



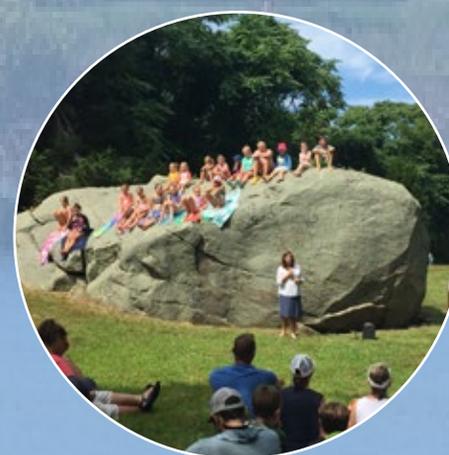
Place Matters



Strategic Agenda

Duxbury Rural & Historical Society
Fiscal Years 2021-2025

Approved by the Board of Trustees, July 6, 2021



Place Matters.

The Duxbury Rural & Historical Society is a place for connection, exchange, and gaining perspective.

Recent experience has given us all a deeper appreciation and respect for what it means to be a community, for what holds us together and what makes us good citizens. Together we have gained a sense that we must strive towards the future, while preserving that which is important to us and that which guides our present. Cultural organizations, especially ones as old as the Duxbury Rural & Historical Society, have a special responsibility to be active participants in these discussions.

By re-issuing our Strategic Agenda update, we make a sustained commitment to all that has made the Duxbury Rural & Historical Society unique and successful, and we look forward with a willingness to experiment and adapt to new and different ways of fulfilling our mission.

The Strategic Agenda was first implemented in 2018 and we have completed or made good headway on nearly all of our ambitious goals. Still, the work is not done and a revised set of goals will carry us forward as we strive to excel in the next five years.

Perhaps the most important update to this Strategic Agenda was a full evaluation and review of our Mission, Vision and Values statements.

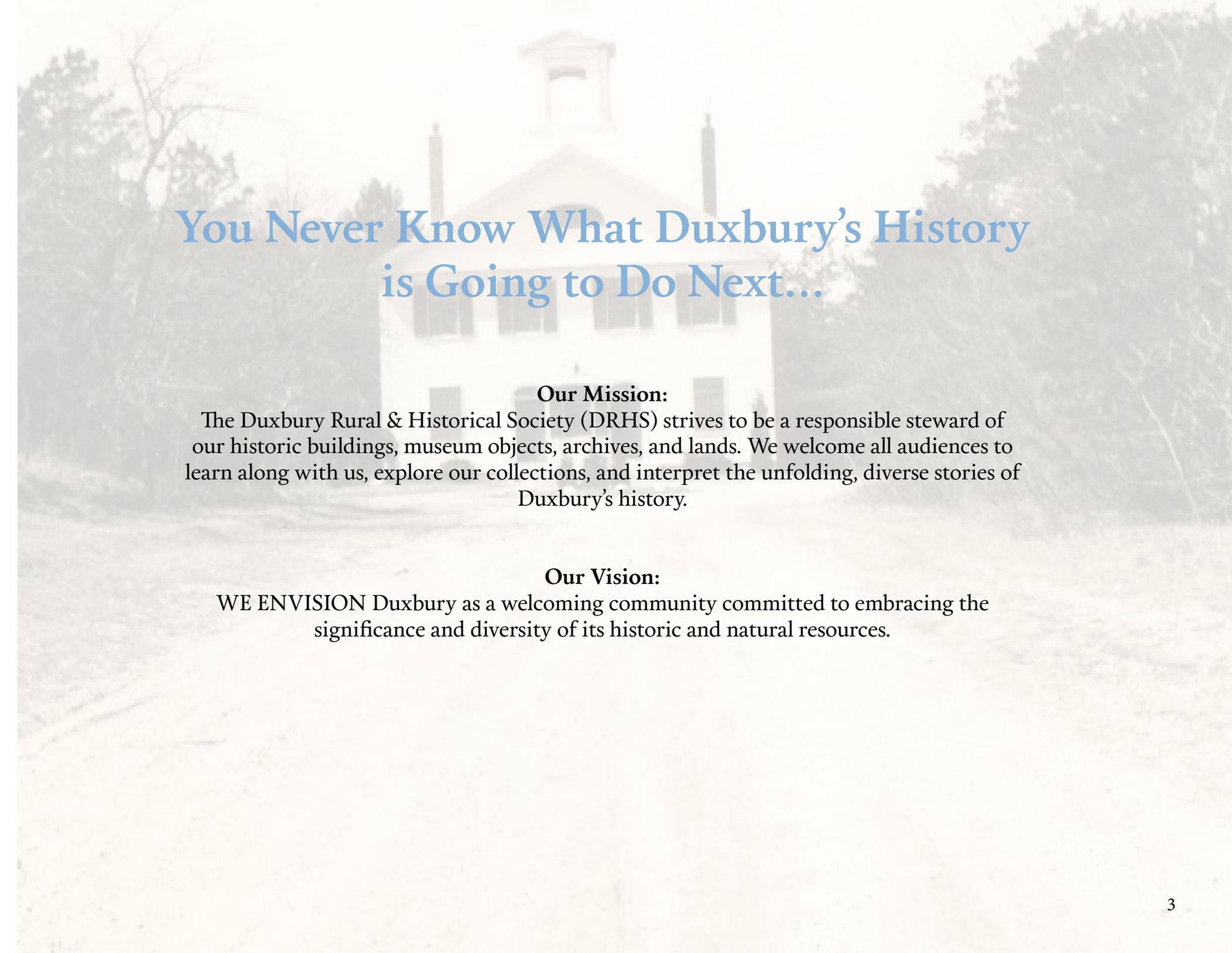
Gleaning insight from a broad range of perspectives, this revision was created with input from all Operating & Project Committees, Volunteers, Staff, and the Board of Trustees. In this plan, primary focus has been placed on six strategic building blocks:

