the standard by which every recommendation should ultimately be judged. Liberty Ledge should not simply survive. It should flourish.

10. The Outcome

The Final Report contains many recommendations that deserve recognition and support.

Several recommendations reflect a thoughtful understanding of the property's strengths and opportunities. Others reveal the continuing tension between preservation and enhancement versus a desire to preserve flexibility for future decision makers. Understanding that tension is essential to understanding the report itself.

10.1 Recommendation 10: Camp Is a Good Use

Among the most important conclusions reached by the Committee is its explicit finding that camp is a good use of the property and provides a public benefit.

The recommendation that future procurement efforts continue to seek a camp operator represents an important affirmation of what residents consistently expressed throughout the process. Camp Sewataro is not simply tolerated. It is recognized as a successful and beneficial use.

This conclusion aligns strongly with public sentiment, operational experience, and decades of demonstrated success. The recommendation also provides an important degree of continuity and stability for future planning efforts.

Special credit is due to those Committee members who worked to ensure that this explicit recognition of camp remained in the final recommendations. The importance of this conclusion should not be underestimated.

10.2 Recommendation 12: Long-Term Commitment

Recommendation 12 also represents a significant and positive development. The recommendation **recognizes that longer-term agreements may be appropriate when they produce corresponding benefits for the Town and its residents.**

Among the examples cited by the Committee are:

- facility improvements,
- accessibility improvements,
- expanded public programming,
- increased opportunities for Sudbury residents,
- public benefits,

- and enhanced value for the Town.

These concepts align closely with the principles embodied in Sewataro Plus. Long-term commitment supports investment. Investment supports improvement. Improvement creates value.

The recommendation therefore reflects a growing recognition that stability can be an asset rather than a liability.

10.3 Recommendation 6: The Continuing Challenge

The most challenging recommendation in the report remains Recommendation 6. The recommendation proposes a comprehensive series of evaluations intended to support future decision-making. **Unfortunately, it never clearly identifies the specific decisions that supposedly require this information.**

The recommendation explains the purpose of the evaluations. It does not clearly explain their necessity. The distinction is important. Good planning begins with priorities. Priorities define decisions. Decisions identify information needs. Recommendation 6 largely reverses this sequence.

By beginning with evaluations while leaving the future decisions undefined, it creates an open-ended framework with no obvious limiting principle. **As currently written, Recommendation 6 risks creating a process in which information gathering becomes an objective in itself rather than a tool supporting clearly defined goals.** The Select Board should therefore approach Recommendation 6 with discipline, prioritization, and fiscal realism.

Every proposed study should be required to satisfy the Specific Aim Test. Every study should be able to demonstrate:

- a clearly identifiable future decision,
- a compelling need-to-know justification,
- a reasonable scope,
- and a meaningful likelihood of influencing future action.

Absent those elements, the burden of proof has not been met.

10.4 Flexibility Versus Direction

The report repeatedly emphasizes flexibility.

The desire to preserve options for future decision makers is understandable. However, flexibility should not become a substitute for direction.

The Committee's extensive public engagement effort revealed consistent themes throughout the process. Residents repeatedly expressed support for:

- Camp Sewataro,
- environmental stewardship,
- recreation,
- public access,
- and enhancement of the property's existing strengths.

These priorities were not speculative. They were identified repeatedly, consistently, and reinforced throughout the process.

Appendix J further demonstrates that many stakeholder interests are already known.

The potential interests of:

- Parks and Recreation,
- the Council on Aging,
- housing advocates,
- environmental advocates,
- and community organizations

are neither hidden nor unknowable.

The universe of realistic possibilities is finite.

The challenge facing Liberty Ledge is therefore not uncertainty regarding possible futures.

It is the exercise of judgment among futures that are already visible.

The question is no longer:

What might Liberty Ledge become?

The more relevant question is:

Which future should be prioritized?

That question ultimately belongs to the Select Board and the residents of Sudbury.

11. The Legacy

In the final analysis, the story of Liberty Ledge is the enduring legacy we leave future generations. Our competing visions of different futures are notable. Yet in the fullness of time, a much simpler question will be asked:

Did we put our children's future first?

As President John F. Kennedy observed:

"Our most basic common link is that we all breathe the same air, we all cherish our children's future, and we are all mortal."

Those words remain profoundly relevant today. While the threats facing society have changed, the responsibilities they impose have not. Our children are growing up in a world confronting climate pressures, mounting public debt, political division, and an increasing erosion of shared truth. They did not create these challenges. Yet they will live with their consequences.

