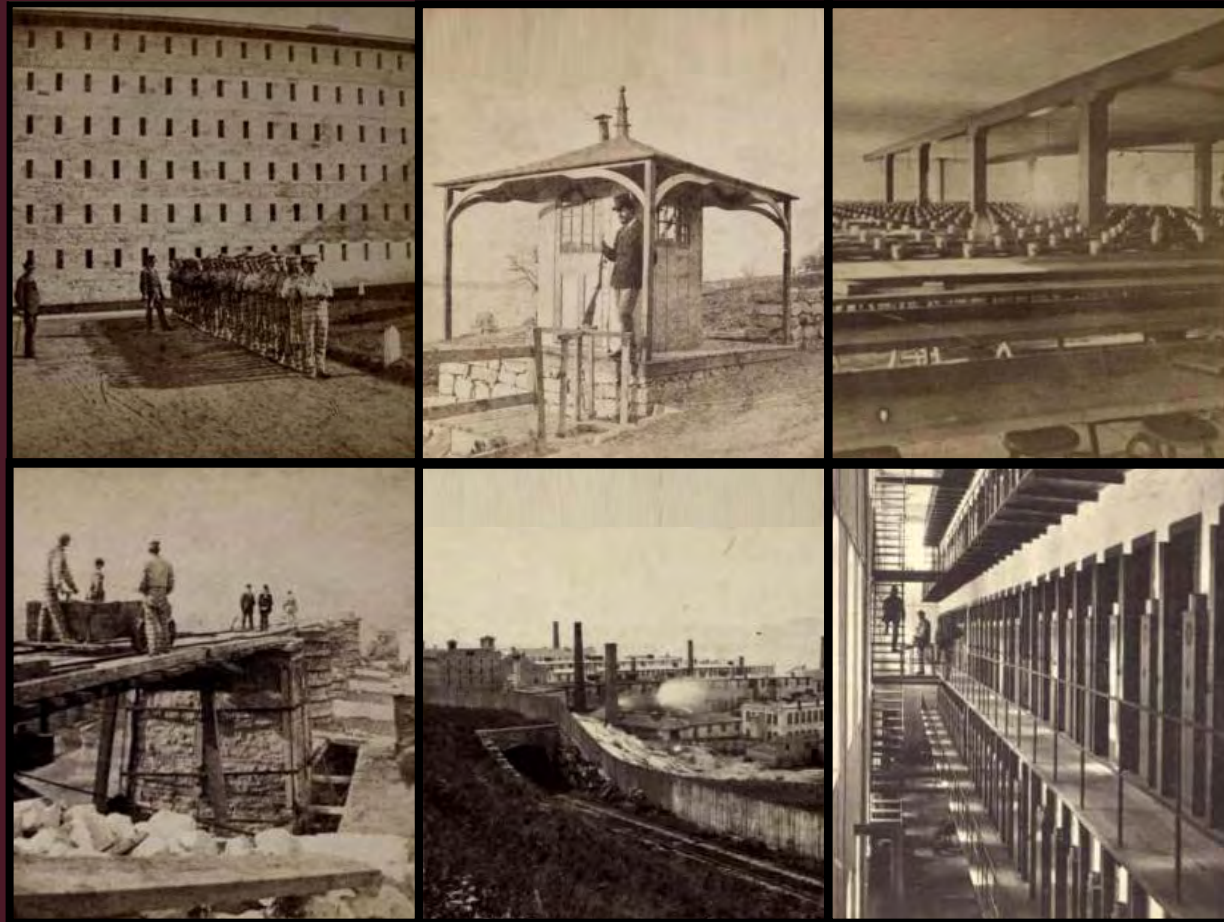


# SING SING

## HISTORIC PRISON MUSEUM COMPLEX



## Concept Design

Original Report 2000; Revised and Updated Report May 2009





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VILLAGE OF OSSINING



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May 2009

The original report, titled *Sing Sing Historic Prison Interim Design Concept* was prepared by the consulting firms of DMCD Incorporated and Li Saltzman Architects, PC in 2000.

Since 2000, the Interim Design Concept has evolved into the Concept Design under the direction of the Ossining Heritage Area Tourism Committee with the assistance of

the Westchester County Department of Planning.

The original report has been revised and updated to illustrate the current Museum Complex proposal. The *Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum Complex Concept Design*, May 2009 report includes new text and graphics. New text is shown in italics and new graphics are footnoted.

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# 1. Introduction

## A. Foreword

SING SING HISTORIC PRISON

### The Historic Significance of Sing Sing Prison

Over the past twenty-five years historians have begun to explore American penal institutions as part of an effort to reconstruct the social history of the United States and to create a more democratic record of our past. They have opened the doors of these institutions and shed new light on the relationship between prisons and the public attitudes and legislative actions which brought them to life and sustain them in our own time.

But this renewed interest in the history of the penitentiary is not limited to scholars. Policy makers and the general public have raised a series of new questions about the nature and character of punishment in American history. Why do we punish? What do we hope to accomplish on behalf of society and the prisoner? What is the relationship between architectural design and the goals of punishment? How are the peni-

tentiaries internally organized? What happens to a prisoner once incarcerated? How do we explain the persistence of the penitentiary for over two centuries when few other social institutions have survived as long? Sing Sing's history not only offers insight into these questions but more importantly provides the essential context for a fuller appreciation of the complexity of the history of crime and punishment in the United States.

In the first decade of our national history American lawmakers began to search for forms of punishment which would transform a criminal into a citizen of the republic. They rejected the arbitrary and harsh punishments which they identified with monarchy and envisioned a series of just and temperate measures, ones which did not scar the body but renewed the soul. In 1790 when Pennsylvania designated the Walnut Street jail as "the penitentiary house" and New York State built Newgate prison in New York City, Americans took the first steps

toward the penitentiary. By the 1820s ideas about punishment had matured into two competing designs, the solitary regime at Eastern Prison in Philadelphia and the silent congregate approach at Auburn in New York State. These were designated the Pennsylvania and the Auburn systems and came to dominate penal discussions and institutional planning for most of the nineteenth century.

But although we identify the New York system with Auburn, it was actually Sing Sing that by virtue of national and international attention, became the representative of the congregate system. Sing Sing was the first penitentiary to fully embody the principles and design of the Auburn system. Sing Sing's history is key to the evolution of the penitentiary.

Sing Sing was and remains to this day one of the principal agents of punishment in New York State, and its reputation and image evoke a powerful response in the minds of



Americans and Europeans. Sing Sing is fixed in the popular imagination as the “American Bastille,” “The House of Fear,” “The Big House,” and the “shock” prison of the penitentiary movement. From its very early days Sing Sing was the destination not only of penologists but the curious general public who came in such numbers that they became a long term intrusion in the daily life of the prison.

Sing Sing’s reputation as a place of dread and terror was, according to prison officials, legislators, and reformers, a function of the urban character of the inmate population, the overwhelming majority of whom were New York City criminals. The colloquial phrase “up the river” meant that a convicted New York City criminal would do his time at Sing Sing. The phrase reminded the public of the geographical links between Sing Sing and New York City and between urban crime and its punishment. New York City’s connection with Sing Sing is not only a function of the number of urban criminals

in the prison’s population but a result of the intense focus of City newspapers and magazines on events at Sing Sing. *The New York Times* reported events at Sing Sing as if it were part of the local beat, published over a thousand stories about the prison from 1858 to 1980, and inextricably bound the prison and the City together.

Sing Sing’s historic nineteenth century cellblock and its institutional history offer both scholars and the general public a window into the American search for a republican form of punishment. Its story is at the core of the history of punishment in the United States.

— Roger Panetta, Ph.D.

## B. Project Background

### SING SING HISTORIC PRISON

In 1994 the Village of Ossining began the process of developing a Main Street and Waterfront revitalization plan. A year later, Ossining's citizens gathered at a public meeting to meet the consultants who were the plan's designers and provide their input in the plan's development. The idea of a historic site and interpretive center at the Sing Sing Correctional Facility was an outgrowth of public discussion with those consultants. The question was asked, "Was Sing Sing Prison considered in the plan?" The prison, rising from the Hudson, consuming some 55 acres above its banks, so much a part of the history and growth of the village, had not been considered in the plan for the Waterfront and Main Street, although clearly the prison is very important to our waterfront.

Construction having begun in the spring of 1825, the prison has a long and rich history. The remains of the original cellblock, located a short distance within the walls of the prison, are of great historic significance.

