

D-6

**WOMEN'S RIGHTS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK**

---

Box 340

**INTERPRETIVE PROSPECTUS**

**SCANNED**

3/6/02

**ON MICROFILM**

**PLEASE RETURN TO:**

**TECHNICAL INFORMATION CENTER  
DENVER SERVICE CENTER  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

INTERPRETIVE PROSPECTUS

WOMEN'S RIGHTS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK,  
New York

Prepared by  
Division of Interpretive Planning  
Harpers Ferry Center

August, 1988

(Approved by John J. Guthrie for  
Regional Director, North Atlantic  
Region, by memorandum dated  
August 3, 1988)

## INTRODUCTION

Established in 1980, Women's Rights National Historical Park is relatively new to the National Park System. To date property has been acquired, preliminary research conducted, interim visitor contact facilities set up, and plans made for the future, in cooperation with local planning entities. The park's General Management Plan was approved in 1986. The interpretive prospectus builds on that planning framework, to provide interpretive direction and to specify the elements and costs that are associated.

The prospectus is primarily a media prescription. It establishes themes and selects the media that are best suited for the interpretation of those themes. It deals with exhibits, waysides, audiovisual programs, publications, and personal services. The plan gives more emphasis to media produced by the Harpers Ferry Center. Personal services to be provided by the site's interpretive staff will be treated in greater depth in an operations plan, prepared by the staff and called "Annual Statement for Interpretation and Visitor Services."

The prospectus is not an end in itself, but the foundation for the next phase of the process--media production. No funding comes automatically with the completion of this plan. Rather, it is the responsibility of the park staff to use donations and the normal programming process, through the regional office, to acquire the implementation means. As funding is provided, individual projects are then designed and produced.

## CONTENTS

### OVERVIEW

Purpose of the park .....	1
The women's rights convention.....	1
The context .....	2
The participants.....	5
The aftermath .....	6
The significance.....	7

### THE PLAN

The resources .....	10
Interpretive themes .....	12
The visitor experience.....	12
The chapel block .....	12
Visitor center .....	12
Plaza.....	15
Chapel site.....	15
Stanton house .....	16
McClintock house.....	17
Wayside exhibit system.....	18
Personal services.....	19
Publications .....	19
Outreach.....	20

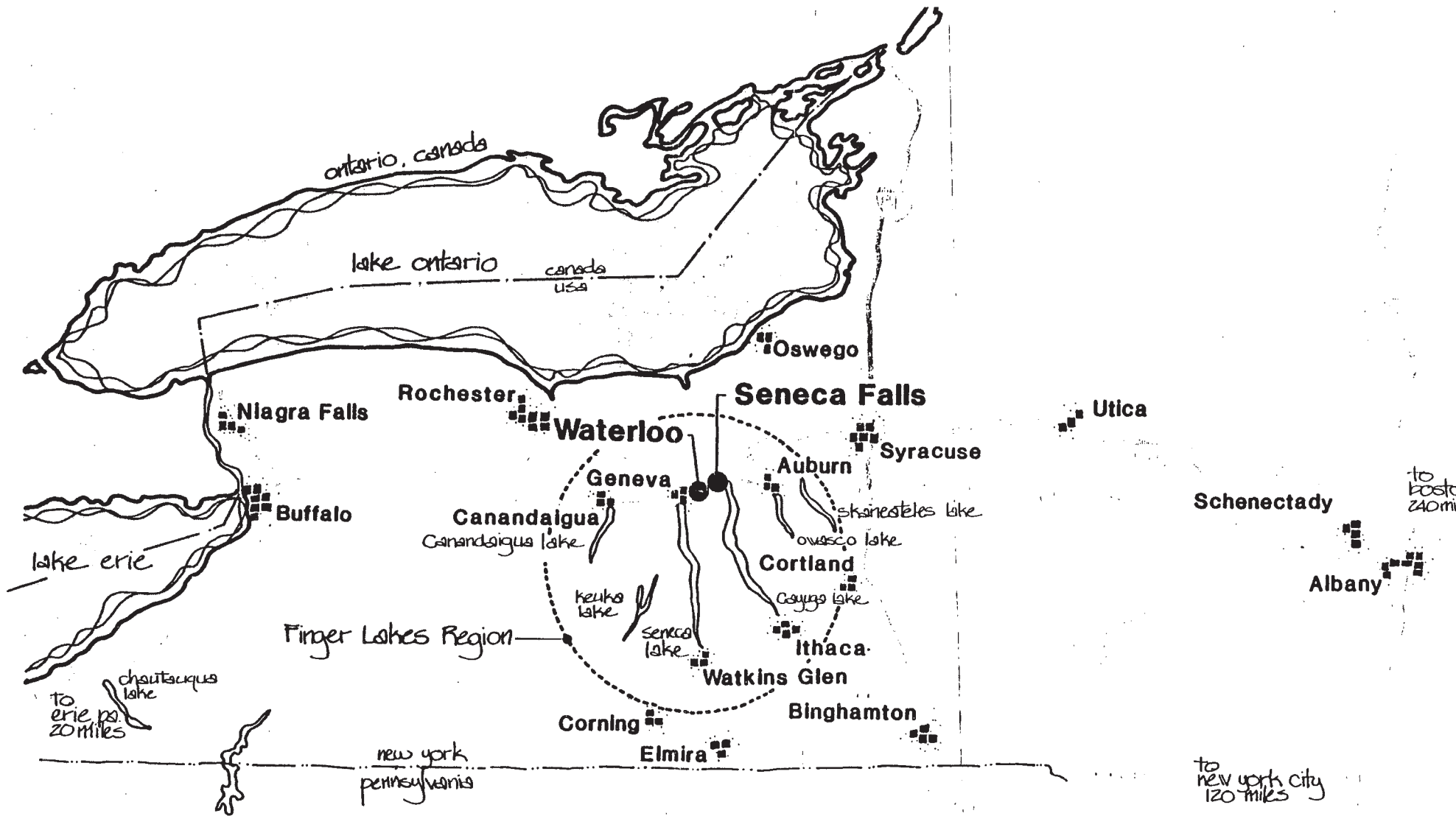
COST ESTIMATES .....	22
----------------------	----

SPECIAL POPULATIONS .....	23
---------------------------	----

RESEARCH AND COLLECTIONS.....	25
-------------------------------	----

PARTICIPANTS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS .....	27
--	----

BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	28
--------------------	----



**ON MICROFILM**

# Regional Map

WOMEN'S RIGHTS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK  
 SENECA FALLS / WATERLOO NEW YORK

488 20,002A  
 DEC / MAR 86

## OVERVIEW

### Purpose of the park

Women's Rights National Historical Park was established December, 1980, "...to preserve and interpret for the education, inspiration, and benefit of present and future generations the nationally significant historical and cultural sites and structures associated with the struggle for equal rights for women and to cooperate with State and local entities to preserve the character and historic setting of such sites and structures." The legislation emphasizes the importance of the Seneca Falls women's rights convention, calling it "an event of major importance in the history of the United States because it marked the formal beginning of the struggle of women for their equal rights." It also states that the Declaration of Sentiments, patterned after the Declaration of Independence and signed by 100 women and men at that convention, is "a document of enduring relevance, which expresses the goal that equality and justice should be extended to all people without regard to sex."

### The Women's Rights Convention

The convention was planned on July 9, 1848, at the home of Jane and Richard Hunt in Waterloo, New York. The Hunts were wealthy Quakers, active in the anti-slavery movement. When prominent Quaker minister Lucretia Mott came to central New York, Jane Hunt invited her to tea. The other guests included Martha Wright, Mott's sister; Mary Ann McClintock, a Waterloo Quaker abolitionist; and Elizabeth Cady Stanton of Seneca Falls.

All five women were wives and mothers, and all were interested and involved in various reform movements. All had, therefore, experienced conflicts between their domestic responsibilities and their desire to do reform work in the "public sphere." Aware that most men did not face similar conflicts between their public and private lives, these five women decided to call the convention to discuss this and many other inequalities between men and women.

That day, they wrote an announcement for the convention, which they published in the local *Seneca County Courier* on July 11 and July 14. The following Sunday, July 16, the organizers met again, at the home of Mary Ann McClintock, to draft a statement of purpose and a list of grievances. The document they produced

was called the "Declaration of Sentiments" and was modeled on the Declaration of Independence.

The new declaration asserted, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men and women are created equal." Among the 18 grievances were women's inability to vote, to own property, to sue for divorce and to attend college or enter the professions. Also listed as unfair were the different moral standards applied to men and women, the fact that women were taxed without representation, and the fact that married women were non-existent in the eyes of the law. This document, with its list of grievances and corresponding resolutions, formed the basis for discussion at the convention.

The location selected to hold the convention meetings was the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel. Its members had disagreed with their original churches over slavery and other reform issues. In their view, the church congregation should take an active role in worldly affairs. For this reason, the chapel was associated with reform; it made a practice of welcoming "radical" speakers and did not charge a fee for use of the building.

On the morning of July 19, the convention opened. After several speeches, the Declaration of Sentiments was discussed. More speeches followed, and the declaration was circulated for signatures. Finally, several resolutions to address women's grievances were read. In the evening, Lucretia Mott spoke on reform movements. On July 20, the declaration was further discussed and voted on. The meeting concluded with speeches by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Thomas McClintock, Mary Ann McClintock, Frederick Douglass and Lucretia Mott. Ultimately, of the 300 participants in the convention, 100 signed the declaration--68 women and 32 men.

### The Context

To fully understand the importance of the first women's rights convention, it is necessary to locate it in its historical context to see that the event was a logical response to local and national conditions and concerns.

The convention took place in Seneca Falls, New York, partly as a result of local social, political, and economic factors. But news of the convention spread throughout the nation and provoked great interest and controversy. The ideas expressed at Seneca Falls had

resonance for many people because the historical forces transforming the village were also affecting much of the rest of the country. What were those forces, and what was their relationship to the call for the first women's rights convention?

Agitation against slavery was an important factor in the early women's movement. Women like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, both involved in antislavery activity, soon realized that they, as women, lacked the rights which they were fighting to give to enslaved men. The main belief of the antislavery movement was that all human beings were absolutely equal. Abolitionists argued that because of their common humanity, all people, white or black, should have the same rights and freedoms. This belief was easily adapted to suit the situation of women; the logical extension of this principle was that women too deserved equal rights.

Also, the convention took place during the era of "Jacksonian Democracy." During this period, the concept of democracy expanded greatly. The vote and other rights were extended to all white men, rather than only to those who were wealthy. Jackson espoused radical equality, though he did not include black men, Native American men, or women in this concept. Nonetheless, the arguments made by Jackson and his followers could be used to argue for rights for oppressed groups. This is precisely what the framers of the Declaration of Sentiments did; they borrowed the prevailing political sentiment and applied it to a group which had previously been ignored. The logic of this was unassailable.

