



Mt. Gilboa Feasibility Study Survey

187 responses

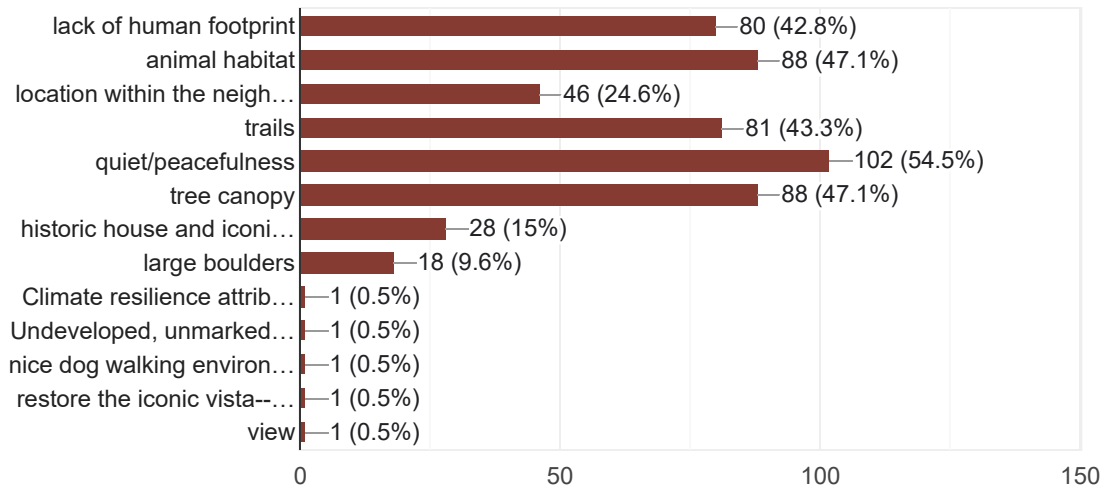
What are your FAVORITE features of Mt. Gilboa?

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In other words, what would you want to be sure is preserved in the future?