A small group of citizens and village leaders gathered to consider Sing Sing's historic value. By the end of 1995, Walter Ludlum and John Chervokas (now town supervisor), along with Village Manager, Jerry Fiella and Mayor John Pasquerella, met with McKelden Smith and Waddel Stillman of Historic Hudson Valley to look at integrating the historic aspects of the prison with the economic development of Main Street and the Waterfront. Historic Hudson Valley, a leader in Hudson Valley tourism and operator of a number of historic sites on the Hudson River spanning the 17th century through the early 20th century, responded enthusiastically to the concept of a historic site at the Sing Sing Correctional Facility.

The direction of this meeting and subsequent ones was to develop a concept that would provide a rich educational opportunity to visitors and contribute to the economic development of Ossining as one of the historic towns along the Hudson. Since 1995 the committee has expanded its

membership to include community members as well as local and county municipal leaders. Early in 2000, the Village of Ossining and the Town of Ossining formally recognized this body as the Ossining Heritage Area Tourism Committee.

*In 2007, the physical design concept was amended to consist of three components: the Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum, the 1825 Cellblock and a Research and Archives Library. The Powerhouse would be utilized to house the entire museum exhibit outside the walls of the Sing Sing Correctional Facility. The 1825 Cellblock would be a stand alone historic landmark and a research and archives library would be housed in the upper stories of the Powerhouse. Renovation of the entire Powerhouse also provides opportunities for multipurpose rooms, with dramatic views of the Hudson River that could be used for tourism related activities to further enhance the economic benefits of the Facility.*

*The Sing Sing Historic Prison Complex will be a public accessible interpretive center located on the grounds of a working prison, the Sing Sing Correctional Facility in Ossining, New York. This unique relationship dictates that the design provide a secure physical separation of visitors from inmates, and that it be sensitive in ensuring that the inmates are never visible to visiting members of the public. In addition, the exhibitory must not present content that could be deemed offensive to the current Sing Sing staff, inmates and those who visit them. Accordingly, as the facility's name makes clear, the main focus of the interpretive material will be on Sing Sing's past and the interpretation will not go beyond its working life, which came to an end in 1943*

*The Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum Complex will consist of three components:*

**1. The Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum Exhibit. (Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum)**

*The interpretive focus of the proposed Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum will be the history of punishment, the creation and development of the penitentiary and associated reform movements in America as seen through the lens of Sing Sing. Interwoven with the narrative of penal theory and practice and surrounding social and political context, will be stories of individual inmates, keepers, reformers and critics.*

*For the most part, the Sing Sing story will unfold over time. Chronological organization will help visitors connect what for many may be a very unfamiliar part of American history to the more commonly known succession of American events and ideas. As visitors learn how America, as a new nation with its own identity to establish, was compelled to – and continues to – grapple with ideas of crime and punishment – they will also learn how central this history is to the understanding of our culture. An exhibit of the 1825 Cellblock will be recreated in the taller section of the Powerhouse.*

**2. 1825 Cellblock Historic Site**

*The 1825 Cellblock is the original Cellblock of Sing Sing and is the primary attraction and "artifact" of the Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum Complex. A secure tunnel will be designed and constructed to connect the 1825 Cellblock to the Museum. Visitors will be able to enter the original cellblock where a portion will be reconstructed.*

**3. Archives and Research Library**

*Located in the Powerhouse, the Archives and Research Library (Library) will be the depository for archival property associated with the museum. The Library will provide space for researchers to view and study historic materials. John Jay College has been working with the committee and stated that there is great interest by researchers to study historic materials on Sing Sing.*



## C. Museum Complex Overview

### 1. Component One: Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum

#### SING SING HISTORIC PRISON

*The point of entry to the Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum Complex will be the former Powerhouse. The Powerhouse was completed in 1936 at a cost of one million dollars and is reportedly to have been built exclusively using Sing Sing prisoner labor.*

*The Powerhouse was designed in the Moderne style, newly emerging as a predominant architectural style for civic and commercial structures in the 1930's.*

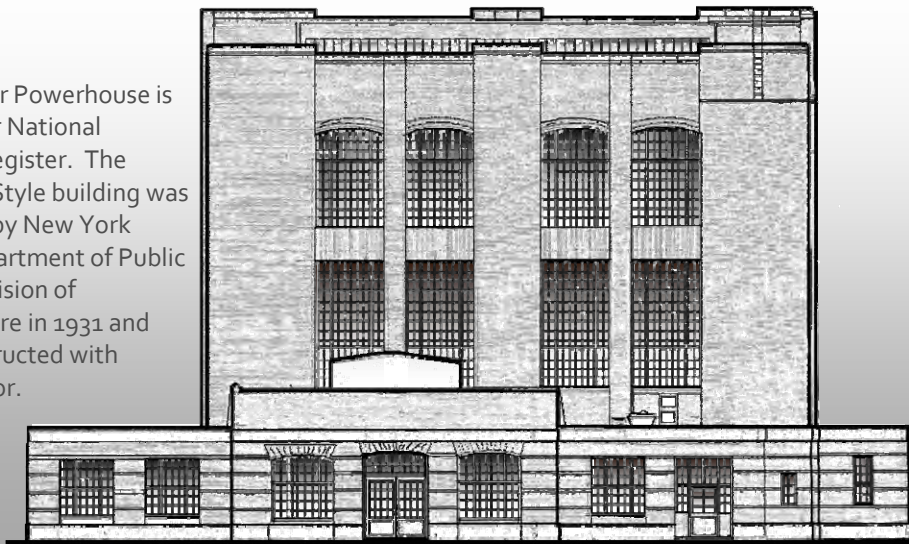
*The Powerhouse is proposed to be used for two components of the Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum Complex, the Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum and the Library. These two components do not fully utilize the entire Powerhouse building and opportunities exist for future museum expansion, office and/or public assembly space.*

*The large interior volume of the former*

*power plant section allow for monumentally sized exhibits including the replication of the multi-tiered 1825 cellblock to scale.*

*The structure's preservation inherently yields environmental gains through retention of the embodied energy in the materials and labor utilized in its construction. Green architecture opportunities exist in the rehabilitation of existing structure's windows and HVAC system*

The former Powerhouse is eligible for National Historic Register. The Moderne Style building was designed by New York State Department of Public Works Division of Architecture in 1931 and was constructed with prison labor.



*Selected views from the power house's upper levels could be established to provide a visitor with a greater understanding of the prison complex and its relationship to the railroad and the Hudson River.*

*The museum exhibit will have five main sections:*

*1. **Sing Sing and the Genesis of the American Prison.***

*Visitors will be introduced to Sing Sing, the topics of the prison and punishment and the history of punish-*

Westchester County Department of Planning 2008



ment in America from the colonial era up until the 1820's. Included will be a temporary exhibit gallery and a theater with a film summarizing Sing Sing's long history.

**2. Up the River.**

The modes of transportation used by Sing Sing visitors and inmates as they went 'up the river' will be interpreted as well as the intake process that a convict would have experienced upon entry to Sing Sing in the nineteenth century.

**3. Cellblock 1825-1943.**

A recreation of the 1825 Cellblock will be constructed in the former power plant section of the Powerhouse. The interpretation will take visitors through the story of the Cellblock from 1825, when 100 convict embarked on its construction, up to the mid-twentieth century when it was deemed unfit to hold convicts. A multi-level ghost structure mimicking the Cellblocks' original interior form will double as the exhibit

structure. Experiences here will include visitor-accessible re-created cells from different eras and an elevator ride that doubles as an isolation cell experience.

**4. Death House / Sing Sing Today.**

Exhibitory related to electrocution as the form of capital punishment conducted at Sing Sing for over seventy years, and 'wrapping up' exhibits that bring Sing Sing's story up to the present will be the final exhibit area. (Visitors can bypass the Death House exhibit.) The Death House-related exhibitory will describe the development of electrocution, including the controversies surrounding it, and the area will include many individual stories of condemned prisoners. In addition, the actual electric chair will be set in a near-complete re-creation of the execution room and the 'last mile.' The interpretive experience will be completed with panels describing the operation of Sing Sing today and an opportunity to listen to oral histories recorded in recent years.

Following the Sing Sing Today exhibit, visitors will re-enter the visitor amenities space where they first entered the facility. The exhibit exit adjoins the Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum Book Store.