Industrialization and resulting changes in the economy and in the status of women also contributed significantly to a climate in which the convention seemed like a logical and necessary event. As Seneca Falls and other towns in the northeast began harnessing waterpower for manufacturing, women began going to work in these new factories. Female factory workers discovered widespread discrimination in the workplace. They learned that any wages they earned were the property of their nearest male relatives. They learned that they were paid about one-third the wages of men who did similar jobs. And they learned that despite working long days in a factory, they were expected to continue to do all the housework and all the childcare. These overworked and powerless women felt tremendously discontented with their lack of control over their own lives, but this discontent could not be expressed, because there was no model of a world for them to call



on in which women did not have to shoulder "the double burden."

Many other women were discontented for different reasons. The wives of farmers, they were accustomed to a certain status within the family: that of valuable, producing member. Women and men in a farm economy would traditionally do different tasks but they would do equally necessary tasks to support the family. When many men left their farms to take jobs in the factories, women's relative status within the family deteriorated. Women were no longer central to the support of the family because they were using the cash their husbands earned to buy things which they had formerly made in the home. When the home was no longer central to production, women were no longer central to society. A public sphere of business and politics developed, and women were excluded from this sphere completely.

The fact that American values were in a transitional phase in the twenty years before the convention was another factor in the success of the convention. This can be seen most clearly in the areas of religion and reform activity.

Religious revivals were very popular in pre-Civil War America, particularly in upstate New York. Revivalist Charles Grandison Finney referred to the area as "the burned-over district" because it was swept so often by the "fires" of revivalism.

Revivalists stumped the country, espousing the notion that human beings could work actively to effect their own salvation. This message contradicted the traditional Calvinist view that one was either saved or not, and nothing could be done about it. Many people accepted this new message and the exhortation to identify their sins and end them. Having done that, the next logical step for these converts was to identify the institutional sins of the larger society, and take steps to eradicate them. This religious motivation propelled many committed workers into the antislavery, temperance and moral reform movements.

Women became active in reform because it was considered socially acceptable for them to be involved in church-related activities. Within these movements, women were frequently discriminated against. However, at the same time, they learned skills like public speaking, petitioning, and organizing--skills which would be useful in the fledgling women's movement.

Religious and spiritual expression took numerous less conventional forms during this period. Many 19th century Americans believed in the perfectibility of human beings, and experimented with new forms of social and family organization in utopian communities. These experimental challenges to the status quo encouraged people to consider the artificiality of sex role stereotyping and domestic vs. public sphere divisions, and in some cases, to reject the prevailing societal view.

The Hicksite Quakers of Waterloo and Rochester formed another religious group which challenged the status quo. Their belief that the Divine was in every person, and that everyone was therefore equal in the eyes of God, led them to work actively in the abolition movement. In June of 1848, many Waterloo Quakers broke away from their yearly meeting, in part over the issue of antislavery activity in Quaker meeting houses. Many elders and ministers objected to the abolition work of their fellow Friends, and attempted to limit such activity. To abolitionist Quakers, this was an unacceptable restriction of their right to follow the dictates of their consciences. The splinter group, 200 strong, reorganized into the "Congregational Friends," and declared that the basis of their fellowship was a commitment to the equality of all people, and to practical reform work. Given this commitment, it was only logical for the Congregational Friends to attend and support the equal rights platform of the women's rights convention.

### The Participants

Yet another factor interesting people in the convention was the particular personalities involved in organizing it. Elizabeth Cady Stanton was uniquely qualified to bring together local abolitionists, Quakers, and Seneca Falls' political and economic elite, having as she did ties to each of these groups. Stanton's "call to action" at Jane Hunt's tea party was in some ways a culmination of a lifetime of personal experience and awareness of injustice towards women. She grew up in an atmosphere of reform and free thinking; she and her husband honeymooned at the World Congress on Slavery in London and lawyer Henry Stanton was frequently absent on reform activities during their married life--leaving Elizabeth to manage the household and seven children alone.

She was able to generalize from her own experience to that of many other women, and thereby to articulate

what many people were feeling. By demanding that the question of women's rights be discussed, Stanton was touching on the concerns of many different segments of the community, and these women and men indicated that she had reached them by attending the convention, and discussing it with spirit afterwards.

The great majority of those who attended the convention were from the area around Seneca Falls, and their motivations for participating in the convention were largely the result of local concerns. However, the idea that women deserved equal rights caught on not only on the local, but also on the national level. This was because in many ways, Seneca Falls constituted a microcosm of the larger society.

### The Aftermath

Reaction to the convention came swiftly. The attacks were so great that some of the signers withdrew their names and influence from the declaration. In spite of this, other women's rights conventions were called all over the northeast, and as far west as Ohio. Throughout the 1850s, national women's rights conventions were held every year but one, in addition to many smaller meetings. Before the Civil War, the women's rights movement was well-established, and working closely with the abolitionist movement in many areas.

During the Civil War, prominent women's rights advocates like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony continued to work for their cause, but also devoted their energy to supporting the war effort, mostly through their Women's Loyal National League. When women were not granted the vote with Black men after the war, the movement became predominately a suffrage campaign, but Stanton never stopped raising other issues of importance to women.

Women fought for suffrage and other basic rights on both the state and national levels throughout the late 19th and early 20th century. The 19th amendment to the Constitution, which gave women the vote, was ratified in 1919.

In 1923, Alice Paul, the president of the National Women's Party, wrote the Equal Rights Amendment, and read it in public for the first time in Seneca Falls, New York. Paul understood that the vote alone would not give women full equality. She launched the ERA campaign, because she believed that if it passed, the

amendment would address the unresolved grievances first articulated in 1848. Passage of this amendment and a variety of other issues remain important to the women's rights movement today.

### The Significance

The first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls in 1848 was the formal beginning of one of the most powerful and far-reaching movements for social change in American history: the women's rights movement.

At this ground-breaking convention, the startling and revolutionary Declaration of Sentiments was discussed and approved. Prepared by the conveners of the meeting, the declaration articulated an entirely new vision of American society and American women within that society. That vision was of a world in which women were fully equal to men, a world in which every human being had the right to live his or her life in accordance with his or her abilities and conscience. It was, as well, a vision of a world in which women were independent, self-reliant, and ultimately responsible for themselves. Such a view of the world was far from the prevailing view of women and their "place" within society in 1848. It challenged the assumption of male authority over women, replacing it with a concept of female self-determination.

The basic premise of the authors of the declaration was that the philosophical ideal "All men are created equal," on which this country was founded, should be changed to "All men and women are created equal." They believed, as Stanton later wrote, that, "Women's political equality with man is the legitimate outgrowth of the fundamental principles of our government, clearly set forth in the Declaration of Independence of 1776, [and] in the United States Constitution adopted in 1784..."

But the 1848 declaration envisioned a reform of society even more far-reaching and radical than that proposed by Jefferson in 1776. Not only did Stanton and the other women demand the political and economic rights "endowed by their Creator," they insisted on a variety of social reforms as well. It was, as Stanton later noted, "The most momentous reform that had yet been launched on the world--the first organized protest against the injustice which had brooded for ages over the character and destiny of one-half the race."

As the declaration made clear, women had long been unhappy with their inferior status in society. However, with a few notable exceptions, this discontent was unexamined and unexpressed. Women strove to expand their spheres of influence, but generally this was within socially acceptable contexts such as the home and the church. The Seneca Falls Convention allowed many women to understand that they were not alone in their discontent. More importantly, the Declaration of Sentiments expressed what many women felt but were unable to explain; before the declaration there was no framework, no model, for a world in which women's position was not clearly inferior to that of men.

Women did, in fact, have much to be dissatisfied with in 1848. As the declaration asserted, "the history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man towards woman." The document noted that women were unable to vote, to own or inherit property, to keep any wages they earned, to get a higher education, or to take any but menial and low-paying jobs outside the home. Further, the laws governing marriage and divorce were written in such a way as to give all power to men. Married women had no legal existence. Perhaps more difficult to quantify and change, a different moral code was prescribed for men than for women; this unwritten code allowed much for men which in women would be severely punished. Most importantly, men had claimed the right to assign to women a "sphere," a right the framers of the declaration believed belonged to every individual and his or her conscience.

It is remarkable that the five women who wrote the Declaration of Sentiments were able to express their grievances so clearly. They had been raised in a world which taught them that women were inferior to men in every way, yet they were able to reject this lifelong socialization and envision a world in which all people were equal. It is equally startling that hundreds of ordinary people joined them in this work, and that all of them had the courage to imagine that they could change the world for the better by working to realize their vision of a just society.

The minutes of the convention report that there was very little opposition to the resolutions proposed at the meeting. Ordinary people in Seneca Falls took for granted the commonsense nature of these remarkable ideas. It seemed obvious to them that women were human, that they were citizens, and that they therefore deserved equal rights. The participants at the

convention clearly believed that what they would be working for was within the mainstream of the American political tradition at that time.