187 responses

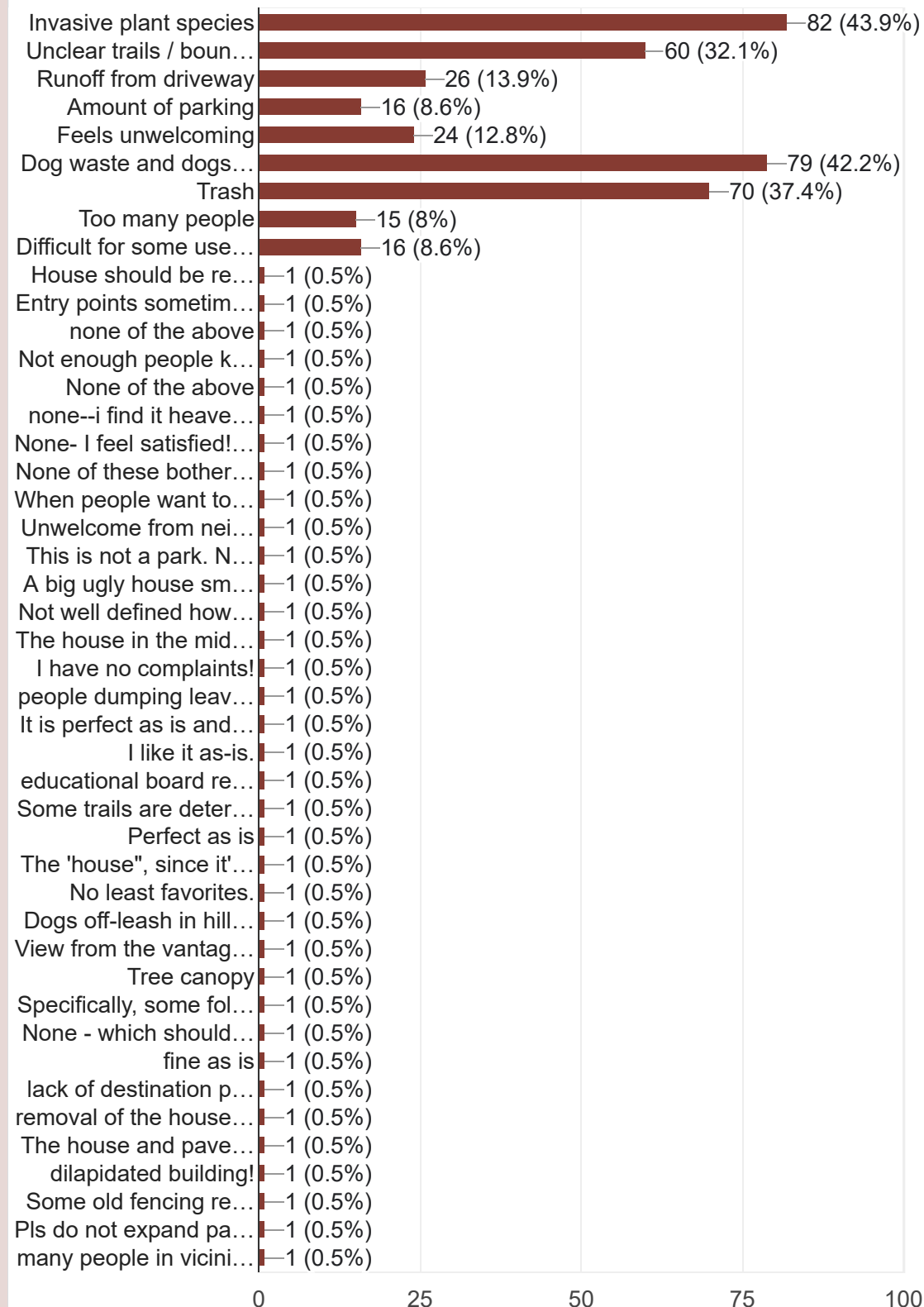


What are your LEAST favorite features of Mt. Gilboa?

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What are some things you feel need to change to improve your (or that of others) experience at Mt. Gilboa?