We cannot solve every challenge facing future generations. But we can make responsible choices when opportunities are placed before us. Liberty Ledge is one of those opportunities.

We can preserve a natural resource.

We can strengthen a beloved institution.

We can expand public benefit.

We can deepen community engagement.

We can encourage stewardship.

And we can leave behind something meaningful for those who follow us.

The Town's decision to acquire Liberty Ledge was a wise one.

The decision to preserve Camp Sewataro was a wise one. The decision to maintain public ownership was a wise one. The opportunity before us now is to continue that tradition of thoughtful stewardship. The first-generation opportunity was preservation. The second-generation opportunity is enhancement. That opportunity now belongs to all of us.

Now we are at a new beginning, and it is time for all of us to seize the day. That is the promise of Liberty Ledge and the vision of Sewataro Plus. And that is why this remarkable Sudbury resource deserves protection, stewardship, enhancement, and care for generations to come.

Acknowledgement

The past six months have been more than an education in civic process. It has been a journey across decades of life on Liberty Ledge. I feel a debt of gratitude to: the Taylor family for lighting the flame of Camp Sewataro; the Town Manager, Select Board and Sudbury community for acting affirmatively in 2019 to preserve the camp and acquire Liberty Ledge; those who produced the compilation report; the Select Board for launching this advisory process; the Advisory Committee for volunteering to pursue recommendations for future action; James Goudie-Murray ad Adam Burney for making it all possible; Camp Operator Scott Brody and Outreach Coordinator Kristin Drummey for representing Camp Sewataro with grace and fortitude, and; members of the community that produced and distributed flyers, posted lawn-signs, organized outreach, participated in open meetings, public input sessions and the Town survey, sent correspondence to the Committee and Select Board, and maintained vigilance week in and week out. It was truly a great opportunity to participate in something greater than my own personal daily life. I have made a conscious effort to have an impact on the process and

thank everyone who aided me along the way.

Personal Reflection

I have a dream of my daughter, now seven years old and already a four-year veteran of Camp Sewataro, standing at the top of the Liberty Ledge hill many years from now.

She is holding her own children's hands as she walks them toward the Chipmunks counselors. She pauses and looks down toward the fishing pond.

The familiar trails remain.

The trees remain.

The camp remains.

The laughter remains.

Softly she says:

"Thank you, Daddy, for cherishing our future.

Now I know what you meant."

That is the Liberty Ledge I hope we preserve.

APPENDIX A October 8 Public Remarks

The following remarks were delivered during the October 8 public comment session prior to issuance of the Final Report. They are included here because they contain many of the governance, planning, and prioritization concerns that ultimately informed this Master Narrative.

For Oct. 8, 2026

Mark Marchionni

28 Julians Way

Liberty Ledge is a natural resource in need of our protection. I want to commend the Committee for choosing wisely and following the responsive and responsible path to Sewararo Plus. However, housing does not need to clutter these recommendations — and it certainly doesn't need to clutter Liberty Ledge.

Liberty Ledge also does not need "future municipal uses" acting as a Trojan horse for housing. This Committee should not mimic the Housing Trust by proposing comprehensive site evaluations by geologists, hydrologists, civil engineers, and other expensive professionals. Improvements consistent with an existing ADA transition plan make sense because they benefit camp operation, community participation and resident access. None of that will require a comprehensive site evaluation stretching over five years. Such studies and delays only serve housing — and it wastes both money and precious time. Liberty Ledge doesn't need this. So, quite frankly, we don't need recommendation 6. Instead, use the time and resources to fully implement Sewataro plus.

The Select Board will not recommend full site studies or anything connected to it—recommendations 7 and 11. Moratoriums, delays, or endless flexibility –hallmarks of indecision—not needed. This is not what the broader interests of the Town are asking for. We know what we want and need, and we're ready for it.

Indeed, indecision is the key to flexibility, but after six months it's time to give the Select Board what they need--freedom to operate on behalf of Sudbruy to make Liberty Ledge all that it can be.

Of critical importance, the Committee has yet to fully recognize the people--who answered loud and clear that they are enthusiastic about enjoying Liberty Ledge, and they totally reject housing on it. Reading aloud survey results is not dealing with facts on the ground. Every committee member needs to come forth and recognize a core takeaway--housing was definitively rejected by the Town. It has no place in these recommendations and no place on Liberty Ledge.

In the final analysis, this is wildly simple. There is no need for evaluations, delay, or indecision. The Town is ahead of you—its time for you to catch up. Residents want to come and enjoy themselves at Liberty Ledge Park. The Park piece of Parks & Rec needs to recommend renaming this unique Town property Liberty Ledge Park — a Sudbury natural resource, home to Camp Sewataro, and a place for enjoyment by all for generations to come.