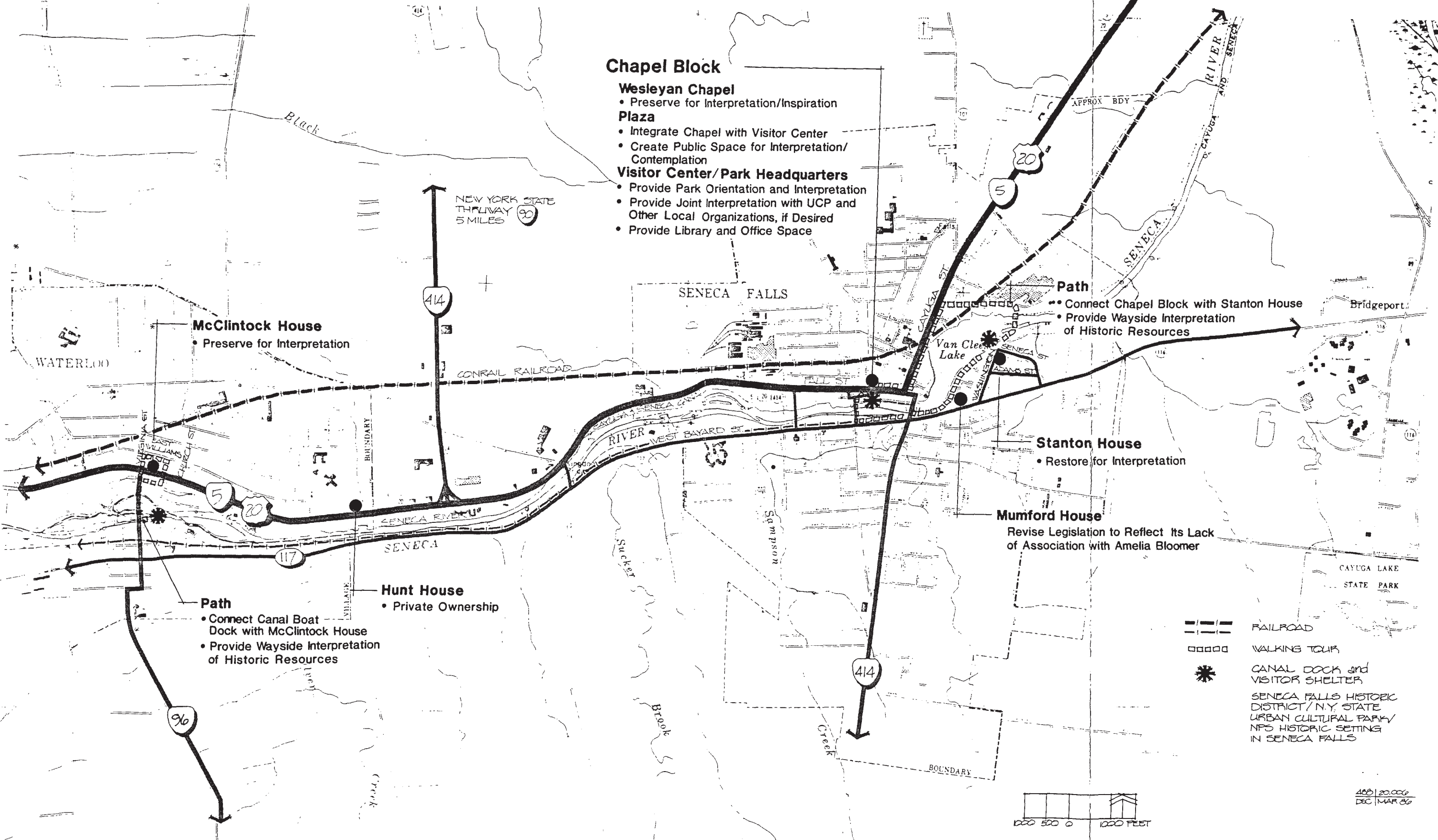
Having articulated what they hoped to achieve, the organizers of the convention began work on a correlate goal: to launch a movement to make their dream a reality. They stated, "We hope this convention will be followed by a series of conventions, embracing every part of the country." Thus began a movement of amazing vitality, which has drastically altered the lives of all contemporary Americans, and which continues to change our society and our perceptions of ourselves as participants in society.

Since 1848, many of the inequities enumerated by Stanton and the other leaders have been eliminated. Women and their male allies struggled for years to gain for women the right to vote, to own property, to go to college, and to choose virtually any career. Other significant changes have been wrought as well. But much work remains to be done. More than 130 years after the convention, some of the basic issues raised in 1848 have not yet been resolved. Women are not yet fully equal to men in political, economic, or social terms.

The convention and the movement it began are unambiguous examples of the fact that in a democracy, ordinary people can join together to have extraordinary influence on the course of history. It is clear that in America, individuals have the power to change things for the better.

The empowering message of this convention, that a just society should and can be created, and that ordinary citizens can join together to bring it into being, has enormous relevance in the the context of the present-day, ongoing struggle for equality and justice the world over. That means that the Wesleyan Chapel not only has enduring historical importance, but also on-going significance to Americans and to others around the world who believe in democracy and justice.

(Overview chapter written by Margaret McFadden)



**Chapel Block**

- Wesleyan Chapel**
  - Preserve for Interpretation/Inspiration
- Plaza**
  - Integrate Chapel with Visitor Center
  - Create Public Space for Interpretation/Contemplation
- Visitor Center/Park Headquarters**
  - Provide Park Orientation and Interpretation
  - Provide Joint Interpretation with UCP and Other Local Organizations, if Desired
  - Provide Library and Office Space

**McClintock House**  
• Preserve for Interpretation

**Hunt House**  
• Private Ownership

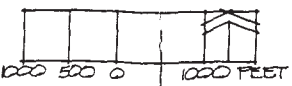
**Stanton House**  
• Restore for Interpretation

**Mumford House**  
Revise Legislation to Reflect Its Lack of Association with Amelia Bloomer

**Path**  
• Connect Chapel Block with Stanton House  
• Provide Wayside Interpretation of Historic Resources

**Path**  
• Connect Canal Boat Dock with McClintock House  
• Provide Wayside Interpretation of Historic Resources

- RAILROAD
- WALKING TOUR
- ★ CANAL DOCK and VISITOR SHELTER
- SENECA FALLS HISTORIC DISTRICT / N.Y. STATE URBAN CULTURAL PARK / NPS HISTORIC SETTING IN SENECA FALLS



488 | 20,000  
DEC | MAR 86

**The Plan**

WOMEN'S RIGHTS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK  
SENECA FALLS/WATERLOO NEW YORK

**ON MICROFILM**

## THE PLAN

### The Resources

The National Park Service currently owns the former Wesleyan Chapel, site of the 1848 convention; and the McClintock and Stanton houses, once occupied by prime movers in the convention and spokespersons for equal rights for women. Additional property is authorized for acquisition; it is associated with historic structures, or will provide space for parking. One other building, the Hunt house, will not be acquired; a cooperative agreement may be developed for some type of use. The former Seneca Falls city hall adjacent to the chapel site will be used as an interpretive center and administrative headquarters.

The condition of these structures varies. The building on the chapel site is a collage which represents the many uses it has served in the 140 years since the convention took place: opera house, store, car dealership, and most recently as a garage/apartment building/laundromat. Only parts of the chapel have survived and there is little or no documentation on which to base an accurate restoration. Accordingly, a nationwide design competition has solicited ideas for a design for the site that would save the chapel remnants and provide a place to commemorate the convention.

The former Seneca Falls village city hall in the downtown district has been donated to the National Park Service for a headquarters/visitor center. Substantial repair and renovation will be required before it can accommodate this use. The building is not of the convention era, dating from the early twentieth century instead. The concrete block theater between the chapel site and the city hall will be removed in order to open up a plaza space.

The Stanton house, as it has survived to today, is not the original size it was at the time Elizabeth Cady Stanton and her family lived there. The 1-1/2-story kitchen wing is gone as is a wing on the north side of the house. From the front, the appearance was symmetrical, with a central core flanked by two matching wings. The extant house has been carefully researched and restored. It contains several pieces of Stanton's furniture. Research has not turned up much documentation on the original contents and finding original pieces has been difficult. Any additional items of Stanton's furniture which are located may be added to the collection.



The McClintock house in Waterloo is not yet restored. The church for which it most recently served as parsonage has been purchased and removed. A small parking area will be developed on the former church lot. Very little is known about the original contents with the exception of a table now on display at the Smithsonian's American History Museum. This is the table on which the Declaration of Sentiments was drafted. Both the McClintock and Stanton houses are located in residential areas.

These buildings are scattered through two adjacent towns: Seneca Falls and Waterloo, in upstate New York--the Finger Lakes region. The park's structures are in close proximity to a number of other structures with historical ties to the period. These amplify and provide context for the park's primary themes. The Seneca knitting mills, across the canal from the chapel block, has survived from that period. A very attractive stone building, it is a vivid reminder of the effect industrialization had on the social and economic condition of women. This building, the canal, and a number of other structures in town offer useful interpretive links to our story. An urban cultural park plan is being prepared for the village of Seneca Falls, under a program initiated by New York State in 1982. The proposed boundary for the urban park is contiguous with the village historic district. The village of Waterloo has completed the necessary research and National Register forms, which would allow it to pursue a historic district designation.

About a block away from the park's chapel and visitor center sites, the National Women's Hall of Fame honors a number of outstanding women. It opened in 1979 and is privately funded. New honorees are selected periodically.

In the nearby city of Rochester, the home of Susan B. Anthony is operated by Susan B. Anthony Memorial, Inc., and opened to the public by volunteers of the organization. The home is substantially furnished and contains a number of interesting artifacts that shed light on Anthony's long association with the women's rights movement. Although Anthony did not attend the 1848 Convention, she and Elizabeth Cady Stanton worked together in the cause for decades, visiting back and forth, and co-authoring *The History of Woman Suffrage*. Anthony, who was unmarried, traveled extensively and took a more public role than Stanton was able to, as Stanton was tied closer to home by her large family.

Although some 50 miles from the National Park Service site, the Anthony house offers an interpretive complement.

#### Interpretive themes

The General Management Plan states that "although the event of 1848 will be the focus of interpretation, women's rights issues, as outlined in the Declaration of Sentiments and as carried into the 20th century, will be covered also."

#### The visitor experience

The principal site in the park is the Wesleyan Chapel. The Chapel Block will provide an overview of the park and related attractions, and will provide the central orientation/interpretation program. Visitors will get a richer experience by adding a visit to the Stanton and McClintock houses. The complete visitor experience will include the Chapel Block, and Stanton and McClintock visits by boat tour or by driving to the houses. Walking tours and additional programs will further enrich their visits.