187 responses

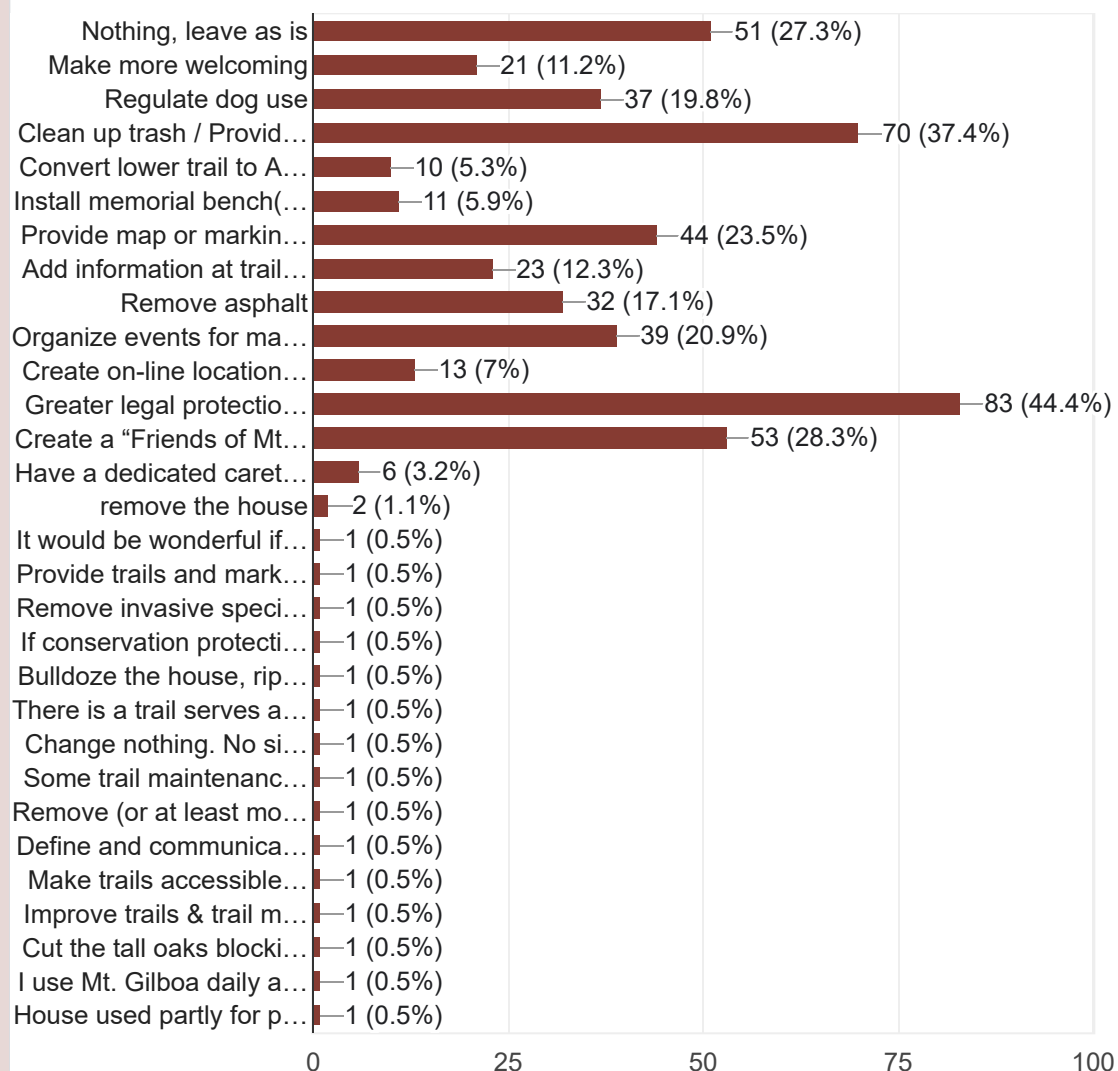


What can/should be done to improve / enhance Mt. Gilboa?



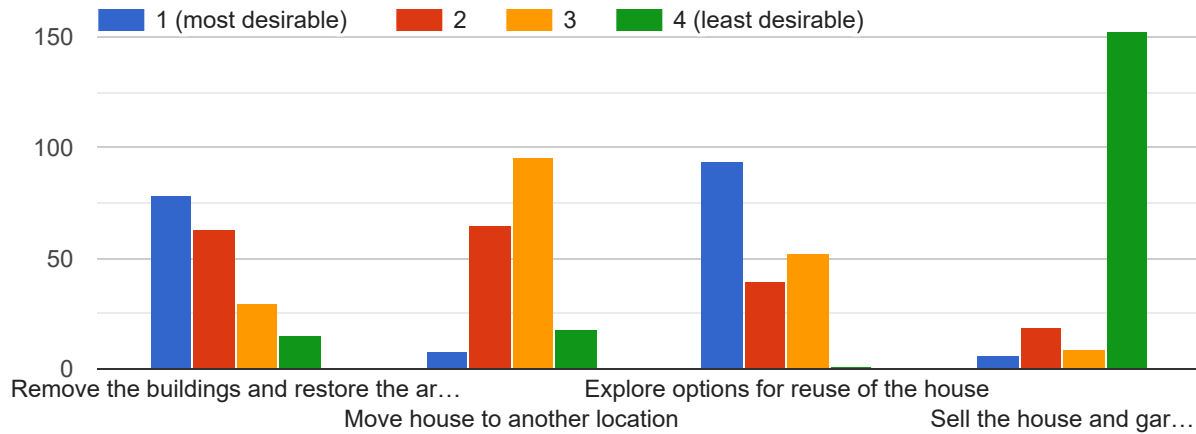
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What can/should be done with the historic house and garage? What needs can they meet and how?