- **Engaging Audiences**
- **Building our Community**
- **Activating Our Collections**
- **Cultivating Leadership**
- **Financing Excellence**
- **Exploring Horizon Issues**

We, the DRHS, commit to annual progress checks, with the next revision occurring around September 1, 2025. Thank you to everyone who continues to encourage, cheer and support this dynamic organization.

Erin McGough
Executive Director, June 2021





You Never Know What Duxbury's History is Going to Do Next...

Our Mission:

The Duxbury Rural & Historical Society (DRHS) strives to be a responsible steward of our historic buildings, museum objects, archives, and lands. We welcome all audiences to learn along with us, explore our collections, and interpret the unfolding, diverse stories of Duxbury's history.

Our Vision:

WE ENVISION Duxbury as a welcoming community committed to embracing the significance and diversity of its historic and natural resources.

Our Values

Integrity

Uphold the highest ethical and professional standards; foster open and transparent decision-making and communications.

Respect

Embrace a wide and inclusive diversity of perspectives and participants.

Learning

Foster discovery, creativity, and empathy to help understand the importance of history in our lives.

Community

Be a good neighbor and model kindness and care in everything we do.

Joy

From lively conversation and participation, to volunteerism and philanthropy, we invite the community to share a passion for our town's heritage and its place in history.



Engaging Audiences

We make history relevant to our audiences by inviting the past into the present. By creating a dialogue with the past, we emphasize our belief in education and outreach and help to create empathy with the human experience.

We believe it is important to be a part of the growing group of colleagues who are exploring the full range of history and community and we wish to be a full participant and leader in this conversation.

Audiences matter. Building audiences is about increasing attendance or participation at all facilities, programs and events so that more people can enjoy all that DRHS has to offer. It is also about deepening audience engagement by ensuring that there is something new and appealing for everyone.

We honor our core base of support: residents in Duxbury and we welcome and create room for new audiences from the broader geographical region.

Strategies for Engaging Audiences

- Seek ways to engage audiences and grow membership from all geographical areas of Duxbury and from a wider cross-section of the community.
- Broaden relationships and networking with other organizations and companies in town, including the school system, forming partnerships that will serve broader audiences.
- Explore the innovative use of technological tools, and find new ways of presenting and interpreting our collections.
- Research, present and engage audiences on marginalized or forgotten stories, new and emerging history.
- Encourage feedback from constituents across a broad spectrum of activity and incorporate that input into daily activities, including social media.
- Build engagement with a growing base of supporters who provide ongoing and increasing levels of philanthropic support.

Strengthening Our Commitment to Community

Our founders envisioned the Duxbury Rural & Historical Society as a proactive and engaged entity in the town of Duxbury. That goal remains at the heart of our mission.

We will fulfill our role as a civic institution by engaging the community more broadly and serving as a vital resource for preservation of and education on historic resources and lands.