#### The chapel block

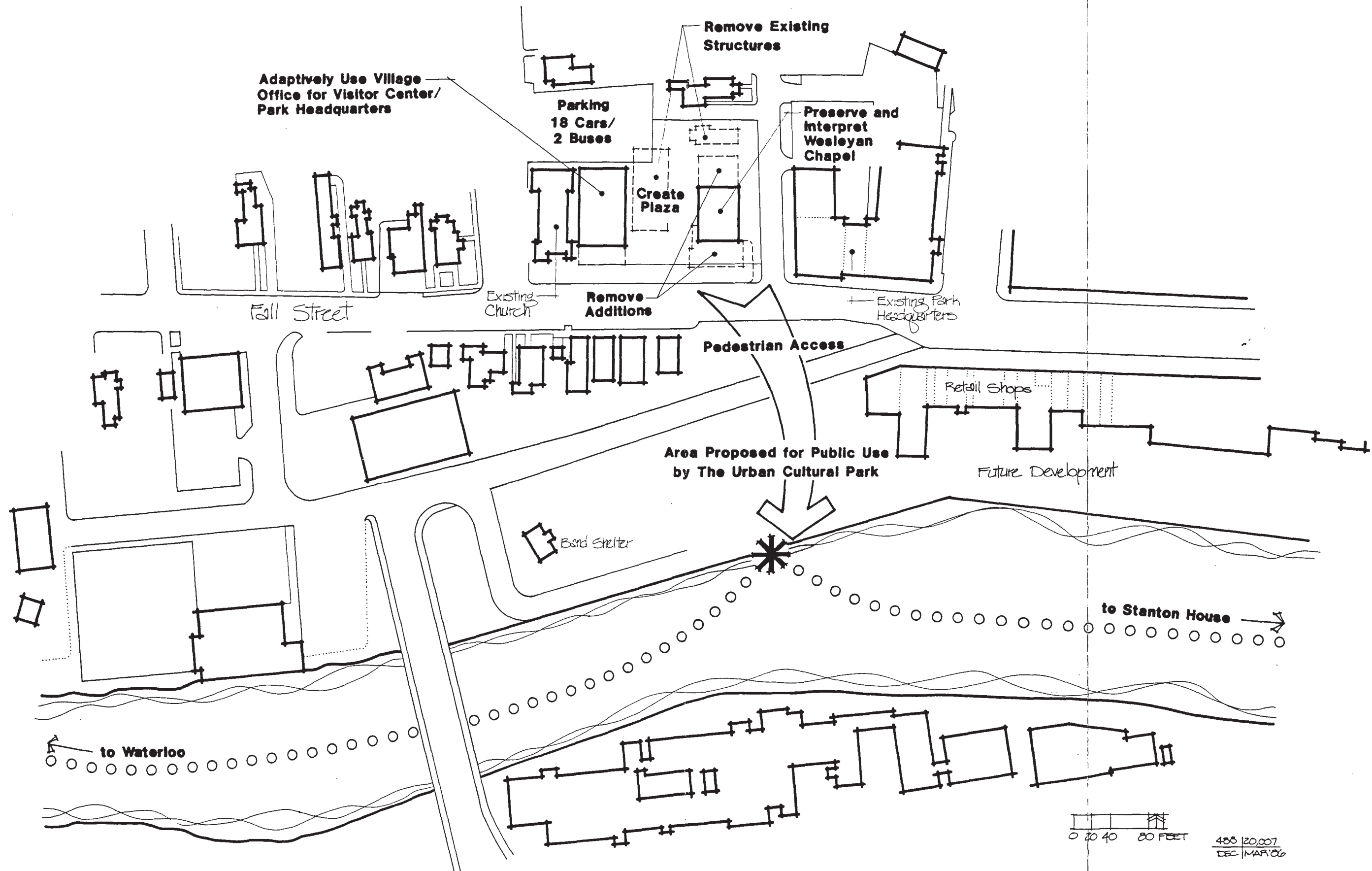
The four elements of the block are the visitor center, the plaza, the chapel element, and the seating area. These will work together, functionally complementary, to provide a unified and organized experience for park visitors.

Visitors will arrive at the site by private automobile, chartered bus, and boat. Parking will be at dispersed locations and therefore there will be multiple points of arrival. The primary entry direction to the chapel block will be from Fall Street, but a lesser number, including physically handicapped persons, will come from the small parking area on the north side of the visitor center.

Visitors may arrive singly, in small informal groups, or large organized groups.

#### The Visitor Center:

The former village hall will house administrative offices for the park staff and a visitor center. All of the the first floor and part of the second floor will be appointed for visitor center functions.



\* CANAL DOCK + VISITOR SHELTER  
 ○ ○ ○ CANAL BOAT ROUTE

0 20 40 80 FEET  
 488 120,007  
 DEC/MAR'06

**ON MICROFILM**

# Chapel Block Concept Plan

WOMEN'S RIGHTS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK SENECA FALLS NEW YORK

Administrative offices will be located in the remainder of the building.

Because the visitor center/administrative offices functions will take place in an existing building in a historic district, the facade should be in harmony with other nearby historic buildings, with its "Main Street" location taken into account. The purpose of the visitor center is to introduce visitors to the entire park and other area attractions, as well as provide interpretation about the primary themes of the park.

An information/reception area will be located at the front of the building, accessible through the main first floor entrances. It is a place that should be seen easily from the exterior as an inviting and active spot where visitors are welcome. This area will contain an information desk, orientation devices, a sizable sales publication area, and assembly space sufficient for a group of about 30.

Themes related to women's rights are numerous and in some cases will be handled solely by publications. Because of the nature of the park it is important that ample space is allotted to sales publications.

The assembly area will be needed to greet and orient group tours. In good weather, this activity can take place out-of-doors on the plaza, but for a substantial part of the year an indoor location will be needed, one that does not interfere with other on-going functions. This area could also be used for special events posters or changing exhibits.

A theater, with a sloped floor and seating for about 50 persons, and a projection booth will be used for an audiovisual program. This will be the centerpiece of interpretation in the visitor center and should be shown frequently on a scheduled basis to allow everyone an opportunity to view it. The 15-25 minute program will dramatize the social and economic context of the convention. It will demonstrate the conditions that made women and their male allies feel the necessity for reform. A starting point might be the grievances listed in the Declaration of Sentiments. It will then culminate in the events of the convention.

Public restrooms and an elevator will occupy part of the first floor space.

The remaining space on this floor will be used for exhibit area, including one or more video monitors

which will be an integral part of the exhibit area. This is an idea park; there are not a large number of artifacts directly associated with the story. Therefore, large graphics such as historic photos and a limited number of artifacts may be used. Some coordination is needed to ensure that the limited number of artifacts are used at the best park site. Copies of the books authored or co-authored by Stanton (*The History of Woman Suffrage* and *The Woman's Bible*) might be best displayed at the visitor center. Period cartoons might also have a place here. The "Bloomer" costume could be shown if space allows, or alternatively at the Stanton house.

The video programs could include an interactive display of the status of women's rights, state by state, with several categories of rights selected for such a comparison. Another might be more global in focus--women's rights by country. These two programs would have to be capable of change as conditions or laws changed. A third program element might be one in which visitors' impressions or experiences were gathered through an automatic on-site video camera; then a series of these would be selected, edited, and set up with random video access. In this way visitors could experience communication with others. An alternative might be to use short clips or photographs of women of accomplishments.

The video monitors may need to be buffered somewhat from through-traffic and noise.

If the idea of collecting ordinary visitors' thoughts in video format does not prove possible, there should still be a way to provide a continuing dimension to the interpretive story, for example a book in which people could write a few sentences or a page of reflections or experiences--something more substantial than the normal register book with its comments column.

Upstairs, reached either by the stairway or elevator would be located several other functional areas: a large public research library and a public multi-purpose meeting room that could be enlarged or decreased in size by movable partitions. A sound-proofed classroom with easy access to restrooms is also needed for children's programs. These public spaces should be grouped, with some method of closing off the public space from the administrative offices which will share this floor. Curatorial storage and work space should be provided somewhere in the administrative part of the building.

### The Plaza:

The plaza will be a connecting and unifying link between the two adjoining structures; it will offer a place where a number of formal and informal activities can occur.

An area has been designated for scheduled interpretive events or other gatherings where permanent seating would be arranged in such a way that a maximum of 50 persons could comfortably gather to enjoy entertainment, speeches, or various types of interpretive programs. This place--the stone stage--will be located out of the main circulation paths. Also, special programs for much larger audiences, who may at times cover the entire grass slope, as well as the seating area, may use the area immediately east of the new stone wall, or other areas as a backdrop/focal point.

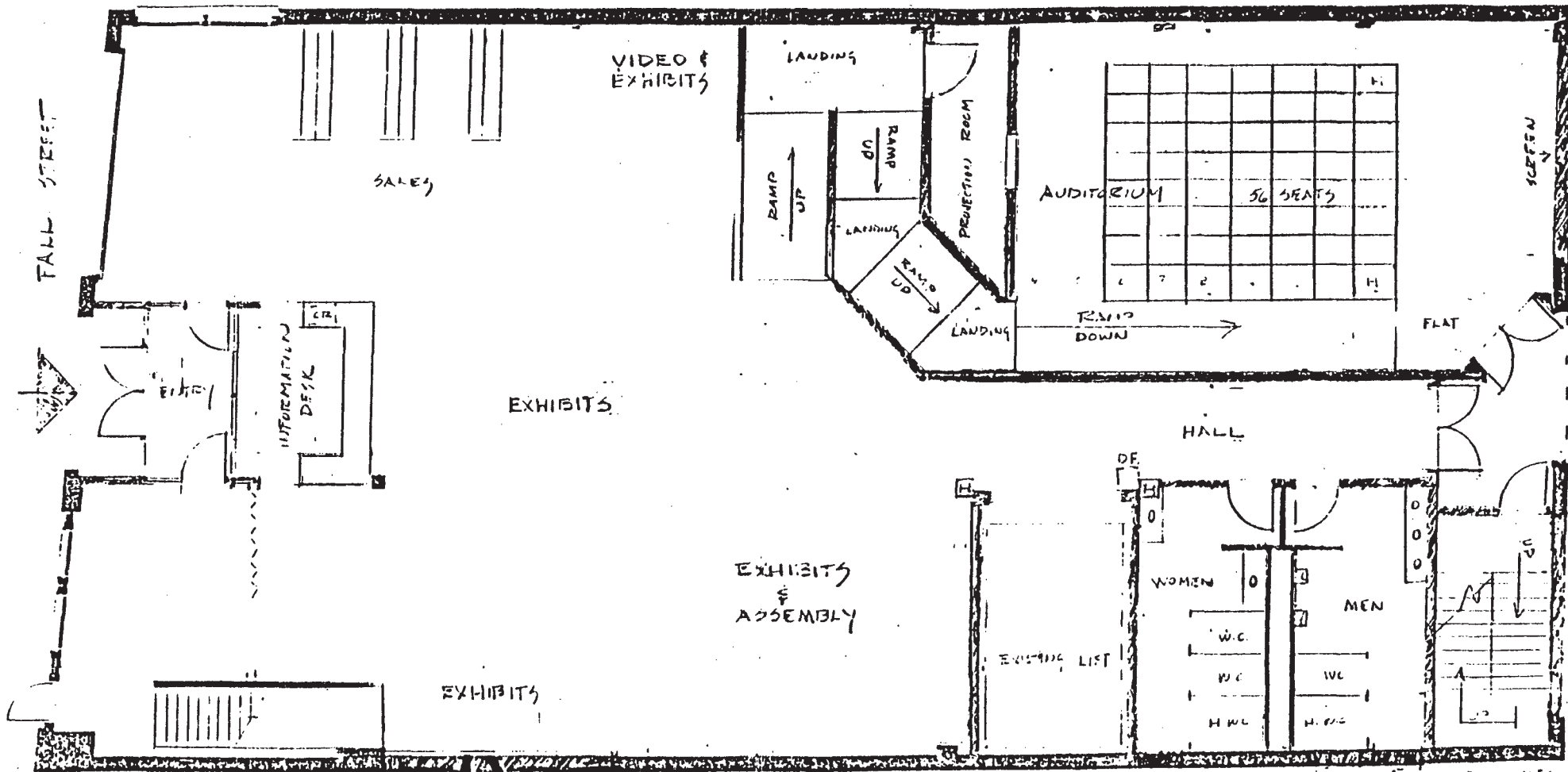
After buildings close for the day the plaza should still be accessible. Park information will be posted to serve those who come afterhours. The plaza should be open in the evenings, so lighting would be needed for safety of visitors and to discourage vandalism, as well as focus attention on the chapel element; a historic name for the chapel was "the great lighthouse." To some extent the plaza will need to be insulated aurally and visually from street noise and distracting sights. The neighbors may also wish some protection from visitor movements and activities. However, complete insulation of the plaza is not desirable because it must attract visitors into the chapel block and must lend itself to protection efforts by rangers and the local law enforcement agency.