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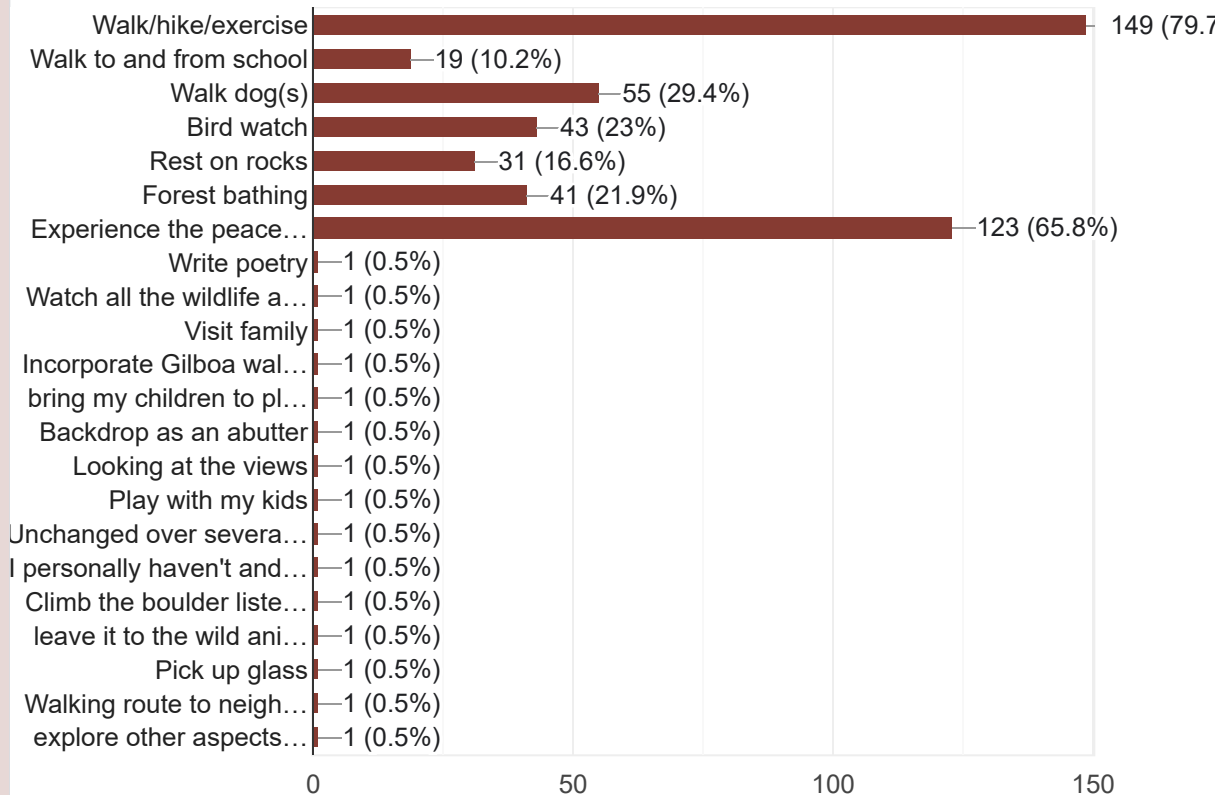


What is your favorite thing to do at Mt. Gilboa?



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Do you have any concerns about the future of Mt. Gilboa?

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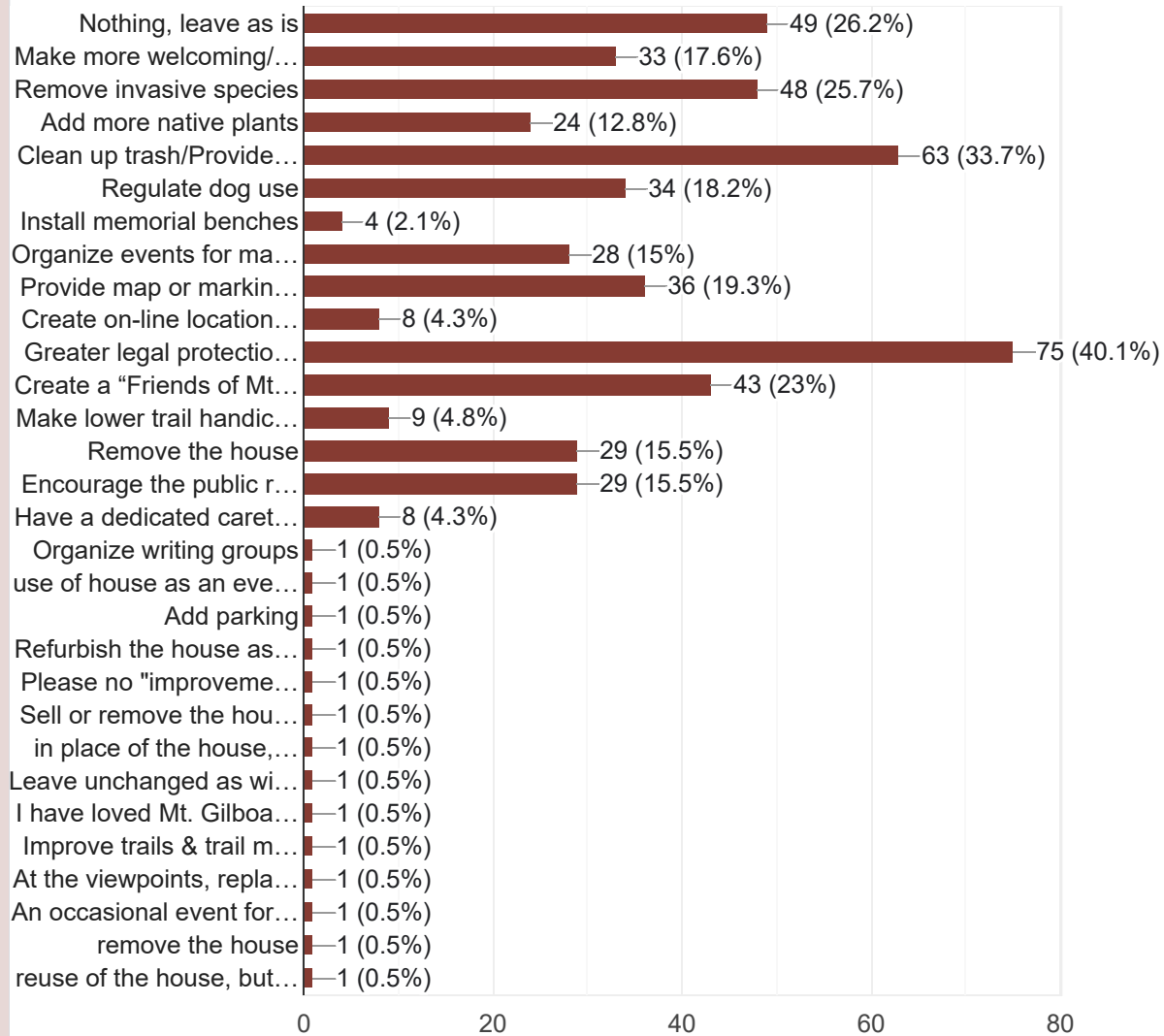
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If you could do THREE THINGS TO IMPROVE Mt. Gilboa, what would they be?