Strategies for Strengthening Our Community

- The DRHS will contribute to public discourse on issues and ideas consistent with our mission with an ethos of professionalism, kindness and care for our community.
- We recognize our role as a trusted thought leader and our responsibility to seek representative voices within all audiences.
- We will continue to explore opportunities for community partnership and collaboration that strengthen both the DRHS mission and organizational priorities and contribute to the vitality of Duxbury and our broader community.
- DRHS will continue to offer opportunities that support the spirit of engaged volunteerism so vital to our organization and the Duxbury community.

Activating Our Collections

The DRHS is in an ideal position to encourage research, knowledge and understanding of the changing nature of the town's history, environment, and development. To remain a source of discovery and delight for future generations, we must make a sustained commitment to the imaginative use of our most important resources: our collections, which include objects, archives, buildings and lands.

We are committed to the ongoing process of strengthening stewardship across all types of collections through thoughtful policy making and planning and by utilizing our collections to inform and to enliven mission-driven activity.

Strategies for Our Collections

- We will continue to seek new ways to present our collections informatively and creatively with the diverse perspectives of our growing audiences in mind.
- Create a strategic collections and acquisitions plan that reflects our collections priorities and identifies potential sources and donors.
- Continue to develop and maintain stewardship and collections management plans that reflect the highest professional standards and ensure thoughtful, ethical decision making.
- Develop annual budgets that reflect organizational priorities and provide ample resources for all collections and programs, including lands management and programs.
- Explore new approaches to sharing our historic homes and buildings, bringing our full imaginations to bear on attracting and engaging new and returning audiences.

Cultivating Leadership

There are many types of leadership: Board, administration, donors, collaborators and volunteers. Each contribution is valuable to the whole of the DRHS, and rises to the occasion when leadership is called upon.

To sustain our organization into the future, we need to cultivate a diverse and engaged staff, a strong membership and a visionary Board which leads by example and serves with the best interests of the organization at heart.

Leaders in the DRHS serve as ambassadors to the community and make a compelling case for the importance of education and preservation of historic resources.

Strategies for Leadership

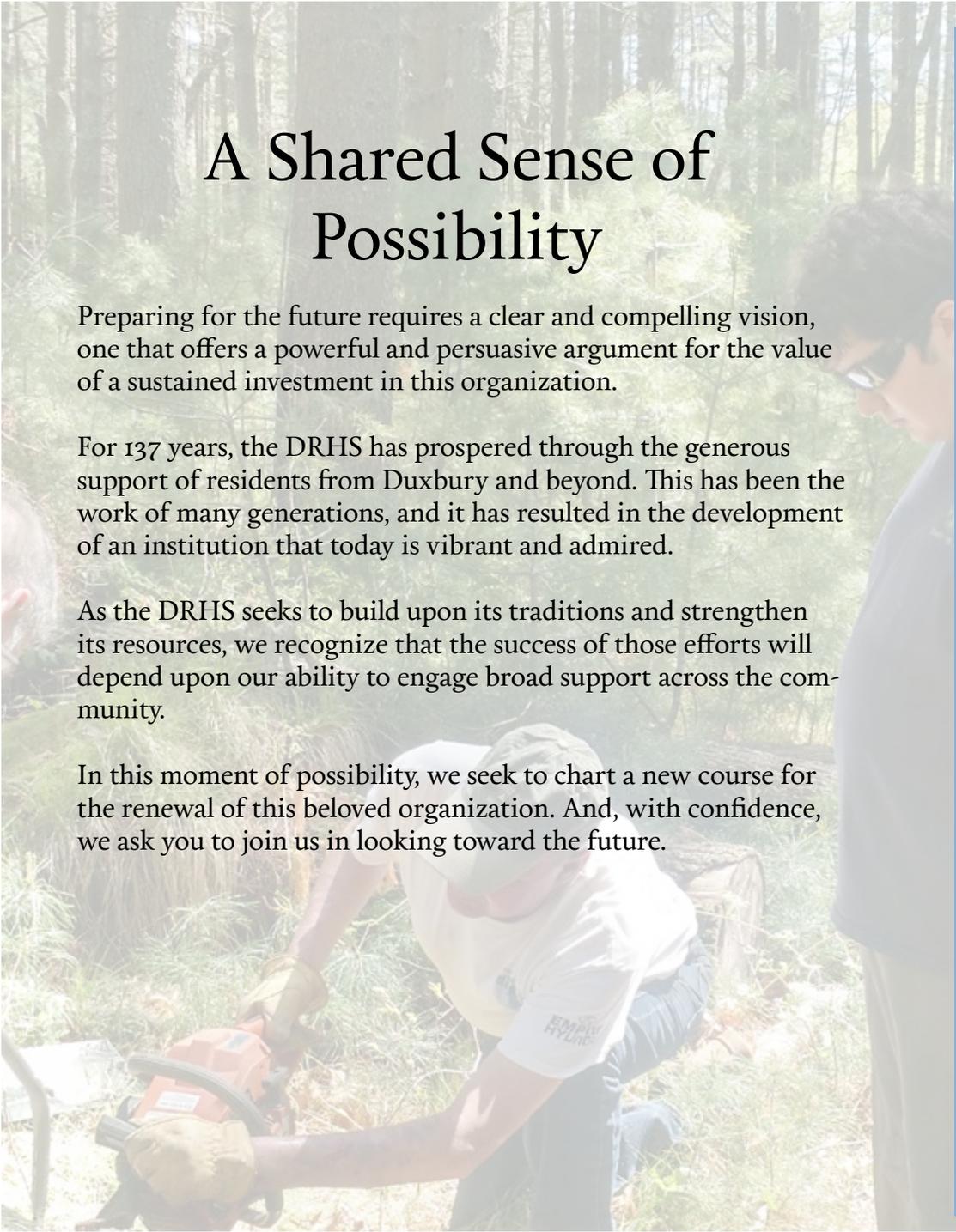
- Develop an ongoing process of succession planning for administrative, board, and committee leadership roles.
- Develop ongoing processes to ensure up-to-date board and committee job descriptions, new board member orientation, ongoing board education, and annual board evaluation.
- Explore new, substantive engagement opportunities, especially for long-time volunteers and donors, such as an advisory council, director's council or other means of maintaining strong, personal connections through meaningful avenues of engagement.
- Develop policies and processes to support continued growth in staff and volunteer diversity and increasing engagement of board, and volunteers.
- Assess operational capacity for supporting program growth, including online education and exhibits, collections curation and maintenance (lands, museum objects, archives etc.), philanthropy, and communications.