### The Chapel Element:

The winning entry in the design competition depicts the chapel unenclosed, with a plaza which slopes down to a long wall bearing the declaration of sentiments on its surface.

The winning design projects the chapel element as a contemplative space. The primary facts of the convention--dates, who attended, length and purpose of the meeting--should be conveyed so that this information is available at all hours, whether or not the site is staffed.

POSSIBLE  
FLOORPLAN OF VISITOR CENTER  
PUBLIC USE SPACES



WOMEN'S RIGHTS  
VISITOR CENTER

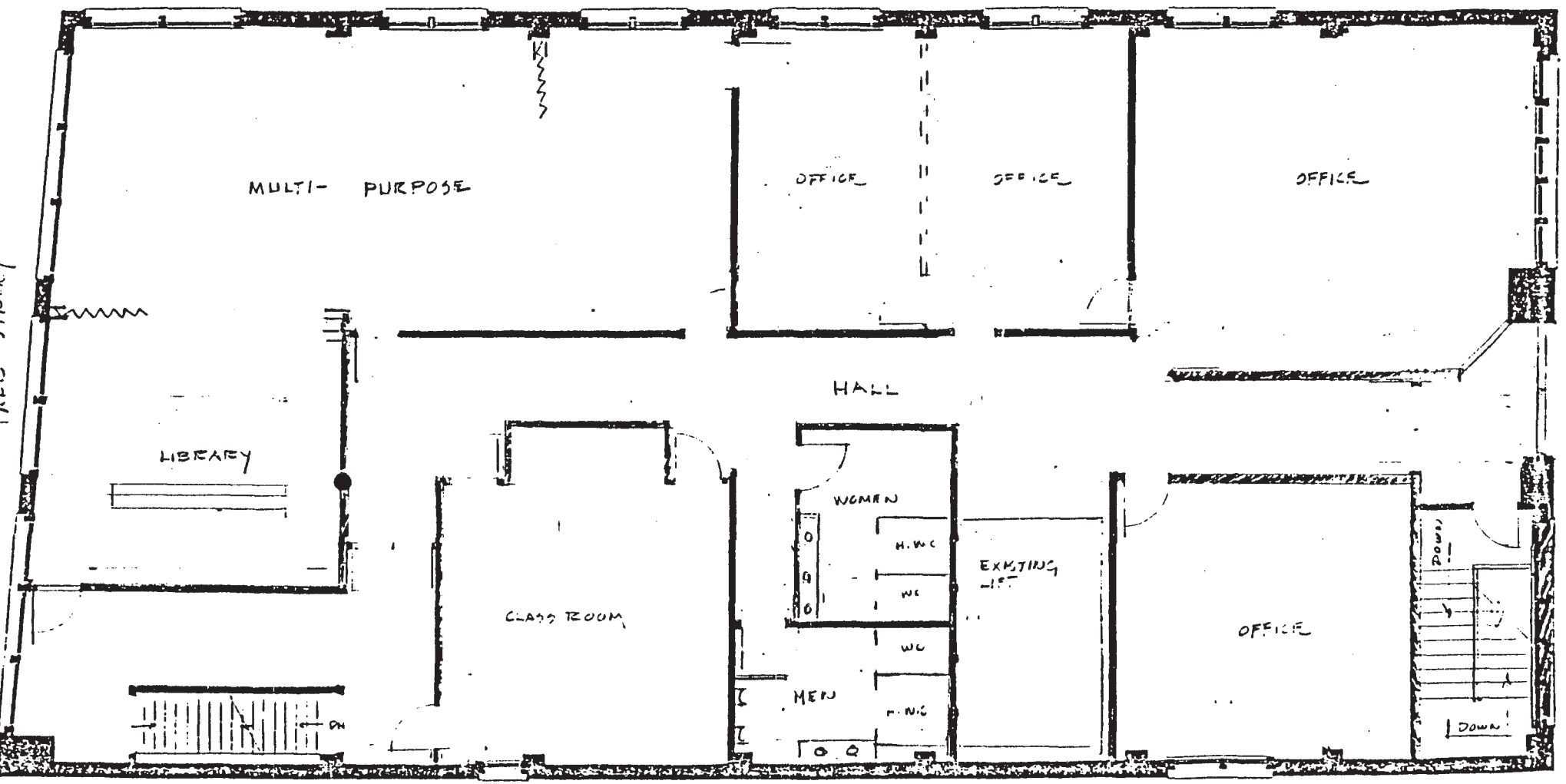
PLAZA

PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"  
0 5 10 15'

W.D.A. H.F.C.  
8/28/87  
NORTH  
REVISED 5/2/88 T.M.



FALL STREET



WOMEN'S RIGHTS  
VISITOR CENTER

PROPOSED SECOND FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"  
0 1 2 3 4 5 10 15'

NORTH  
→

### Stanton house

The theme of the interpretation at this historic house will be Elizabeth Cady Stanton--wife, mother, reformer. Her experience in the first two roles led to her development as the third.

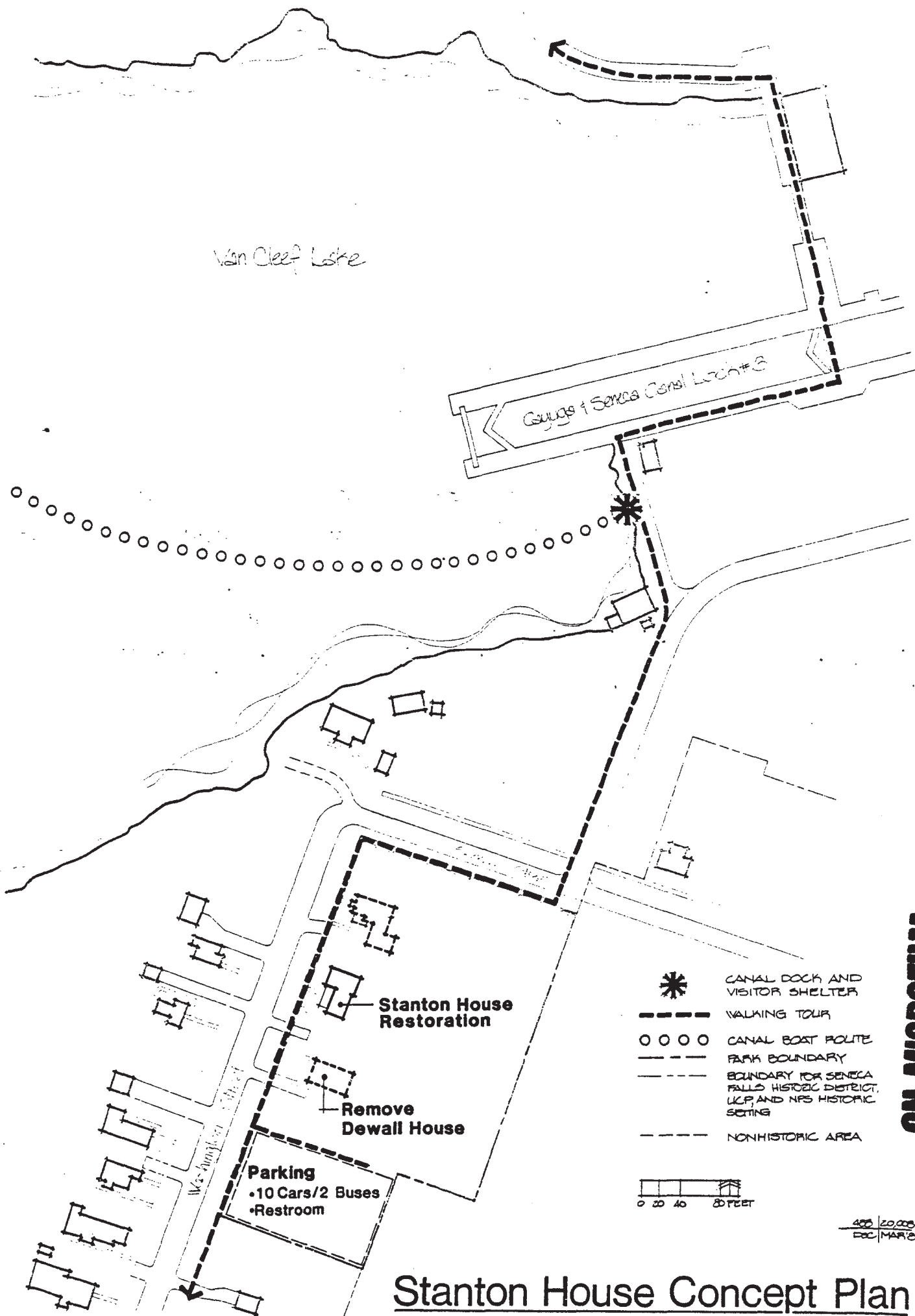
Stanton was the one who hired and supervised the workers in repairing and remodeling this home for the family. Over the years it was not only a lively and active residence for a large family but the place where innumerable friends and fellow-reformers came for dinner or a bed overnight, and informal meetings on causes of various kinds.

The rooms upstairs and downstairs in the extant central core and south wing will be used by an interpreter to tell these stories. Various pieces of furniture and other items which personally belonged to Stanton will help supplement the interpreter's talk by providing visual hooks on which to hang story lines.

Free-standing pieces rather than more typical case exhibit units are envisioned. The existing large pieces of furniture will be displayed on low, free-form and non-intrusive pedestals to subtly make the point that a full furnishing is not intended. Items like sheet music, books, and china should be provided with evocative supports, such as a piece that suggests a music stand, for the sheet music. Supplementing this material will be quotes, and perhaps graphics. All of these elements should be coordinated visually; design might mirror that time period in some way, or pick up an architectural theme.

A music program will be installed in the music room--a tape of period piano music known to have been played by Stanton herself. Occasionally, a pianist might perform live at the house for visitors.

The remaining suggestions for interpretation at the house require funding and construction: an open framework or other device to represent the north wing in order to fully convey the original size of the house; an enclosed addition in the former kitchen wing site at the rear of the house which would provide space for exhibits and activities not compatible with the historic spaces. In the latter could be some touch and try items that would help modern visitors understand the historic living conditions. A large graphic art piece could also show a cross-section of the house with the varied activities of the Stanton family and domestic help portrayed.