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Additional Comments

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your thoughts regarding Mt. Gilboa?

76 responses

You could revision the house and the property as a writers' retreat center.

Minimal intervention - the property should remain wild-ish and a refuge for animals and people.

With the Governor's office, explore making it an Executive Mansion.

I hope there is oversight about the use of the house. I remember that at one time the rent was artificially low because it was rented to friends of a town official.

There are so few areas in Arlington that haven't been "enhanced" with art and benches and everything. There's no need to do that to Mt. Gilboa. The only enhancement I would make is to improve the path connecting kids from the Crescent Hill area to Peirce. Other than that, invasive control and keeping it primarily as habitat is the right thing to do.

The area is too small to be widely publicized (and I don't live in the immediate area), as it would be overwhelmed as Whipple Hill has recently become, with high levels of path erosion and dogs run amok. PLEASE ensure its preservation with a CR! It's nice to have a bit of green remain in the area and not turned into a manicured park.

Love Mt Gilboa! We hike there with our dog multiple times per year

Please do not "reimagine" or "enhance" this treasure! Leave it alone!

this woodlands is an oasis in what has become a noisy suburb; Whipple Hill used to be the same prior to overuse during the pandemic.

If you can't afford to knock the house down, divide the property so the house is on ~1/2 acre; impose some serious deed restrictions to protect the conservation area, and sell the house. Use the \$\$ for something else in town.

It is a gem - I worry about overuse if you begin to create signage and parking. Just look at the Res since the improvements - dog use is out of control and it's always busy

Precious natural space in Arlington deserves thoughtful, careful, creative care and we have the ability to make sure this precious natural space is well-tended first and foremost for the birds and animals who depend on it, and second for judicious, respectful use by people.

I've lived in Arlington for 50 years; my first visit to Mt. Gilboa occurred just last week. Hiked the trails.

The questions on this survey indicate an advancement from the last, with more ideas about adding human imprint now apparent. PLEASE. Leave this rare place alone.

it's a beautiful pristine wooded area - the last refuge for many wildlife species in Arlington - lets leave it as such !

Thanks for doing this.

I walk there nearly every day and I love it! It's great to see kids and families on their way to Pierce through the woods. What a gem! I also love the Christian school's scavenger hunt project. Having community groups like this feel ownership is important.

Thank-you for this process and your sensitivity to and respect for the community input. My answers probably show that I have mixed feelings about the house. It is really cool and it makes the scene so unique with this house looming up on top of the hill (it is visible even from the Arlington Reservoir trail). But, for many reasons, I think the house is not suitable for a public use (e.g. meeting space) and a variety of interesting meeting spaces are already available in town with much better parking and accessibility. A residential use, as long as it didn't disturb the peacefulness, would be okay. However, if the house were to be removed, I'd like to see a scenic vista with a more natural feel, harmonious with the rest of the wild land. Including getting rid of the asphalt, of course! Maybe a stone dust surface instead to provide accessibility (like the new Arlington Reservoir trail). Perhaps with rustic picnic tables and benches and very limited parking, encouraging those who are able to walk up the drive but giving some parking options to those who have mobility challenges. And, as somebody suggested at one of the meetings, maybe the foundation of the house could be left as a "feature", commemorating the fact that it was once there. (Similarly, a project at Robbins Farm Park created a monument that is intended to be reminiscent of the foundation of the original Robbins family farm house...ask Tony Vogel of Friends of RFP about it). Thanks very much, again....the community meetings were a bit rocky but I think a lot of the neighbors feel they were heard.