## 2. Component Two: 1825 Cellblock Historic Site

### SING SING HISTORIC PRISON

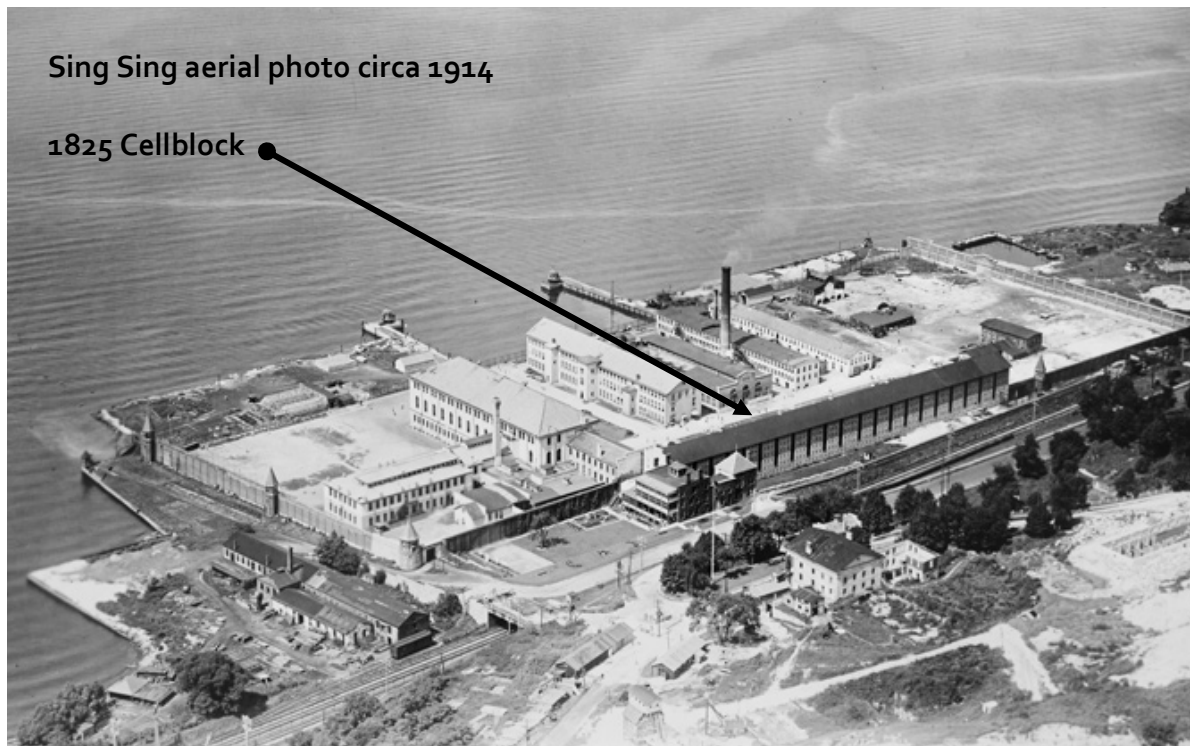
*The second component of the Complex will be the 1825 Cellblock Historic Site. The 1825 Cellblock is the original Cellblock of Sing Sing and will be the primary attraction and "artifact" of the Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum Complex. The revised design concept calls for the 1825 Cellblock to be stabilized and preserved as an archaeological ruin. A secure tunnel will be designed*

*and constructed to connect the Cellblock to the Museum. Visitors will be able to enter the original cellblock where a portion may be reconstructed.*

*In 1825, \$20,100 was appropriated to buy the 130 acre site, named after the Sint Sinck Native Americans. By May, Mr. Lynds, Sing Sing's first Warden, had selected 100 convicts from the Auburn prison and brought them by barge along the Erie Canal to freighters down the Hudson River. They arrived in Sing Sing on May 14, "without a place to receive them or a wall to enclose them."*

*The initial construction included a cell block 476 feet long, 44 feet wide, and four tiers high, with a capacity of 800 cells, all built of Sing Sing marble. Each cell was seven feet deep, three feet, three inches wide and six feet, seven inches high. On November 26, 1828 the convicts were locked into their cells for the first time. A bible was furnished to each of them the next morning.*

*Two additional buildings were added by 1830, one containing a hospital and a kitchen; the other a chapel for 900 men. A recreation yard was added in 1831.*



### 3. Component Three: Archives and Research Library

*The third component of the Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum Complex would be the Archives and Research Library (Library). The Library would be located in the upper floors of the Powerhouse. Selected views from the Library could be established to provide a greater understand of the prison complex and its relationship to the railroad and the Hudson River.*

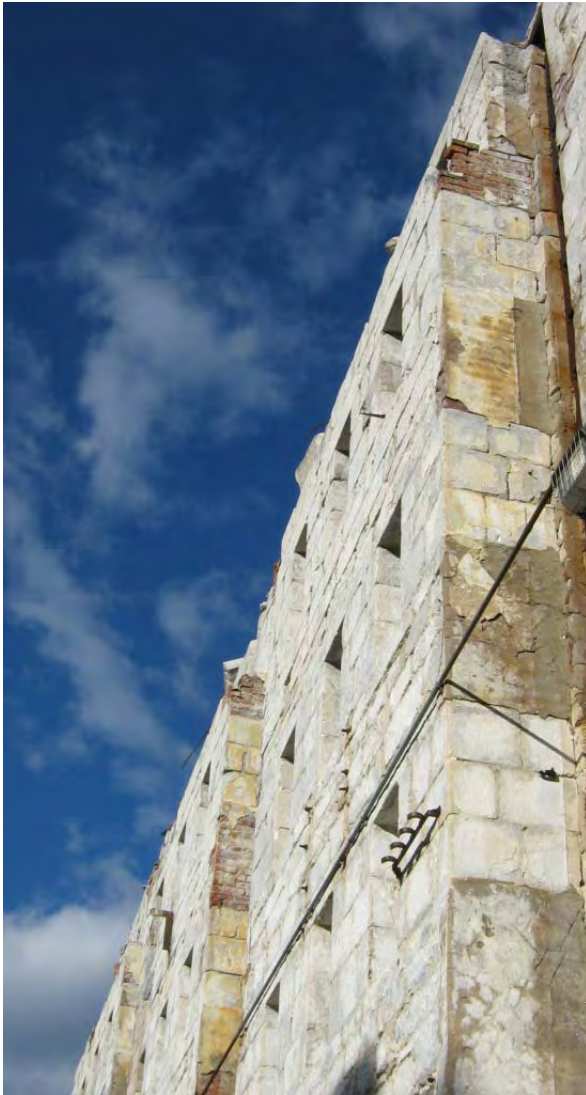
*The Ossining Heritage Area Tourism Committee met with staff from John Jay College of Criminal Justice. It was agreed that there will be a need for an archival research library to bring together the significant artifacts, books, and journal essays on penology. The Library will make available to researchers, teachers and students of penology an extensive range of essays which are indispensable for obtaining an overview of the historic theories and findings of this subject.*





## D. Historic Preservation Overview

### SING SING HISTORIC PRISON



#### Historic Preservation

The preservation of the historic character and fabric of the Cellblock is critical to the success of the Sing Sing Historic Prison project. Indeed, the scale, rhythm, and texture of the Cellblock walls are the touchstone of the historic prison. The Tuckahoe marble walls are Sing Sing's most significant artifact, evoking the prison's history – including the local quarries, the construction of the walls by the prisoners, and the perspectives on architecture and punishment that informed the Cellblock's austere and repetitively uniform design.

Technically, the first issue to address is the stabilization of the walls. The deterioration of the walls' lime mortar and the loss of the roof and lateral bracing make the Cellblock vulnerable to the weather. A program of weather protection, lateral bracing, and repointing is required for the entire Cellblock.