CANAL DOCK AND VISITOR SHELTER



WALKING TOUR



CANAL BOAT ROUTE



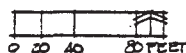
PARK BOUNDARY



BOUNDARY FOR SENECA FALLS HISTORIC DISTRICT, ULP, AND NPS HISTORIC SETTING



NONHISTORIC AREA

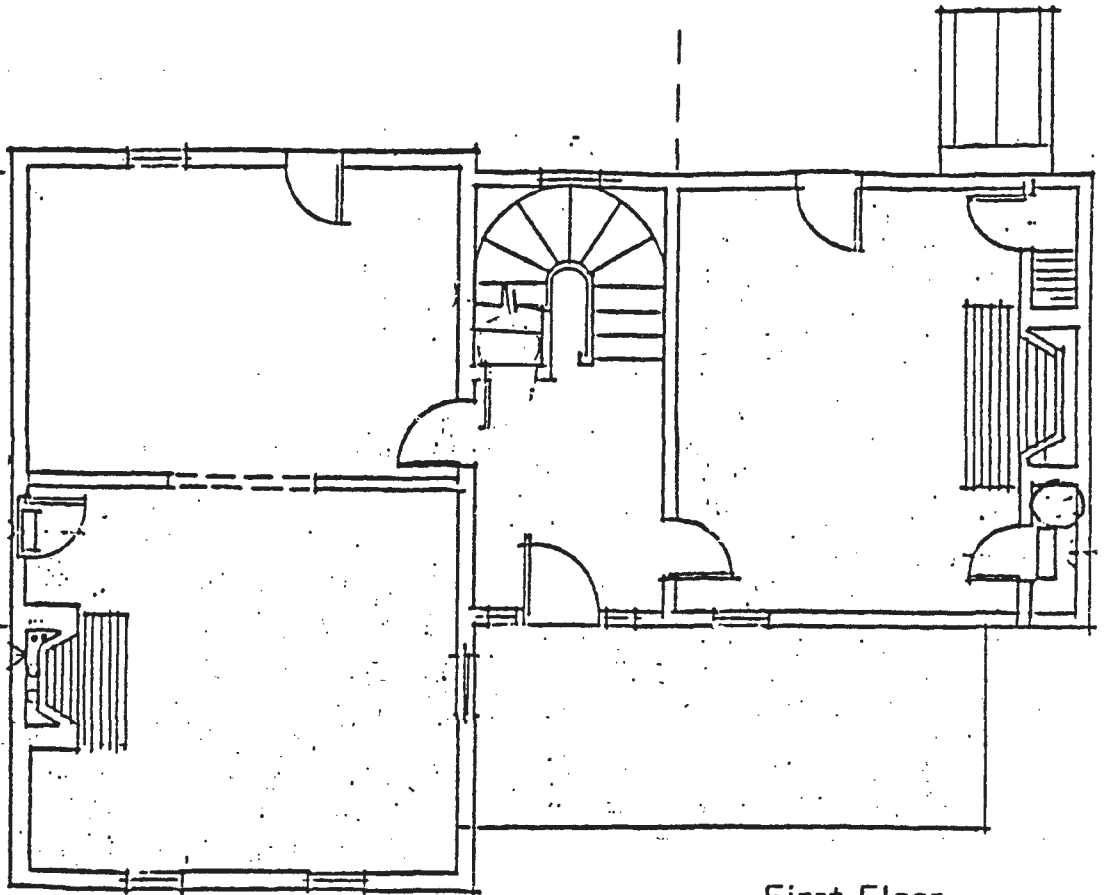


**ON MICROFILM**

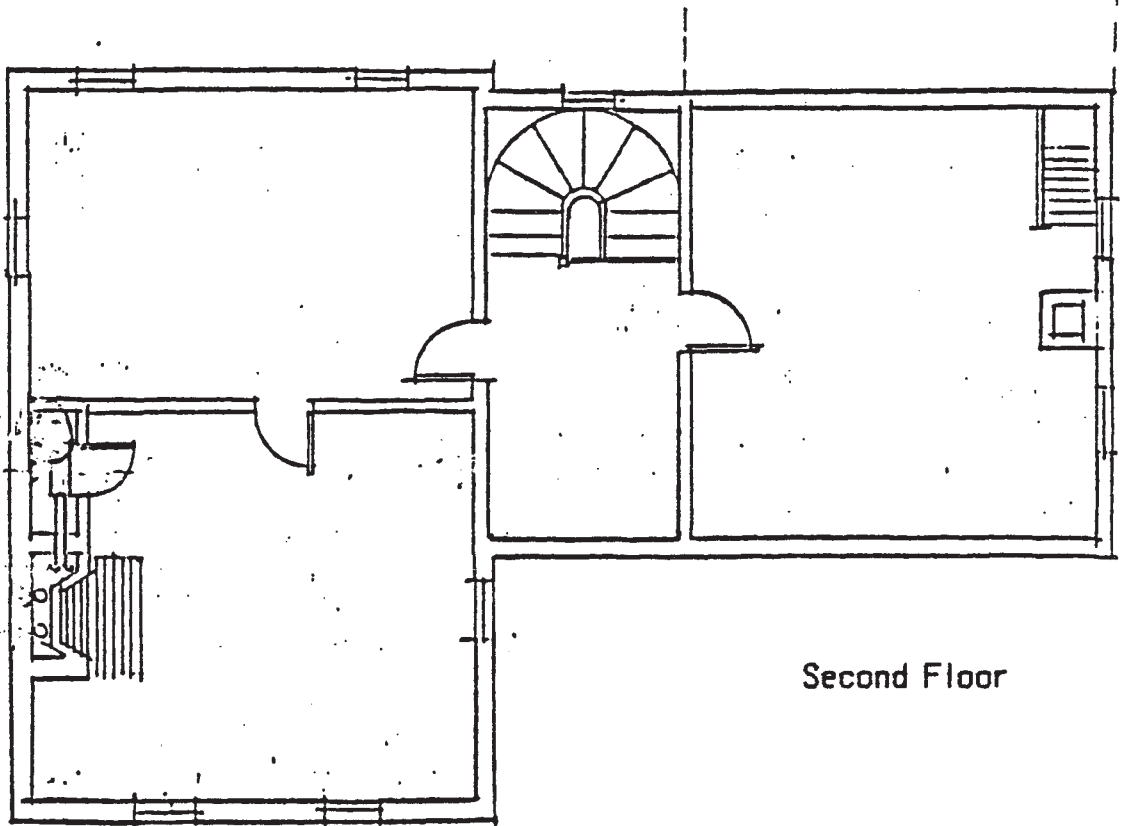
# Stanton House Concept Plan

WOMEN'S RIGHTS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK SENECA FALLS, NEW YORK

Stanton House Floorplan



First Floor.



Second Floor

N ←

Elizabeth Cady Stanton provides considerable written material to help interpret her home. She had a voluminous correspondence, wrote books, and presented lectures (called "Home Life" in a lyceum series) which contained references to her own home life, family activities, and attitudes. These are fertile sources for exhibit quotes and interpreters' theme talks alike.

The interpretation at the Stanton home will be filled with experiences that are easy for modern visitors to understand and identify with; a behind-the-scenes look will be an ideal way to get an intimate understanding of the housewife that was also a prominent reformer. It will offer insight on the relationship between her public and private lives.

The suggestion to create a functional space, equivalent in size to the historic kitchen wing, is not in the current plans. A concept plan will be beginning soon for the Stanton house and vicinity. For the consideration of these planners a rationale is offered for a new enclosed space: it would provide additional space for interpretive media and activities; and it allows visitors to comprehend the original size of the house. There are very few spaces in any of the park's buildings that lend themselves to interpreting for groups, and this park is one that already attracts groups and will increase such activity in the future. School groups especially will benefit from the availability of a functional space like that suggested for the Stanton House. It would be an ideal support for interpreters, for unstructured activities and interchange. Many of the other experiences at the park have some structure: a historic house tour, an audiovisual program, a walking tour. The physical structures are the anchor for the story, to tie it to a special place. Yet the story deals with a social movement, and intangibles are the real resource. How can bricks and stone and wood tell such a story? The best way to convey some elements of this story is by informal interchanges between visitors and interpreters, so to the extent possible at Women's Rights, spaces inside and outside should be provided that lend themselves to the application of interpreters' creativity in unstructured situations.

#### McClintock house

Here the Declaration of Sentiments was drafted and the plans for the convention continued.

The front room will contain a replica of the table now on display at the Smithsonian Institution. Life-size, or larger than life-size, images of the five women would be placed in the room, along with a few lines of biographical text. Other items might include copies of documents to which the group referred when determining the format of their declaration. Also, copies of the declaration should be available. The experience in this room could be participatory, led by the interpreter stationed here. The spirit of the room should be one that evokes the gathering of these women to plan the convention.