I live on the block that leads to the land. It's one of the few spots that is still preserving nature and animals. It doesn't need more people, more traffic, more signs, more paths. It should be conserved, as it was intended to be. I value the animal life and the trees and the peace - any attempt to develop would be harmful and short-sighted.

This is a municipal resource not a neighborhood resource. Preserve with strongest protocol as wild open green space, preserve as tree sanctuary, wildlife sanctuary, for forest bathing.

Any open space in Arlington deserves protection and proper care. For that reason, am very pleased that this feasibility study is being conducted.

It is a precious local wooded area. Minimal improvements such as basic signage, public/private boundaries signage, and trimming back invasive species are all good. But nothing more than that. Demolishing the house would be best. I'd be in favor of a bench at the top with a lookout but nothing more.

Arlington has very little open space. Spending CPA money because it's available doesn't make it a good idea.

I think someone there should be more guidelines in taking care of the property and someone to speak to when one is concerned about the conservation land. This is a special place and should be maintained as it with no development whatsoever. However it should be monitored

to make sure it stays that way. Thank you!

Good forced choice survey that is going to add clarity in a short span of time to what most people want . Hopefully will curtail the exhaustive process monkey motion that abounds down here and leads to planning entropy. Don't get wrapped around the axle and spend lots of time on stuff that matters to few and is off mission. By that I mean the house. The treasure of Mt. Gilboa is not a dwelling, its the land. That's the focus, not low income housing the homeless or artist in residence or whatever. Make the house decision soon and move on.

Our family has lived in the Mt. Gilboa neighborhood for 20 years and we would like to see it be as protected as legally possible and unchanged except for maintenance and clean up. It seems to us the house just doesn't belong there.

suggest leving as is - it is a special place

My brother was lucky enough to live in the house in the early 1990's. I watched the most spectacular lightning storm from the living room one summer. Other times, I would watch the transatlantic flights make their turn to the east over Arlington. This was several years before I moved to Arlington, but the impression always stayed with me. If there was a way for the house to be available to the residents as avenue for special events, that would be great. That might not be the most favorable outcome for the neighbors, and as I now live in a different neighborhood, I would defer to their wishes. If the town sold the property, I think it would just be demolished, the tall trees removed, and all the town residents would have to stare at a monument to vanity. Is there a university who would like an observatory site?

It's lovely! Great place for wildlife sightings.

Maintain it as conservation/woodland natural area with minimal "infrastructure." Organize volunteer/neighborhood Friends group to monitor conditions and do cleanups. Remove the house to create a few more parking spaces and an overlook area.

It seems to me that the creator of this survey wants to remove the house. Wouldn't be surprised if that's how it turns out.

This is a much-needed wild area and is precious for Arlington which is starved of such

Do not loose an area that is like a small forest in the middle of housing. Keep the tree canopy and natural aspect. Don't turn into a manicured park.

I love Arlington's many green spaces. Thank you!

For the house, consider a historic curatorship; a long-term tenant pays "rent" by making programmed improvements to the premises. There are many local models, including the Commonwealth's <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/historic-curatorship-program>

Conservation land is NOT a park. ADA compliance is NOT appropriate!

I live in the neighborhood, and have been struck by how strongly people feel about Mt. Gilboa. I'm somewhat concerned that this will become a big conflict or a source of great unhappiness among some residents.

Work with Audubon to reuse the house for outdoor education. The elementary schools are seriously lacking natural space and outdoor classrooms and education. This could be a wonderful resource for schools, green teams and the community to learn more about native gardens, wildlife, even star gazing is feasible on Mt Gilboa.

Please keep it as a wildlife protected area.

As reiterated in the meetings that I attended I'd like to again state that although for Arlington, the size of the parcel is 'large', it is in actuality not very large compared with other preserved parcels in many nearby and far away towns. However, its importance as a link to the green corridor that it is a part of, is of the utmost importance. In our state of shrinking conserved environs, and the need for birds, mammals and all other forms of wildlife to have a continuous or semicontinuous pathway, providing this has been shown to be the most valuable in terms of true successful conservation. This is of course should be the first priority of our conservation lands.

