

Cape Ann Museum Green campus taking shape with landscaping, solar panels, and final touches



Cape Ann Museum Green campus with a view from the new 12,000 square foot Janet & William Ellery James Center out to the campus which includes three historic buildings (from right to left)- the White Ellery House (1710), an adjacent Barn (c. 1740), and the Babson-Alling House (c.1740), all located on the site at the intersection of Washington and Poplar Streets in Gloucester. Photo by Steve Rosenthal, 2020.

GLOUCESTER, MASS. (September 2020) – Preparations for Cape Ann Museum Green, the Museum’s new campus off Grant Circle and Route 128 in Gloucester, have continued over the summer with further grass and new trees planted as part of an overall landscape design that will aesthetically combine three historic buildings on the property with a new contemporary archival collections storage and public exhibition space called the Janet & William Ellery James Center. The campus plans to open to the public by Sept. 17.

Designed to dramatically expand the Museum’s community, contemporary art and educational offerings, the almost four-acre campus is home to the three historic structures, the White Ellery House (1710), an adjacent Barn (c. 1740), and the Babson-Alling House (c.1740), all located on the site at the intersection of Washington and Poplar Streets in Gloucester. The new 12,000-square foot James Center includes 2,000 square feet of flexible exhibition and community programming space designed to reach broader audiences with new exhibits and public programs. At the new Cape Ann Museum Green, visitors will see a selection of images from *The Porch-Rait Project*, photographs of Gloucester families taken early in the COVID 19 pandemic as a benefit to The Open Door.

The James Center was built to LEED Platinum standards and was designed by Boston-based designLAB. Integral to the building’s environmental footprint is the installation later this year of a 173KW Solar

Array system on the building's roof, and with recent city approval temporary art banners are now planned for the building's Route 128 facing exterior.

“It has been thrilling to watch Cape Ann Museum Green evolve over the last year” said Oliver Barker, the Museum's Director. “This unique location, visible at the entrance to Cape Ann, offers a historic connection from the 1700s until today. The Museum's mission is to celebrate our rich, diverse, and deep history here on Cape Ann while also continually discovering new works by contemporary artists. This property symbolically brings all of that together in one place as the Gateway to Cape Ann.”

To visit the site, the public can sign up for reserved timed ticketing: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cape-ann-museum-green-timed-ticket-reservation-tickets-119111438519>

This pivotal Museum initiative has been in development since 2017 and was led by a Cape Ann Museum Green Committee chaired by William (Wilber) James. “The Museum is indebted to Wilber and his Committee, which includes Sam Holdsworth, Norm Chambers, John Cunningham, Stephanie Benenson, Dick Carlson and Suzi Natti, with encouragement and support from Board Chair Charles Esdaile, for their leadership, vision and commitment to creating a new cultural experience for our community and for visitors to Cape Ann,” Barker said.

“We are but threads in the fabric of life, building on the efforts of those who came before us and setting the stage for future generations” said Wilber James. “This property builds on the vision of our forebears and we invite others to join the Cape Ann Museum today in setting the stage for the future as a leading regional museum of American art that is relevant and engages our community.”



(Left) Fitz Henry Lane (1804-1865), *Babson and Ellery Houses, Gloucester*, 1863, oil on canvas, Cape Ann Museum, Gloucester, MA, gift of Roger W. Babson, 1937 [779.02] (Right) Fitz Henry Lane (1804-1865), *The Babson Meadows at Riverdale*, 1863, oil on canvas, Cape Ann Museum, Gloucester, MA, gift of Roger W. Babson, 1937 [779.03].

The James Center will provide critical state-of-the-art storage for the Museum's expanding collections as well as the community space for education and art installations. Landscaping has been progressing since spring with the planting of dozens of indigenous trees, shrubs, and flowers alongside the campus's notable fieldstone wall constructed from stones found throughout the property. A sculpture park at the campus is envisioned for the future.

The bucolic Cape Ann Museum Green property was the subject of three Fitz Henry Lane paintings in 1863, two of which are now at the Cape Ann Museum. *View of the Babson and Ellery Houses*,

Gloucester, shows the Route 128 side of the property, while *The Babson Meadows at Riverdale*, looking from the rear of the Babson-Alling House, with its meticulously rendered field stone wall and gate provided the framework on which the CAM Green perimeter field stone wall and new entry gates, all designed and crafted by local Gloucester artisans, were recently installed to recall that historic time..

Due to the pandemic, the official opening of Cape Ann Museum Green has been postponed until June 2021, but news about opportunities for the public to see the campus in socially distant appropriate ways starting September 17th is forthcoming. The creation of the Cape Ann Museum Green campus is a critical component of the Museum's 2018-2023 Strategic Plan and the commitment to enhance facilities by providing space for current holdings and anticipating future strategic collection growth in a sophisticated climate-controlled and highly secure building.

DROPBOX LINK TO IMAGES:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/yc4uwbyu591zw86/AACwZ73rwQ_PMmIzJVke6DU7a?dl=0

Please credit Steve Rosenthal (2020) for photographs of the CAM Green and James Center.

The Cape Ann Museum has been in existence since the 1870s, working to preserve and celebrate the history and culture of the area and to keep it relevant to today's audiences. Spanning 44,000 square feet, the Museum is one of the major cultural institutions on Boston's North Shore welcoming more than 25,000 local, national and international visitors each year to its exhibitions and programs. In addition to fine art, the Museum's collections include decorative art, textiles, artifacts from the maritime and granite industries, three historic homes, a Library & Archives and a sculpture park in the heart of downtown Gloucester. In June 2021, the Museum will officially open the 12,000 square foot Janet & William Ellery James Center at the [Cape Ann Museum Green](#). The campus also includes three historic buildings - the White Ellery House (1710), an adjacent Barn (c. 1740), and the recently acquired Babson-Alling House (c.1740), all located on the site at the intersection of Washington and Poplar Streets in Gloucester.

The Cape Ann Museum is located at 27 Pleasant Street in Gloucester. While temporarily closed due the COVID-19 pandemic, regular hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Sundays from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission is \$12.00 adults, \$10.00 Cape Ann residents, seniors and students. Youth (under 18) and Museum members are free. Cape Ann residents can visit for free on the second Saturday of each month. For more information please call: (978)283-0455 x10. Additional information can be found online at www.capeannmuseum.org.

For a detailed media fact sheet please visit www.capeannmuseum.org/press.

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