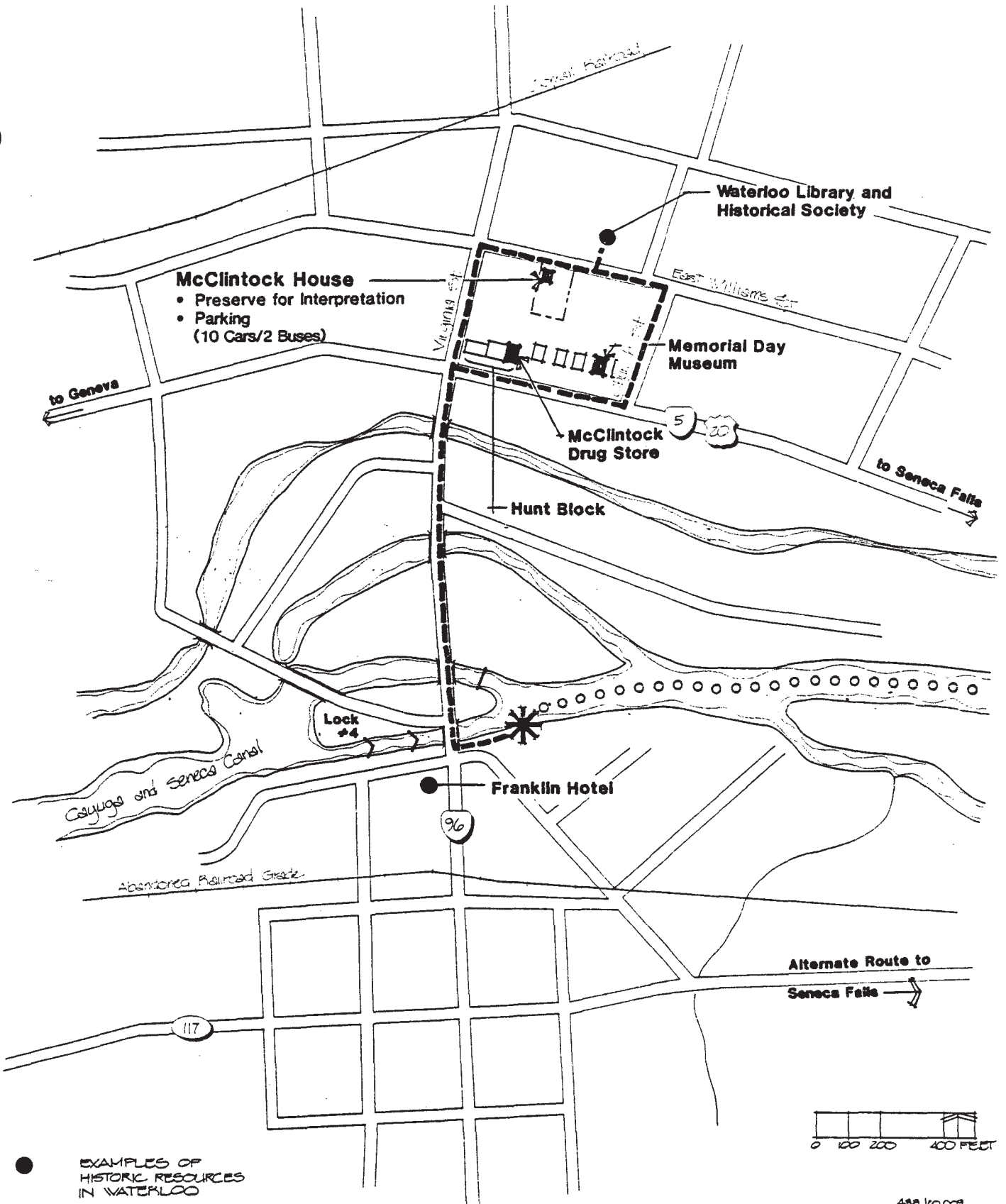
The remainder of the first floor should concentrate on exhibits interpreting the "Quaker connection." That four of the five women, including McClintock, were Quakers was not a coincidence; their beliefs and practices included equality for women and men. There are books, photographs, announcements, and a number of objects that could shed light on the subject of the Quakers and their reform activities.

The upstairs rooms could be functional to accommodate small gatherings.

#### Wayside exhibit system

A coordinated system of outside panels is needed at a variety of locations. They should have a family resemblance and be mounted in a way that suits historic sites. The materials will be vandal resistant, of reasonable cost, and easily replaceable. The panels will contain text and graphics of several kinds. One or more panels may be needed at each listed site.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
1. Boat dock - Stanton house	Interpret locks Direct visitors to Stanton house Interpret the town of Seneca Falls, pre-1914
2. Stanton house	Briefly explain history and significance of house



- EXAMPLES OF HISTORIC RESOURCES IN WATERLOO
- ○ ○ CANAL BOAT ROUTE
- WALKING TOUR
- ★ CANAL DOCK AND VISITOR SHELTER



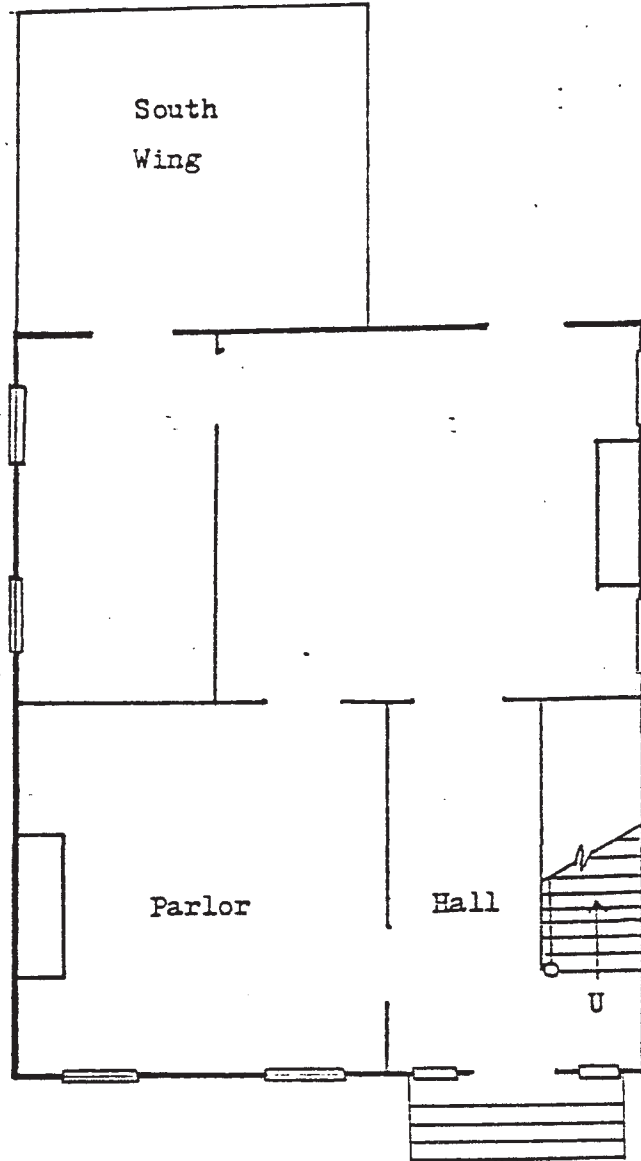
488 120,001  
DEC/MAR/88

# McClintock House Concept Plan

WOMEN'S RIGHTS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK WATERLOO NEW YORK

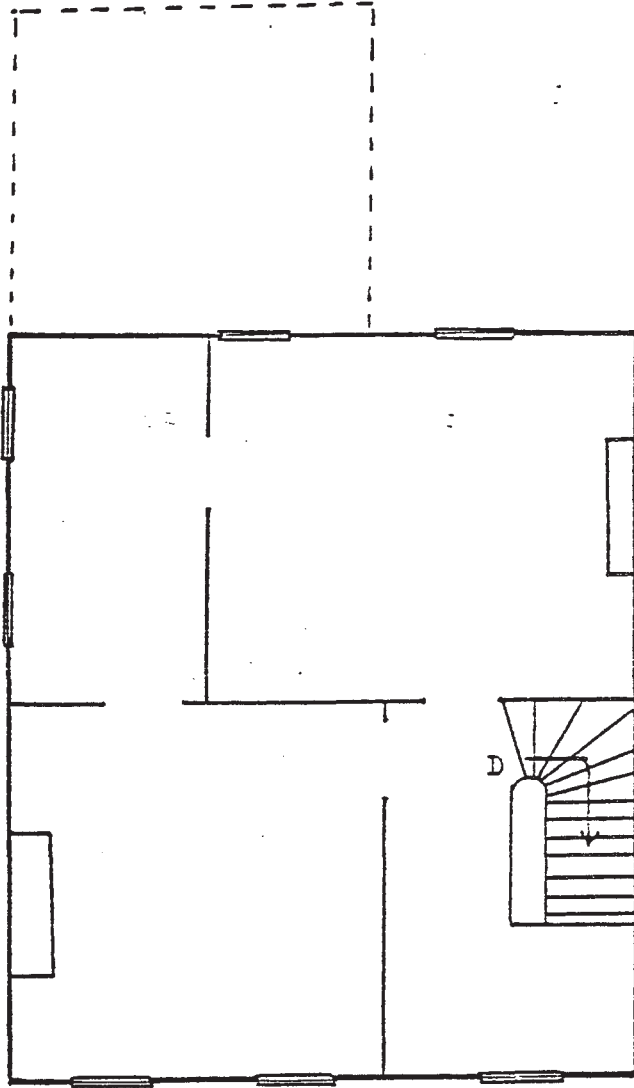
**ON MICROFILM**

McClintock House  
First Floor Plan





McClintock House  
Second Floor Plan



- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 3. McClintock house                   | "  |
| 4. Chapel block                       | After-hours<br>orientation to<br>block and to park<br>Orientation to<br>chapel structure |
| 5. Boat dock-Waterloo                 | Orient to park<br>Direct visitors to<br>McClintock house                                 |
| 6. Boat dock-downtown<br>Seneca Falls | Orient to park<br>Direct visitors to<br>chapel block                                     |
| 7. All boat docks                     | History and present<br>day extent of canals  |
| 8. Stanton park                       | Industrialization and<br>the mill girl   |

Some standard signage may also be needed to mark the bike route and walking tour route. Plaques may be needed to mark non-park historical buildings, perhaps done by the Stanton Foundation or the urban cultural park.

#### Personal services

The park is a place of ideas, requiring intelligent discussion, analysis, synthesis, and balance. With such subject matter, publications and especially personal services must play important roles. At all of the park sites the interpreters must be well-read and skillful at their jobs.

The quality of experience at both of the historic houses depends on what the interpreter brings to it; other media at these locations will only serve to support the main event--the interpreter's talk/tour. Similarly, the quality of experience on the boat tour will depend on what the interpreter provides.

#### Publications

Like personal services, publications have an unusually important place at this park. There are many aspects of the women's rights movement that can only be handled by the printed word. This is especially true of the more recent history of the movement; the park

interpretation leans more toward the 1848 events--the structures are all related to that story--with somewhat lesser emphasis on subsequent events. Therefore, it is important to have adequate space for a very good book sales operation. The research library should also be an important resource in its own right.

Aside from commercially produced items that should continually be reviewed for applicability at the site, some research projects may lead to publications, and other items should be scheduled through in-house means. The free park folder has been scheduled for production in the unigrid format. A handbook, in the Harpers Ferry Center handbook series, would also be appropriate for this park. It could be sold at the park and other sites as well. Site bulletins should be prepared on such topics as: women in industry, canals, architectural styles of the region, Quakers, and the Wesleyan Chapel.

#### Outreach

Thought needs to be given to increasing awareness of the site and the importance of its story. Women's Rights National Historical Park can serve visitors off-site as well as on-site. A number of existing organizations and groups, not to mention the educational world, are logical information circuits to plug into, not only for our benefit but for what we can contribute.

Traveling exhibits and an audiovisual program should be prepared for off-site use. Multiple copies should be available to serve large numbers of people. The AV program might be prepared in more than one format and should be an introduction to the park--the sites and story. It could be loaned, rented, and/or sold.

There was a previous effort to organize a gathering of leaders of national women's organizations to increase knowledge of the site and to enlarge the park's network of contacts and potential friends. This is a worthwhile idea, and at the right time, should be revived and implemented.

There could also be historical symposia to gather together groups of researchers and potential researchers in women's history.