In most other towns, where conservation has been, and still is a priority, they don't have to further enhance their parcels that are both small and large (or enormous) other than a clear map made available on line and, if large, trail markings. Where necessary, erosion control measures can be employed, and as trees and limbs fall across paths, they are cleared. Also, as we already have, a sign indicating the entrance(s). Mt. Gilboa's size does not dictate the discussed over management ideas and certainly has no area that could or should be made ADA compliant. (All paths have a mild or steep grade to them and regrading any of them would be detrimental and outrageously destructive)

Unfortunately, the town and its employees involved with the house and its upkeep have been extremely negligent in allowing it to fall into its current state. By doing so, a situation of extreme financial burden has been put upon myself and all other taxpayers. If incremental normal maintenance, as would have been done by any responsible homeowner, was done on the house, we wouldn't be in this situation. Now, it's either pay way too much for its renovation and possible additional ADA compliance or, let it sink into the ground.... It'd be best to just remove the house. With our tight budget, as a town, I don't think renovation is a fair investment.

I have had 43 years of experience with Mt. Gilboa, enjoying all that it has had to give and I was a part of the original group of neighbors that convinced the town, with the help of the Trustees for Public Land, to purchase the house and that adjoining parcels to preserve it and protect it from development. I walked my two children to Pierce school nearly every day until they were old enough to continue to do it on their own. I don't mention this to garner praise upon myself but, instead to relate that I have had 43 seasons to understand the language of the woods, with its rock outcrops, its position high on the valley, its flow of seasonal migrations of birds, the changing flora and fauna, and its historical significance to our colonial and native American heritage that once cherished and used it responsibly. I hope we can keep it the low key gem that it already is.

Thank you for allowing me to include my thoughts. I am a proud Arlingtonian.

This study feels like a solution in search of a problem. The property is at its highest and best

use already. The house should either be sold and its lot separated from the conservation land or removed entirely. No trail markers or other signage should be installed.

Beautiful area which could be enhanced with removal or reuse of the house

Please don't destroy or sell the house!!

Arlington's rough in the diamond.

Please promote it's use and install signs and trash barrels

It's important to keep it as open space and conservation land. Arlington doesn't need any new development especially this natural gem.

it seems to be the latest of Arlington attempts to improve areas at great cost but actually make more urban and unattractive uncle sam statue area. park at center. dallin museum (essentially the same but modern unsuitable railings at great cost greatly barren ignored town hall gardens and menotomy park. - ill placed in high traffic area a plastic bench totally unsupervised renovation years ago. re placement and breaking up of granite slabs. spy pond park grass with a sprinkler system???? and badly planned playground- generic -with badly placed swings in a traffic area and so on since around 1973. , Arlington has gone uglier and urban with ridiculous parking bans and the only enforcement of laws in arlington!!! oops forgot. - town hall. area. brick city! slippery high maintenance and requires un environmental huge amounts of ice melt cannot walk dogs on huge swath of mass ave due to burning paws arlington has several guide dogs on this route also bricks do not enhance - trees and plants do. -I was hoping Arlington would evolve and have more environmental and creative leadership supported and money not spent on bland "do overs".

Would be nice if the little path connecting Orient Ave to Summit St. was repaved, it is dangerous in the winter getting to Peirce School

I do not support any changes. I do not want the land where the house is to be built on. Taking the house down will take away the historical protection. It will impact all the historical house in the neighborhood. I disagree that it is littered with trash. Adding trash barrels will add a trash problem and rodents. I believe in carry in and carry out Its required at many open space locations. It's not reasonable to expect the trash barrels to be maintained regularly at mount Gilboa. My great grandfather George Disston built many of the house in Mount Gilboa. Our family has been in the neighborhood since 1896. His picture is on the front of the Mount Gilboa historical book.

Mt Gilboa is a lovely way for me and my family to 'take the scenic route' when walking somewhere. Initially, I thought the house on the property was private, and now that I know it's public it's more rewarding to explore and spend time within the park.

Property should remain unchanged as wild space. Any changes to the land or structures will risk the property to a "change in use" risking further development. It is more than coincidence this feasibility is being conducted at the same time as the state mandated housing expansion

for towns with MBTA service, as both housing plans submitted by the town of Arlington about the Mt Gilboa conservation land and historic district. There is little doubt that the town has already engaged planners/developers in evaluating potential uses with any changes under the feasibility process and grant.