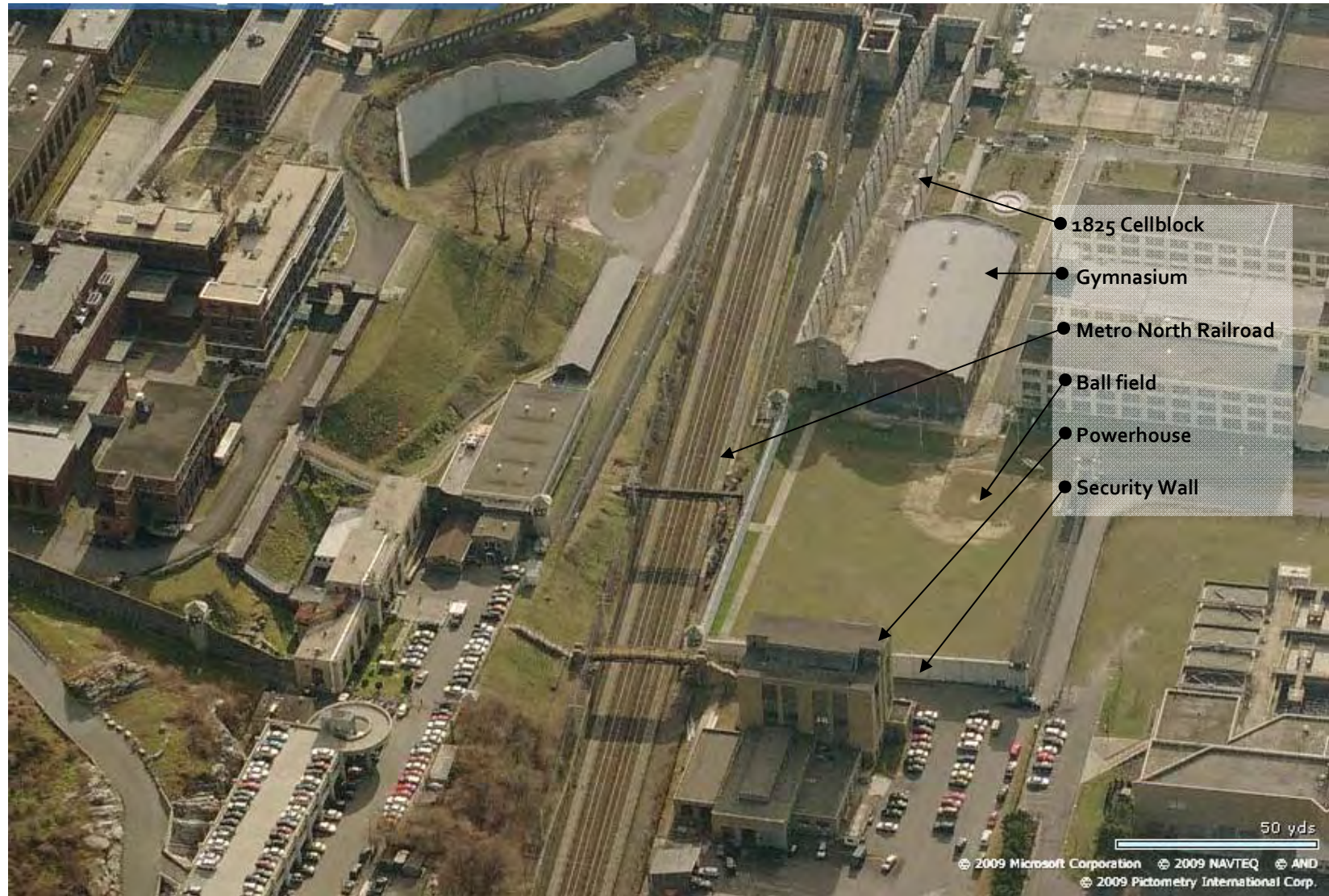
All work will be developed in accordance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. The primary intent is to preserve the Cellblock – “to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials” of the historic property.

*A Phase II Environmental Site Assessment was prepared and completed in 2008 for the site location of the proposed Sing Sing Historic Museum Complex by Ecosystems Strategies, Inc. Services were performed to document the presence or absence of contamination associated with historic or current on-site activities. Specific services included the extension of nine soil borings at various locations throughout the property, the collection of a surface soil sample from the vicinity of an on-site transformer, the collection of a soil gas sample from below the slab of the on-site building and the collection of a concrete dust sample which exhibited field evidence of contamination. Recommendations were provided, but no further investigation was recommended. A full copy of the report is available at the Westchester County Department of Planning.*



## E. Birdseye Aerial Photo

SING SING HISTORIC PRISON





## F. Site Planning

### SING SING HISTORIC PRISON

Visitors will receive their first impression of the site as they approach the Powerhouse. The approach should be designed so that the paths to the parking and entrance are clear; visitors feel safe, and they feel a sense of excited anticipation for the experience to come. We estimate a yearly visitorship of over 100,000 to the Sing Sing Historic Prison. Visitors will arrive by train, bus, automobile and, perhaps, even by ferry from Manhattan and other points along the Hudson River.

Each mode of transport requires careful consideration to create a positive visitor experience.

- The train and ferry will drop visitors off at some distance from the Powerhouse. Walking visitors must be able to easily find their way and feel safe as they do so.
- Cars will require drop-off zones and parking spaces. The site currently has limited space available.
- Buses require significant turn-

around, drop-off and parking space. These needs must be addressed.

If arriving by train or ferry, visitors will likely walk from the station or a dock near it, but some of the areas of the site approaching the Powerhouse entry are compromised by narrow sidewalks, unsightly buildings, and smells emanating from the sewage treatment plant. Landscaping, parking and signage can ameliorate most of these problems. Design solutions are represented schematically in these concept documents. A shuttle bus would offer an excellent opportunity for a brief interpretive introduction and reduce the need for other techniques.

Automobiles will be parked to the west and north of the Powerhouse, but we have become aware of how many Department of Correctional Services' cars are parked in the same locations. Coordination is required, especially as the building to the south will become an administrative facility. Drivers will want directional signage to guide them to

the site; we should plan on banners, posters and road signs up the hill on Route 9, in the downtown area, at the Caputo Visitor Center, and elsewhere, to make it an easy destination to find.

Buses will arrive, drop off a group, and park nearby, but we do need to discuss this with Metro-North or other entities to determine the best locations.

The local transport modes offer promotional opportunities as well. Along the train tracks we are designing a partially covered walkway with an east wall facing the tracks. Here, large-scale signage will announce the existence of the Sing Sing Historic Prison.

Because it is clearly visible from the train station, the façade of the existing (and soon to be demolished) multi-story building south of the Powerhouse indicates that this would be an excellent location for other Sing Sing Historic Prison signage. The new building's architects should be encouraged

to include a structure capable of presenting signage of a scale appropriate to an entry and that is visible from the train station. Identifying signage should also be visible from the Hudson River.

#### Access from Train Station

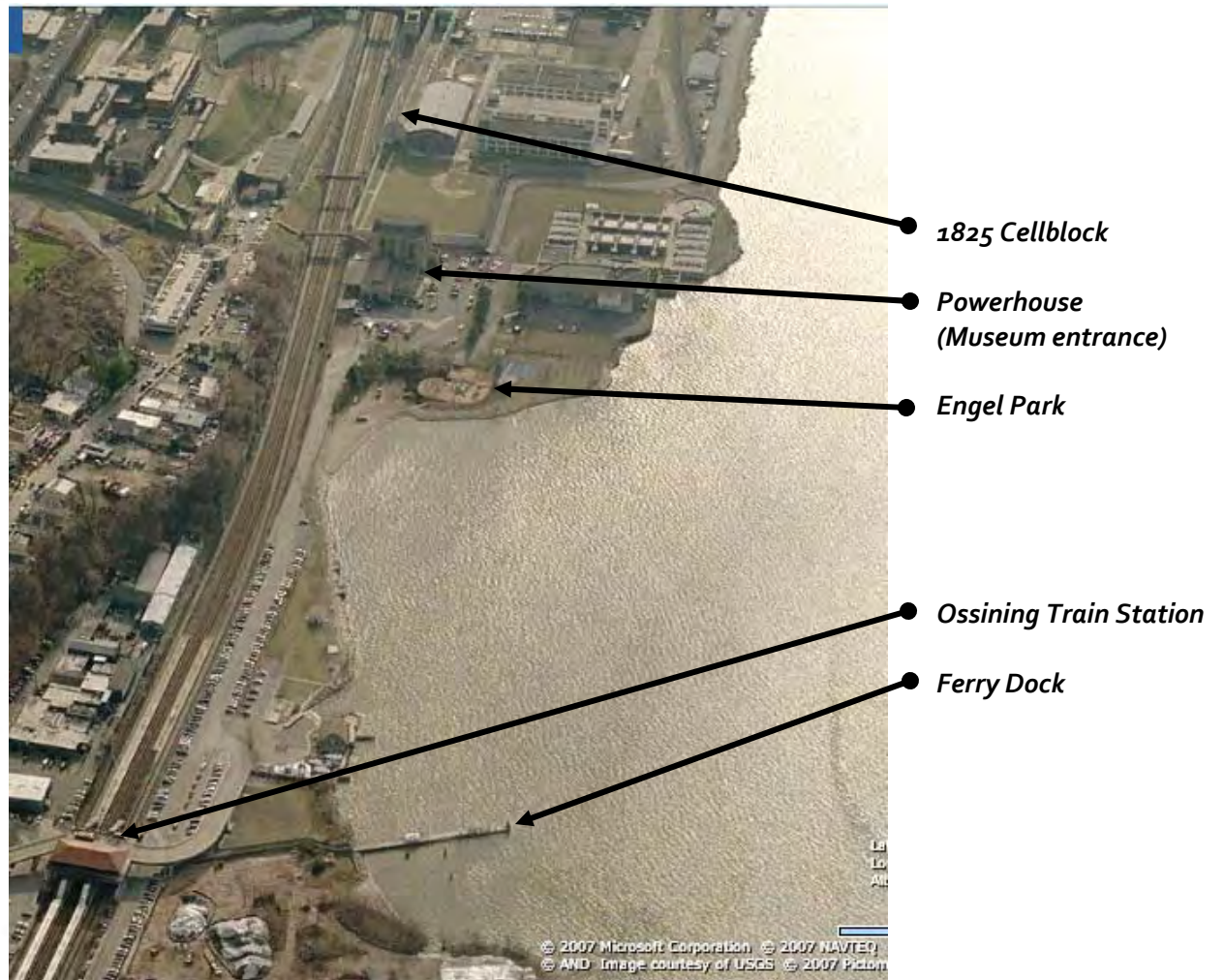
- Approach to the facility must be clear and well-defined.
- Path for pedestrians is needed.
- Signage is required.
- Path must also link to waterfront Louis Engle Park.