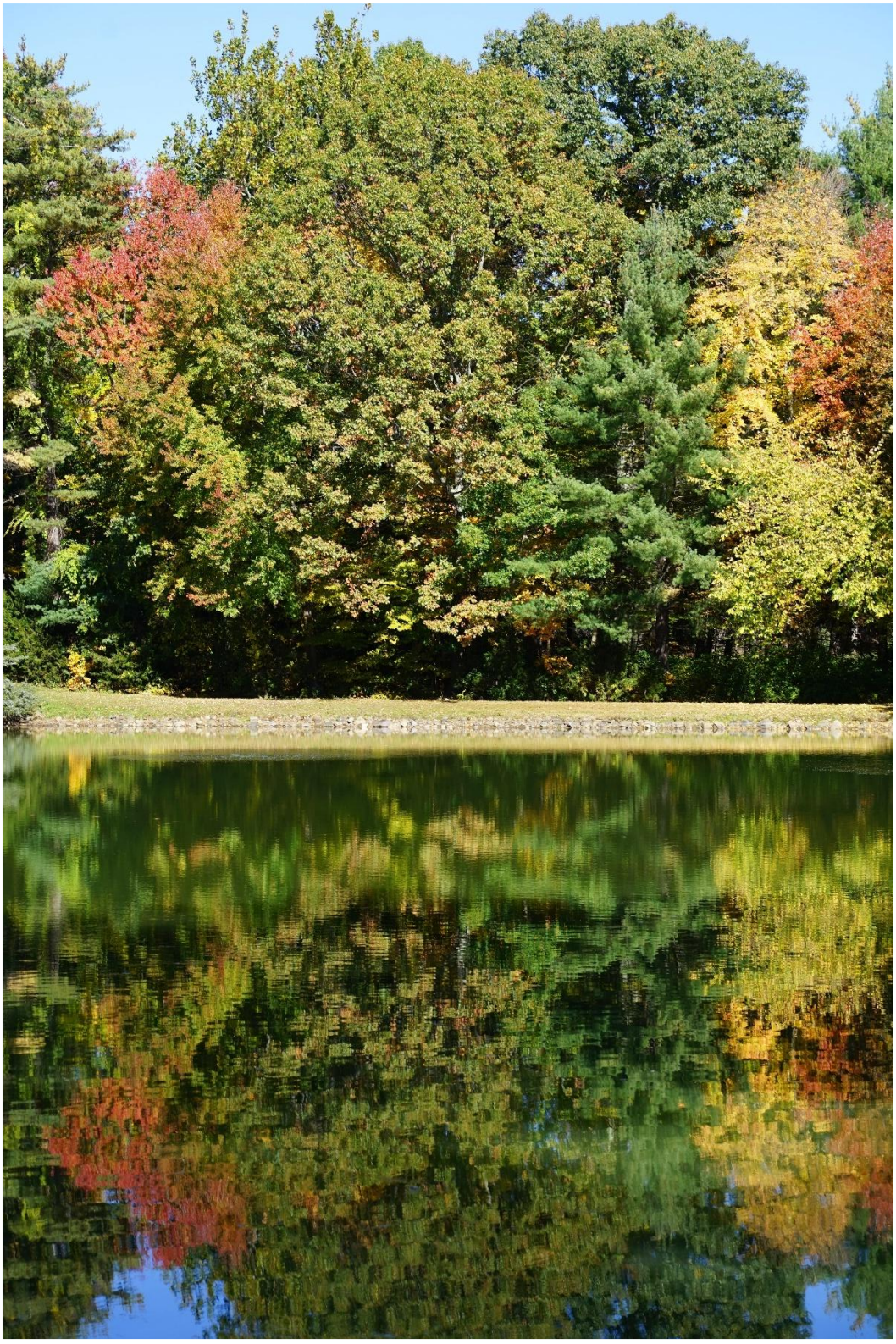
Thank you.

APPENDIX B A Photographic Essay: **Am invitation to Sudbury**

Welcome to Liberty Ledge. We've been waiting for you.



A maple in October *Showing all the colors of the wind.*



The Fishing Pond *A place of reflection, recreation, and community.*



The Community of Nature *All of it accessible to everyone.*



Great Blue Heron *Ecological richness and natural beauty abound at Liberty Ledge.*



A New Beginning *From one strong foundation, three opportunities emerge.*