With such a lack of wooded spaces in Arlington and the lack of habitat for wildlife I would propose that the number one priority is legal status as a forever to be preserved wooded area that is protected from development 100% forever. I would also vote that it is noted on Arlington's open conservation sites, and that people are aware of it. It seems that mostly known and used by the people in the immediate neighborhood. While that is ok, and they surely will be good stewards, please reach out to let the rest of the town know that it exists. Maybe hold a wildlife walk there once a year and incorporate into places explored by the schools. Wild places like this are precious for everyone to have access to and experience. I would also agree with the largest number of voters in the meeting that was held (i was not in attendance) that the priority is to keep it a wild natural site. And removing the house and creating a viewing/picnic platform with keeping the existing steps and foundation would be lovely. I believe this location should be celebrated and appreciated and protected, and not used for a single purpose or family (renting) that limits its use for public wildland access in our fairly urban town. Have a picnic day up there on the new viewing area and invite Audubon to come and talk about the birds and habitat, or a wildlife scientist from the town.

Key items

1. Legal Protection as a fully wild native area forever. Conservation Land with no development allowed ever.
2. Keep it as wild and native as possible, with only removal of invasives and planting of native plants.
3. Remove the house and keep stairs/foundation for picnic area/viewing platform. Do not disturb any of the forest/land as part of any proposed work.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

This parcel is a treasure of open space in our densely populated town. The reservoir project has been a huge success in improving access without harm. I hope the same could be done for Mt Gilboa. I frequent the open spaces in Arlington but have always found Gilboa forbidding, like I will be accused of trespass. So glad to see this survey and interest in improvements.

Please keep Mt. Gilboa undeveloped, but don't remove the house. We should repair it and maintain it for some use by the town, whether an artist's residence, residence for a caretaker,, and/or perhaps a place for schoolchildren and other's to visit for a mini field trip to learn about conservation, birds, etc.

Having known someone who lived in the house in the early 90's, I know how beautiful this building is, so I hope that the Town of Arlington can find a way to preserve the house and use it as a residence or gathering place for small community events. It is a treasure! please don't knock it down!

Last wild place in Arlington. We should protect it at all costs.

Convert the house--somehow--into an open structure available for some meetings or events.

Sometimes the best thing to do for nature is leave it alone.

please do everything you can to keep this space as natural as possible, and protected for future generations. Thank you for being so thoughtful about this.

There is considerable rain water draining into the surrounding neighborhood streets and the trails get 'washed away', particularly after the rain we have had in the last 2 years. As you make improvements to the trails, please put in place a way to redirect the rain water to prevent flooding and large black ice patches on Summit Street.

Unless the property is maintained in a way that ALL townspeople can feel welcomed and enjoy it, it should be sold and the funds generated used to improve McClennan Park and other nearby parks that are welcoming to all.

See email I sent to David Morgan on 2023-12-05 and email I sent to Ryan on 2024-01-11. Thank you for your time and effort!

If the town could make an impactful amount of money selling the house, that would be great; otherwise I'd favor removing it.

Thank you for asking

Please leave the area as wild and do not pave paths or introduce a bunch of signage. Please remove the house, garage and all the asphalt.

Please remove the house and let the open space be preserved for people and animals as a wild habitat

Grateful for this space, we hope it is preserved and maintained!

Suggest artist studio or conservation theme use for house

Needs to be preserved as open space forever.

do not go overboard. the trails are nice as is and i love walking my dog in there and having the trees and birds near my home.

Embrace the natural beauty of this Mt.

Would recommend environmental impact study of Mt. Gilboa based on the various scenarios. Water runoff is a massive concern, there is clear evidence of radon in the bedrock, we have numerous animals who reside in there, and the public that may come to any improved conservation/event land will have a significant impact on private way residents that surround the area.

Put a look out tower at the location of the house after removing it

Whatever you do, don't remove any trees.

Mt. Gilboa conservation should be left as a well protected wildlife conservation area for

wildlife/natural habitat. Their future and our children's future depends on our generation to help ensure that a health Earth exists for all beings into the future. We are quickly running out of natural habitats on Earth, in the USA and in our local area for wildlife to thrive wo being stressed by too limited natural areas, over development and the many humans/dogs etc invading their spaces. Please help ensure that Mt. Gilboa remains a small but important oasis for wildlife!

It's great as is for the trails. Public use of house and view, accessible mainly on foot, would be a really appropriate and awesome asset for the neighborhood and people on foot.

sorry I am a bit late with this response...will you still include it??? can you please let me know? thanks!

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