#### Ferry Access

- Pier access, adjacent to the railroad station, should be incorporated in the site plan.

#### Parking

*A conceptual visitor parking lot has been designed that can accommodate 93 cars and a bus drop-off area. The new lot will be immediately accessible from the road. New parking lot lights will be provided.*





## G. Parking Lot Plan

SING SING HISTORIC PRISON



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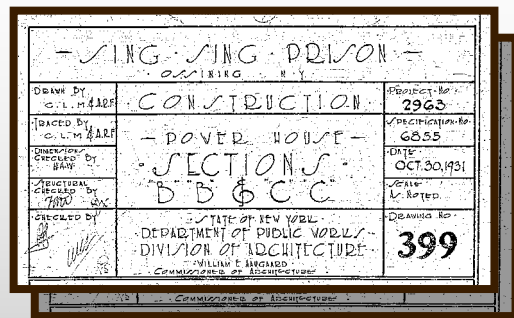
## 2. Component One: Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum

### SING SING HISTORIC PRISON

#### Summary

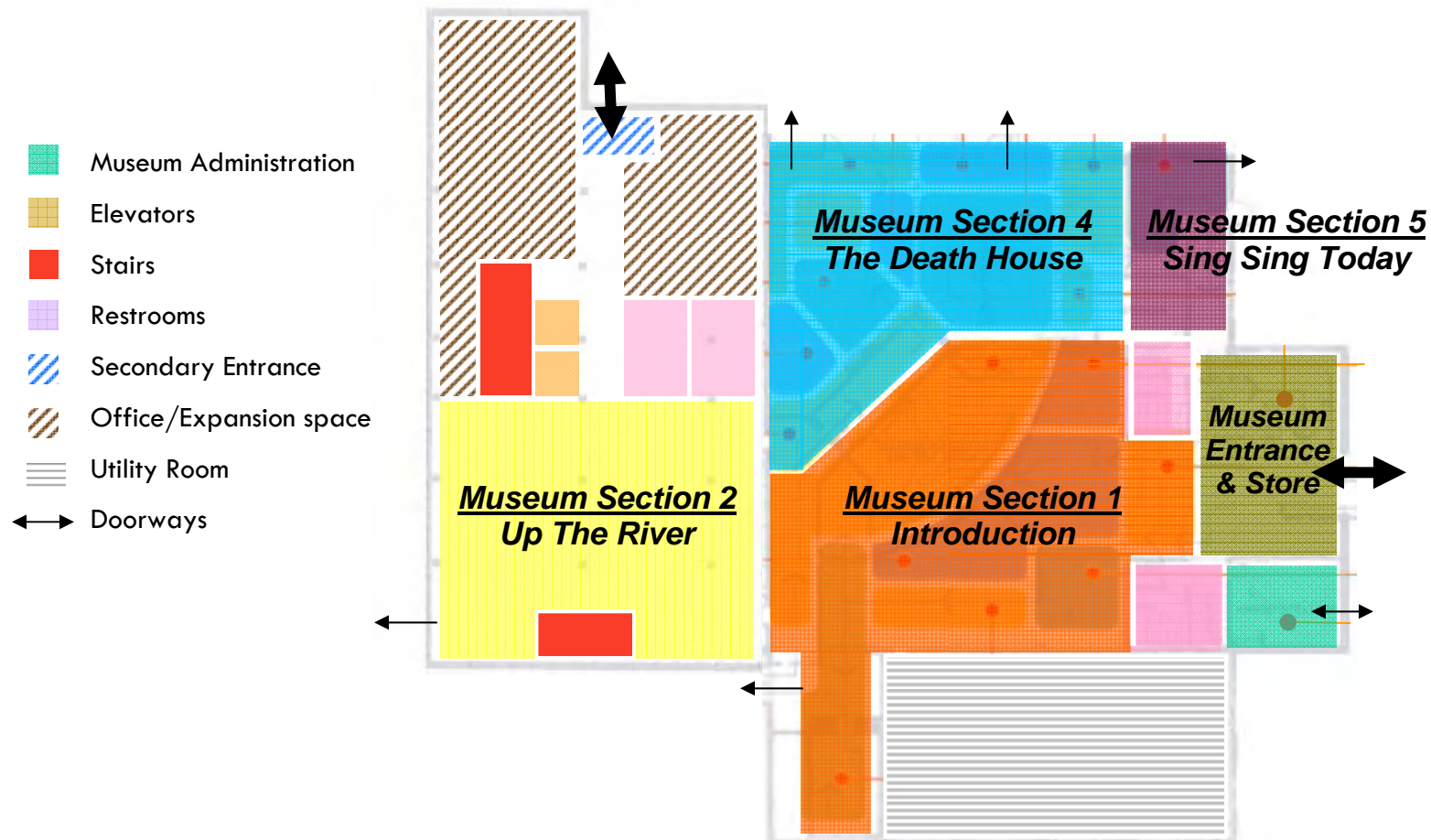
The lobby area will be large enough to accommodate a busload of visitors and it will hold the following: a desk where visitors will purchase tickets, receive information, and purchase items from the sales shop;

an unenclosed shop where books, t-shirts and other items will be available; lockers for storage of visitors' coats and other personal belongings; locked office space for personal belongings; locked office space for personnel; locked storage; and restrooms.



Original elevation drawing of Powerhouse.