Financing Excellence

To ensure a dynamic future, the DRHS must continue to maintain and grow its financial base in a number of areas. Providing the resources for excellence includes a concerted effort in growing philanthropy, membership, endowment and planned giving, capital project funding, and revenue supporting programs.

Strategies for Financial Excellence

- Continue active management and careful stewardship of DRHS financial resources to support long term financial stability while allowing for strategic organizational and revenue growth.
- Encourage revenue growth and diversification through membership, philanthropy, program innovation.
- Continue to develop a professional approach and the right tools for success in philanthropic giving, including donations, planned giving, donor cultivation, Board giving, and grant funding.
- Establish a Gift Policy that provides clear guidance for the Board of Trustees, administrative staff, and donors on acceptable parameters of all philanthropic donations, including corporate sponsorship, endowment giving, in-kind, and planned gifts, to ensure their careful stewardship and to secure the long-term financial strength and stability of the organization.
- Explore opportunities to increase financial and other resources to support lands and property management.

A person wearing a white t-shirt with 'EMILY HYLTON' on the sleeve and a white cap is using a chainsaw in a forest. The background is a dense forest with tall trees and sunlight filtering through the canopy.

A Shared Sense of Possibility

Preparing for the future requires a clear and compelling vision, one that offers a powerful and persuasive argument for the value of a sustained investment in this organization.

For 137 years, the DRHS has prospered through the generous support of residents from Duxbury and beyond. This has been the work of many generations, and it has resulted in the development of an institution that today is vibrant and admired.

As the DRHS seeks to build upon its traditions and strengthen its resources, we recognize that the success of those efforts will depend upon our ability to engage broad support across the community.

In this moment of possibility, we seek to chart a new course for the renewal of this beloved organization. And, with confidence, we ask you to join us in looking toward the future.

Beyond 2020: Exploring Horizon Issues

- As dedicated stewards of historical buildings and lands, it is vital that DRHS continue the assessment and planning processes already underway to effectively anticipate and manage potential risks posed by our aging buildings, infrastructures, and lands and ensure the resources needed to address future needs.
- Begin to plan for and participate in community discussion aimed at mitigating the effects of climate change on our buildings and lands.
- Existing DRHS storage facilities are no longer adequate for our growing collections. Important first steps included an updated inventory and conditions assessment, now completed. Short term storage solutions with appropriate environmental controls must be identified while we explore and assess options for the longer term.
- Ensuring that our lands stewardship and programming are fully resourced and that we raise community awareness of the role we play in open space conservation.

Thank you to everyone who made this document possible:

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Community Garden Club of Duxbury

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Deb Casagrande

Lands Observer

Paul Wales



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