A number of special events during the year can be the focus for both on-site and off-site programs:

- Women's Equality Day (the August anniversary of female suffrage)
- Convention Days (July)
- Elizabeth Cady Stanton's birthday (November)
- Susan B. Anthony's birthday (February)
- Black history month
- Women's history month

COST ESTIMATES

<u>Item</u>	<u>Plan</u>	Gross \$ to <u>Produce</u>	<u>Equip</u>
Exhibits and related material at VC	\$60,000	\$300,000	
15-minute film for VC theater	\$30,000	\$330,000	\$23,000
2 - 3 video programs as part of VC exhibitry	\$10,000	\$135,000	\$11,000
Stanton house:			
Exhibits	\$20,000	\$200,000	
Furnishings related		\$ 3,000	
Audio station		\$ 10,000	\$ 1,500
McClintock house:			
Exhibits	\$20,000	\$200,000	
Furnishings related		\$ 10,000	
Parkwide wayside system (panels at 9 locations)	\$18,000	\$ 60,000	
Outreach AV program	\$ 8,000	\$ 45,000	
Traveling exhibit	\$15,000	\$ 75,000	

NOTE: All of these items should be included in the construction package for line-item funding. Completed buildings with unfunded contents should be avoided.

## SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Provisions will be made to accommodate the needs of special populations who visit the site. Special populations are identified as those with sight, hearing, mental, and mobility impairments; visitors who do not speak English; and the elderly and young children.

Accommodations will be made for access to the site as well as to most of the interpretive media. Guidelines are available to assist park staff and media designers in increasing their sensitivity to the special needs of these groups. A number of such accommodations are ones that will benefit all visitors.

Some specific suggestions are listed here; others will be developed during later operational and design stages and will reflect the state of the art and standard procedures at the time of implementation.

### **Physically Impaired:**

Public Law 90-480, the Architectural Barriers Act, establishes certain standards for physical access. Any new buildings constructed will, as a matter of course, be designed for accessibility for the physically handicapped, both by visitors and employees. Historic structures, on the other hand, require special treatment and any modifications must be done only with the participation of a qualified historic architect and with the appropriate clearances.

Access to interpretive media will be handled in a number of ways. For instance, all video programs will be closed-captioned for hearing-impaired visitors. A captioned version of the primary film should be made available as well. Consideration should be given to tape recording of the park folder or other basic informational material for the benefit of those who are visually-handicapped. Major exhibit areas could include some touchable items and have a specially-prepared tape description for the visually-handicapped. Wayside exhibits will be designed with the needs of special populations in mind. Type size, contrast, angle and height of mounting are important considerations.

### **Non-English Speaking**

There appear to be very few visitors who do not speak English and therefore little need for foreign language translations of park folder and publications. However, the park staff should remain alert to increasing use by this group.

### **Special Age Groups**

The park staff has been working with school groups already. There might be additional opportunities to help with off-site materials and better coordinate any site visits. Facilities will be designed for the potential use of school groups, as well as other groups, on occasions when they visit the park and need indoor space.

Park sales publications should be surveyed to check the availability of material suitable for children who come in family groups. Generally it is the case that information designed especially for them is scarcer than for adults. So it may be the case that more attention should be given to interpretation for children.

Senior citizens have not had programs designed for them, and probably do not require such a thing.

## RESEARCH AND COLLECTIONS

The park staff has made a good start on researching the site. Acquisition of pertinent books, articles, and primary source materials is an on-going priority for the interpretive division. However, much work remains to be done. Because the field is relatively new, doing women's history research is often difficult; many sources are unavailable or hard to find. This is exacerbated by the fact that the park is quite a distance from any substantial research facilities. Therefore, development of a substantial research library, open to both park staff and the public, should be undertaken.

When they become available, the park should acquire microfilms of the collected letters of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, which are currently being compiled at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Further research is also required on the papers of Henry Stanton, and on several other aspects of the 19th century women's rights movement.

Very little is known about the Hunts, the McClintocks and about the Hicksite Quaker Congregation in Waterloo. This aspect of the park story needs to be investigated for successful interpretation of the McClintock house. Exhibitible items related to Quakers should be researched.

A historic resource study should be prepared for selected properties in the historic district of Seneca Falls and in Waterloo. This information would be utilized for personal services interpretation, waysides, and self-guided tours.

Historic structures reports are required for the McClintock house, which will be preserved, and for the former city hall, the facade of which will be preserved and the interior adaptively reused as a visitor center and park headquarters. Historic furnishings reports are already funded for the McClintock and Stanton houses and the chapel.

Additional research is needed to identify other exhibitible objects such as books belonging to Judge Cady (or duplicates of these books) since these would help reveal the kind of intellectual environment in which Elizabeth Cady Stanton was raised. A historical society in Johnstown, N.Y., holds a number of his books



in their collections. Stanton descendents may also have other items of interest; it is believed that a Greek dictionary belonging to Stanton and family portraits exist.

Research will need to be accomplished on the current status of women's rights, in order to prepare the video programs described for the visitor center.

Grounds studies are required for both the Stanton house (DeWall and Hawker lots) and the McClintock house. The information gained through these studies should be incorporated into historic landscape plans for each site. These plans will detail the preservation and restoration of the grounds of each site.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS (in  
alphabetical order)

Elayne Anderson, Denver Service Center-Eastern Team

Linda Finn, Interpretive Planner and Team Captain,  
Harpers Ferry Center

Judy Hart, Superintendent, Women's Rights National  
Historical Park

Alan Kent, Division of Interpretive Planning,  
Harpers Ferry Center

Cynthia Kryston, Division of Interpretation, North  
Atlantic Regional Office

Margaret McFadden, Women's Rights National  
Historical Park

Carol Petravage, Historic Furnishings Division,  
Harpers Ferry Center

Raymond Price, Wayside Exhibits, Harpers Ferry  
Center

Terry Savage, Planning and Design Division, North  
Atlantic Regional Office

Kip Stowell, Exhibit Planning and Design Division,  
Harpers Ferry Center

Shirley Wilt, Audiovisual Arts, Harpers Ferry Center

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Banner, Lois W.  
*Elizabeth Cady Stanton: A Radical for  
Woman's Rights.* Little, Brown, and Co.,  
Boston. 1980.
- Bacon, Margaret Hope  
*Valiant Friend: The Life of Lucretia Mott.*  
Walker and Co., New York. 1980.
- DuBois, Ellen Carol, editor  
*Elizabeth Cady Stanton - Susan B. Anthony,  
Correspondence, Writings, Speeches.* Schocken  
Books, New York. 1981.
- Feminism and Suffrage: The Emergence of an  
Independent Women's Movement in America 1848-  
1869.* Cornell University Press, Ithaca. 1978.
- Flexner, Eleanor  
*Century of Struggle: The Women's Rights  
Movement in the United States.* Harvard  
University Press, Cambridge. 1959.
- Giddings, Paula  
*When and Where I Enter- The Impact of Black  
Women on Race and Sex in America.* Morrow  
Publishing Co., New York. 1984.
- Griffith, Elizabeth  
*In Her Own Right: The Life of Elizabeth  
Cady Stanton.* Oxford University Press,  
New York. 1984.
- Gurko, Miriam  
*The Ladies of Seneca Falls: The Birth of  
the Woman's Rights Movement.* Schocken Books,  
New York. 1974.
- Hayden, Delores  
*The Grand Domestic Revolution.* MIT Press,  
Cambridge, Mass. 1981.
- Howland, Elizabeth D.  
*Debut of Woman's Rights - Seneca Falls, N. Y.  
1848.* Seneca Falls Historical Society. 1971.
- Hymowitz, Carol and Michaela Weissman  
*A History of Women in America.* Bantam,  
New York. 1978.

Mill, John Stuart and Harriet Taylor Mill  
*Essays on Sex Equality.* The University of  
Chicago Press. Chicago and London. 1970.

National Park Service:

General Management Plan. 1986.

Historic Structure Report-Historical Data  
Section, Wesleyan Chapel. Sharon Brown. 1987.

Special History Study. Sandra Weber. 1985.

Shultis, Elizabeth

*Seneca Falls 1848: All Men and Women are  
Created Equal.* A dramatization. The Elizabeth  
Cady Stanton Foundation. Seneca Falls, N.Y.  
1984.

Stanton, Elizabeth Cady

*Eighty Years and More - Reminiscences 1815-1897.*  
Schocken Books, New York. 1971.

Sterling, Dorothy

*We Are Your Sisters: Black Women in the 19th  
Century.* W. W. Norton, New York. 1984.



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

North Atlantic Region

15 State Street

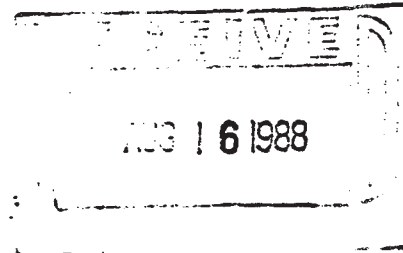
Boston, Massachusetts 02109-3572



IN REPLY REFER TO:

August 3, 1988

K1817(NAR-01)



## Memorandum

To: Manager, Harpers Ferry Center

From: Regional Director, North Atlantic Region

Subject: Women's Rights National Historical Park, Interpretive Prospectus

You have received comments from the Superintendent, Women's Rights NHP. Please incorporate these comments, subject to the following changes, into the final Plan.

1. p. 14, #5, 1st sentence. Change to "A theater, with a sloped floor and seating for about 50 persons and projection booth/s will be used for an audiovisual program."

3rd sentence. "The 15-25 minute program..."

2. p. 15, #1, Sentence beginning "Ideally..." will be reworked to indicate that exhibit plans for all three sites must consider most appropriate location for objects relating to the park story even though plans will not now be done simultaneously.

3. A corrected Stanton House Concept Plan is needed. Portion of Hawker house next door will not be reattached.

4. p. 17, #3. Eliminate "Minimal exhibitry is anticipated in the structure." Rephrase paragraph to indicate that information on the primary facts of the convention should be displayed to all visitors all hours of the day.

5. p. 18, #2. "A music program...."

#4. Rephrase to indicate that current plans do not include construction of an enclosed space where the original kitchen wing stood. A study is budgeted for the Stanton House area which will help determine future use. Indicate interpretive uses should an enclosed space be constructed.

6. p. 19, #6, 3rd sentence. Replace with "The materials will be vandal resistant, of reasonable cost, and easily replaceable."

7. p. 28. Judy Hart and Terry Savage should be moved to Core Team.

Subject to these comments the plan is approved. We are grateful particularly to Linda Finn who has been a supportive and invaluable Team Captain and to all the Harpers Ferry staff who assisted in this process.



Herbert S. Cables, Jr.