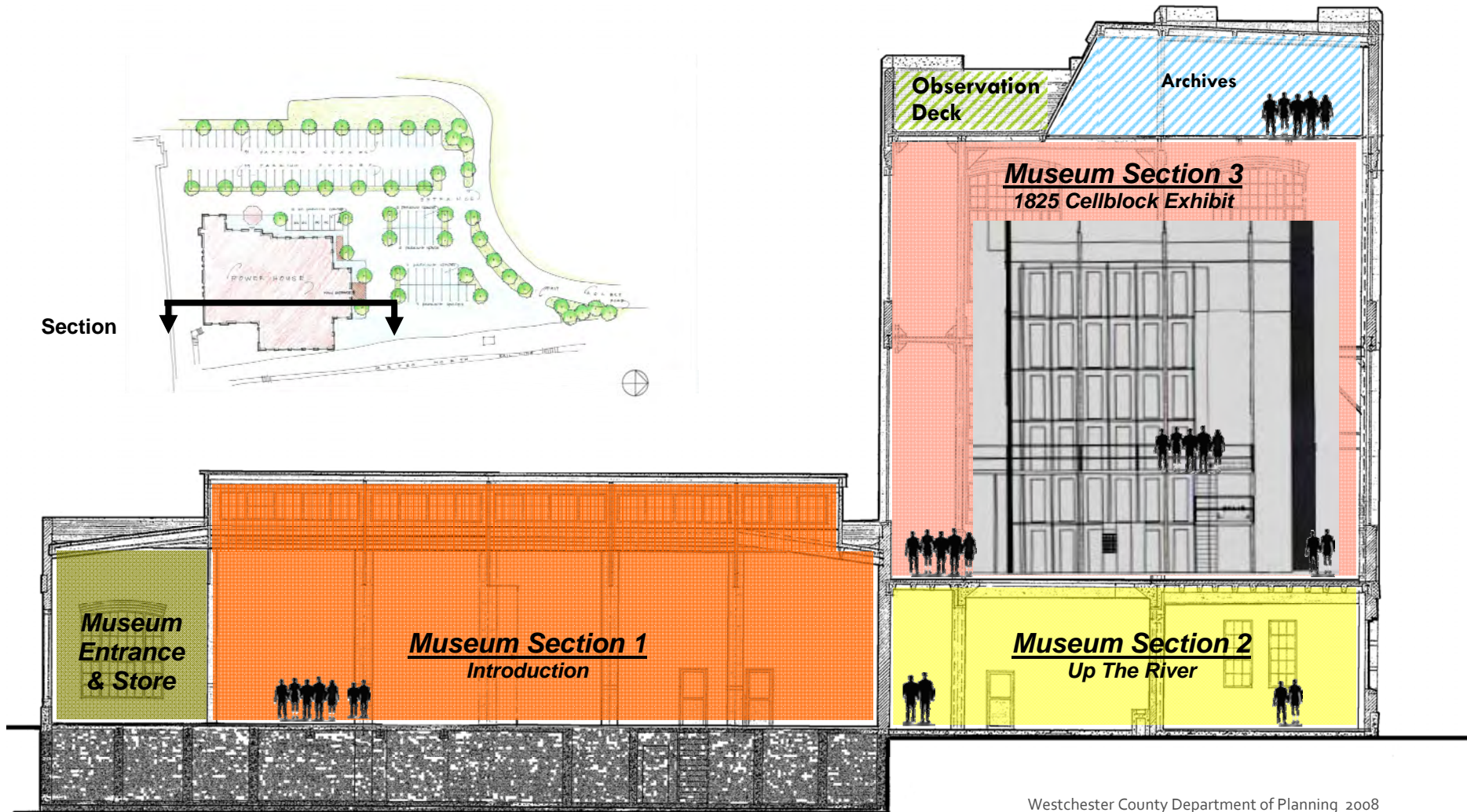
## Powerhouse First Floor Plan



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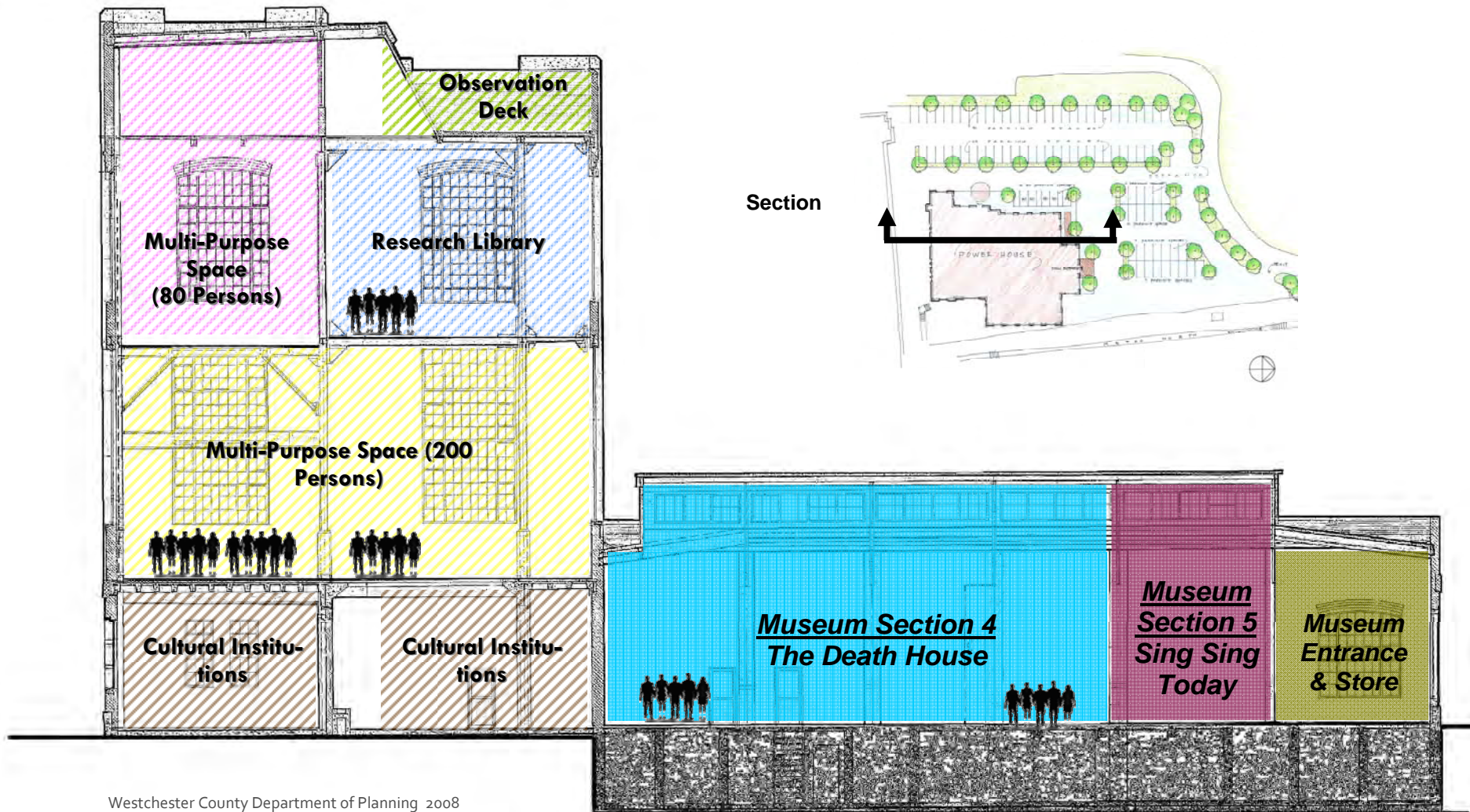


Powerhouse Elevation



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Powerhouse Elevation



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## A. Visitor Amenities and Administration

### SING SING HISTORIC PRISON

The first thing visitors see as they enter the facility is a steel door mounted within a run of chain-link fence topped with razor wire and flanked by an architectural suggestion of a prison watchtower. These stark security icons are situated on the other side of the entrance hall, directly opposite the entry. The fence is lit so that it is opaque.

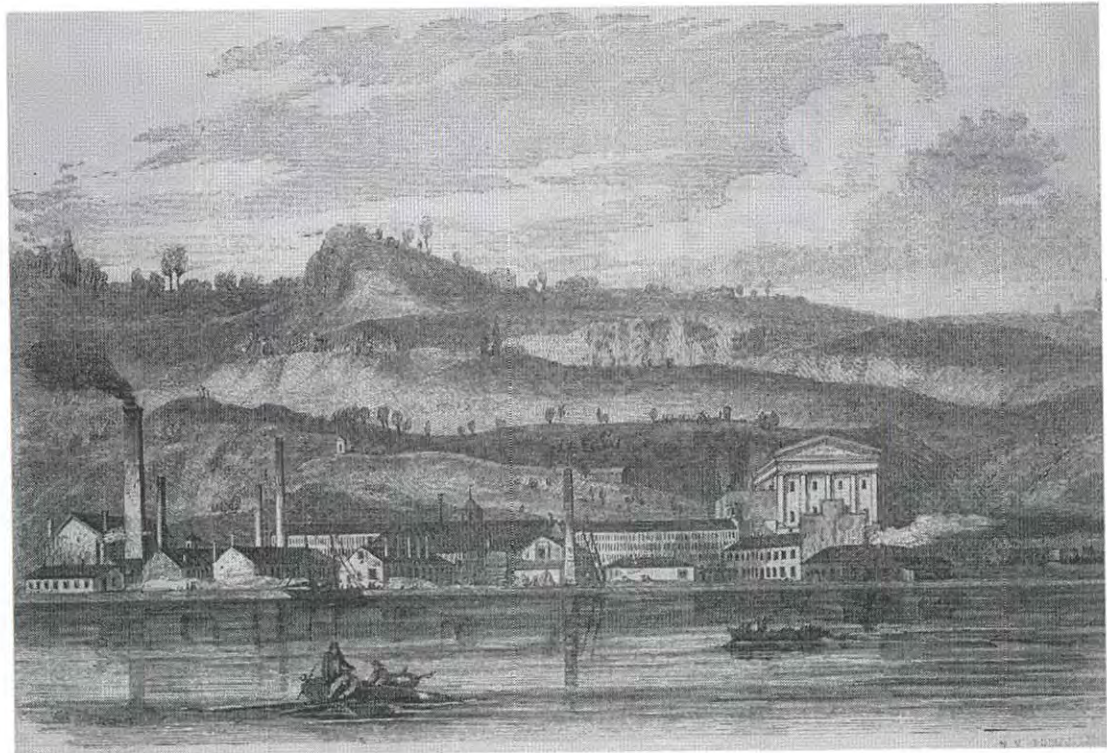
Adjacent to the entry door on an entering visitor's right is a ticket desk that is designed to double as a sales desk for the shop. The "shop" occupies a corner space adjoining the desk. After concluding their tour of all exhibit areas, visitors will exit back into the entrance hall through a corridor next to the shop.

To the left of the entry door in the opposite corner is closed administrative space and storage. Adjacent to the administrative space are lockers with keys that visitors can use to stow coats or items they do not wish to carry. For visiting school

groups, rolling bins might be brought out for quick relief and retrieval of coats.

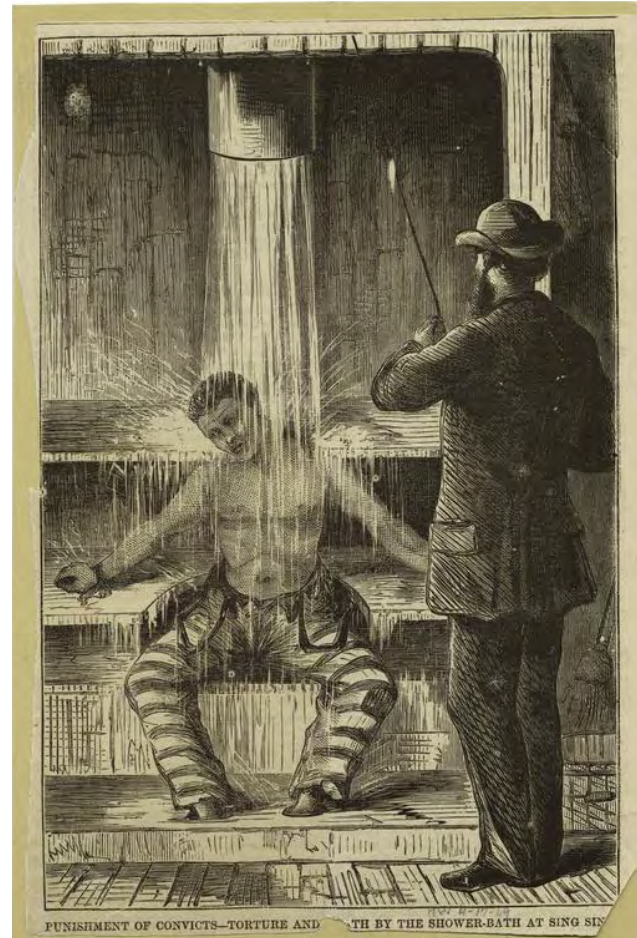
Beyond the desk, shop and administration / storage is open circulation space. Centered within this space is an aerial photo or map of

Sing Sing's existing facility so that visitors can orient themselves and have something to take in while, for example, waiting for companions to make purchases in the shop. Restrooms are located on either side of the chain-link fence and steel door.



## B. Genesis of the American Prison

### SING SING HISTORIC PRISON



### Summary

Given the relative neglect of the topic of punishment by historians until recently, it can be assumed that most visitors will know little of the stories of punishment and prison reform movements in America, and the key roles that New York State and Sing Sing have played within them. Hence, the first exhibit area will provide basic groundwork for the visit by defining the jail, prison and penitentiary, and by illuminating the concept of punishment and its various purposes, including deterrence, retribution and rehabilitation. The unique story of Sing Sing will begin here, and the foundation for the reform era that rendered the 1825 Cellblock will be laid as well with exhibits that trace American punishment from its European antecedents through the second decade of the nineteenth century. This space also holds a theater and temporary exhibit gallery.



## Exhibit Walkthrough

When visitors pass through the interior steel door they find themselves within a “man lock,” or sally port. That is, they are in a contained space with yet another “locked” door to pass through. In this enclosed space they encounter an introduc-

tory exhibit that lays the groundwork for the experiences to come.

Visitors then pass through the second door and emerge into the “inside,” a suggestion that is heightened by the darkness of the

room and spot-lit exhibits. The most eye-catching icon in view is a re-created public gallows which proves to be an anchor for an exhibit describing the public nature of colonial era punishment and the lengthy list of crimes deemed capital by the British.

However, before getting to that exhibit, visitors encounter exhibits describing the prehistory of the Sing Sing site, including the geological events that rendered the rock that was

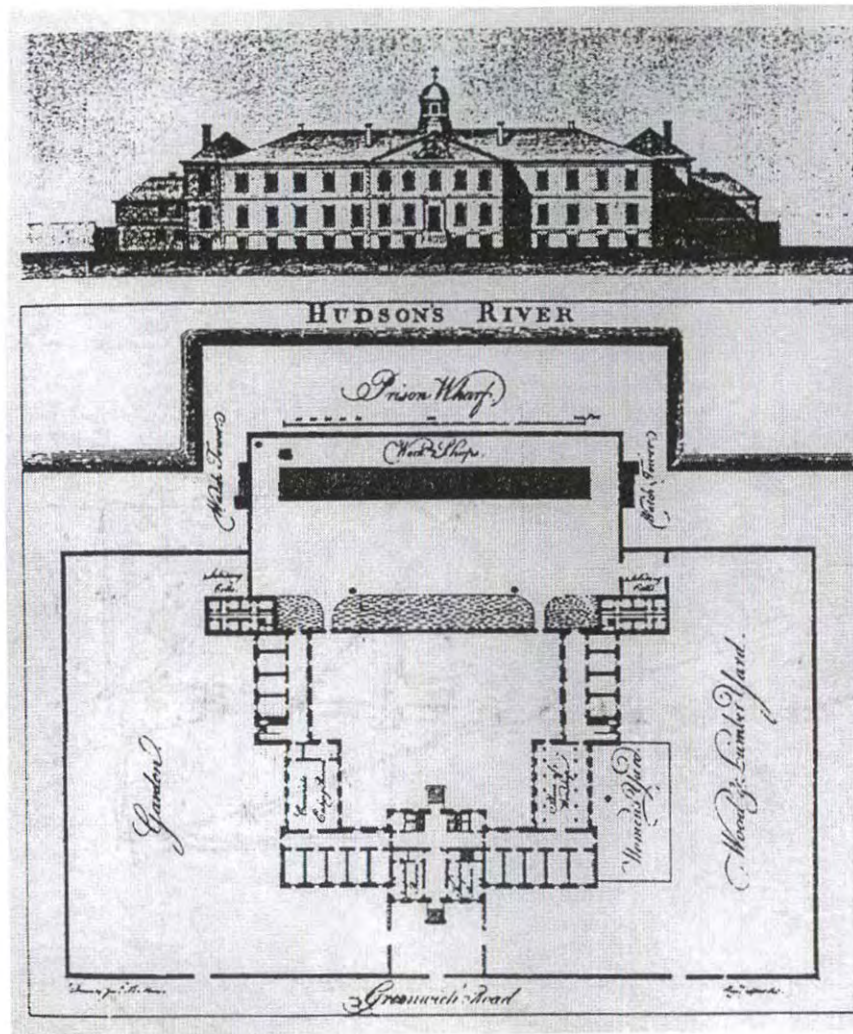
later convict-quarried, and the story of native peoples who once inhabited the area. Adjoining the prehistory exhibit, is a presentation on the selection of the Mt. Pleasant site and the construction of the prison.

A faux stone wall that functions as backdrop for the above exhibits also serves to delineate the theater space. In the theater, visitors view a film that sketches Sing Sing's history by telling the story of its changing notoriety over time. The theater will seat approximately thirty visitors. Adjoining the theater is a gallery where temporary exhibits can be mounted. The gallery has its own entrance, but one of the walls dividing it from the theater will have the flexibility to be opened, allowing the spaces to merge for a special event, program or installation.

An exhibit in this area that spans all of Sing Sing's history is one that focuses on just what visitors are doing, and that is visiting Sing Sing. Stereoscopic viewers, postcards and a peep into a 19th century







Sing Sing workshop enhance the interpretation that a visit to Sing Sing has deep and varied historical roots.

Before exiting the Powerhouse, visitors encounter exhibits that describe European influences on the development of the American prison, and early American penal experiments. These culminate in a walk-in re-creation of a cell in Newgate State Prison in New York City, circa 1800. A raucous scene is depicted using eight male cast figures – these ranging in age from pre-teen to old. Through the use of audio, visitors listen in as several visitors plot an escape, gamble, and sing as they drink rum. In sum, the scene makes vivid the first stage in the evolution of the American prison and contrasts sharply with the isolation, strict discipline and silence that was mandated by the reformers who created the next model prisons, Sing Sing being the most famous of these.



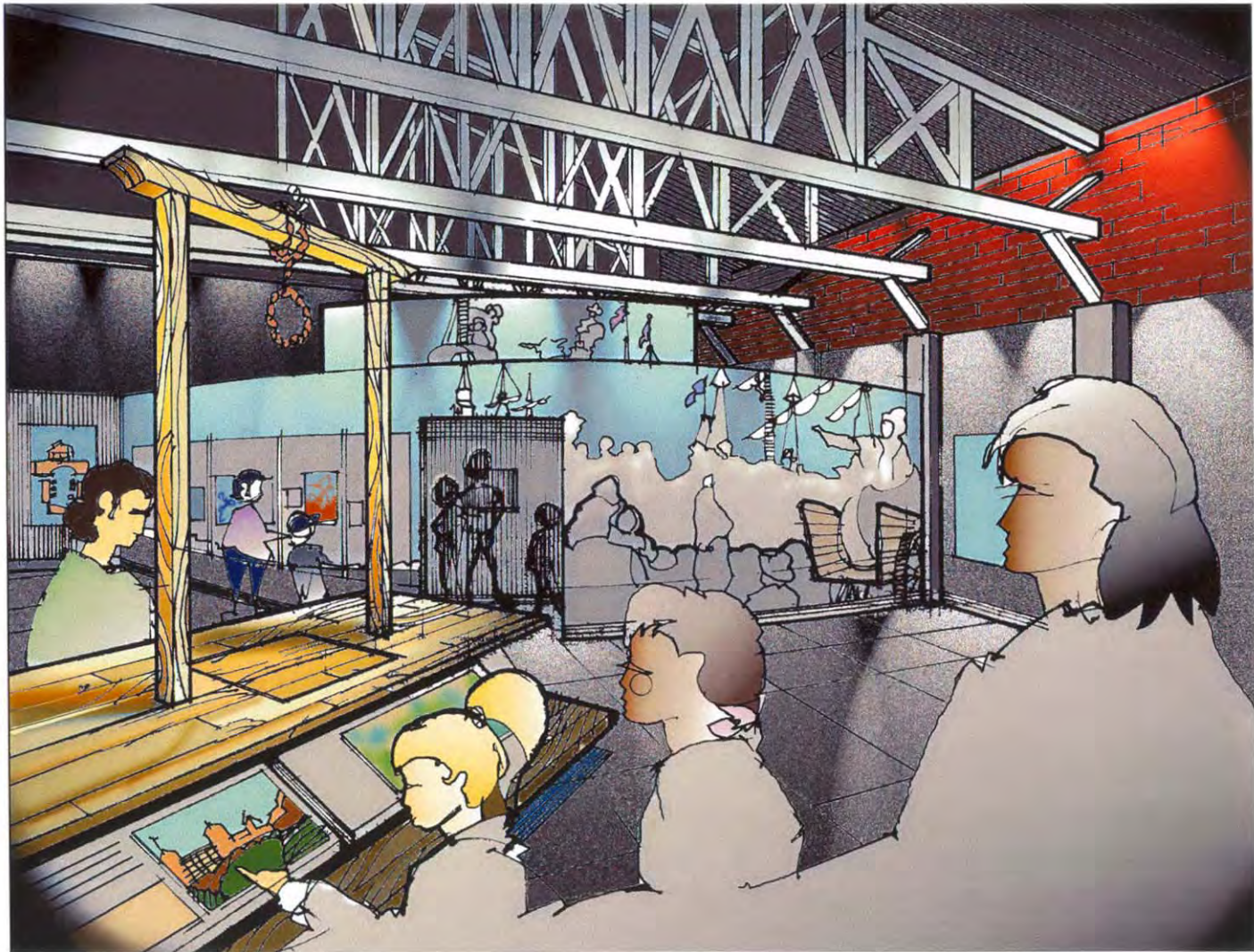
## Genesis of the American Prison

### Introduction Rendering





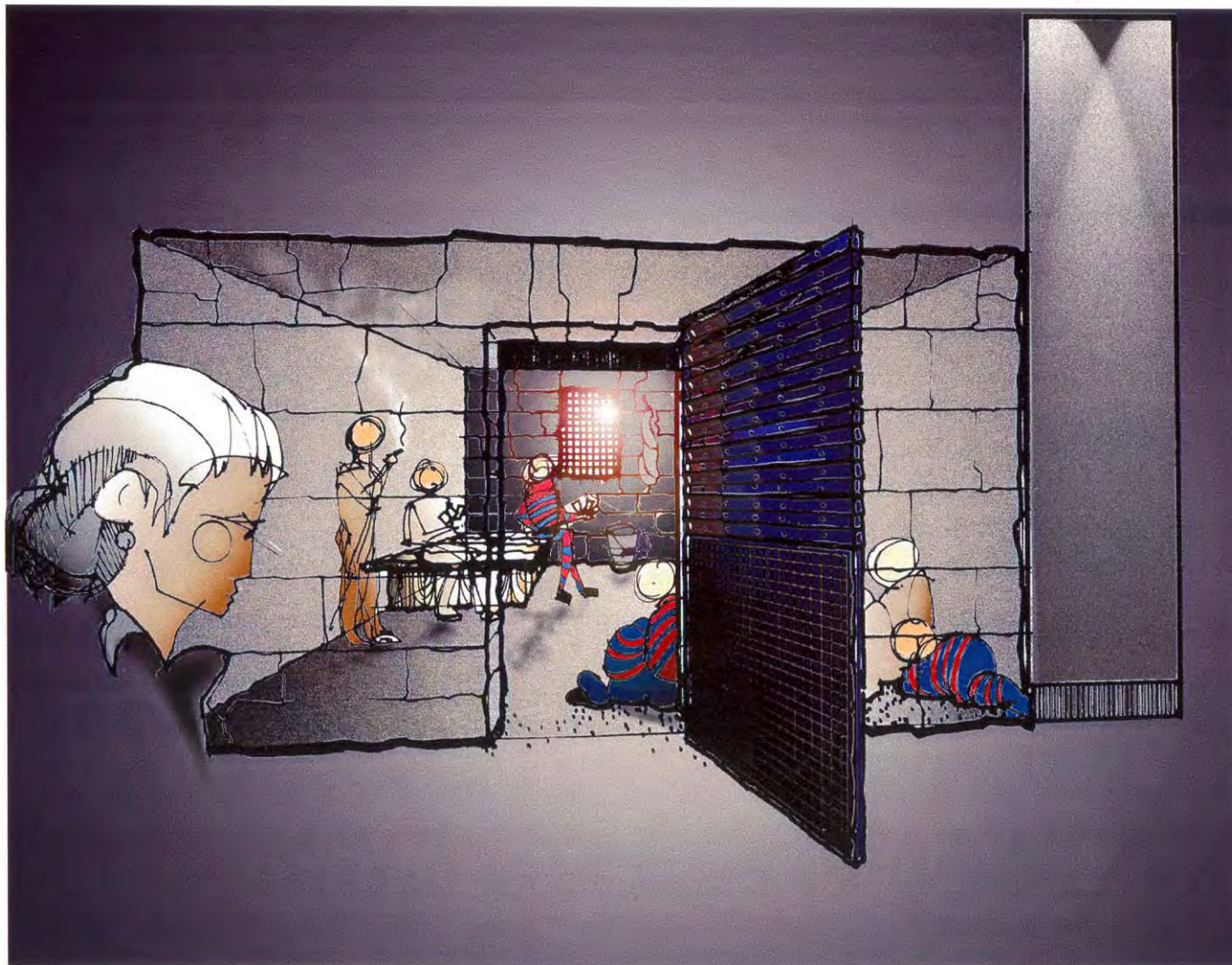
## Genesis of the American Prison Colonial Era Rendering





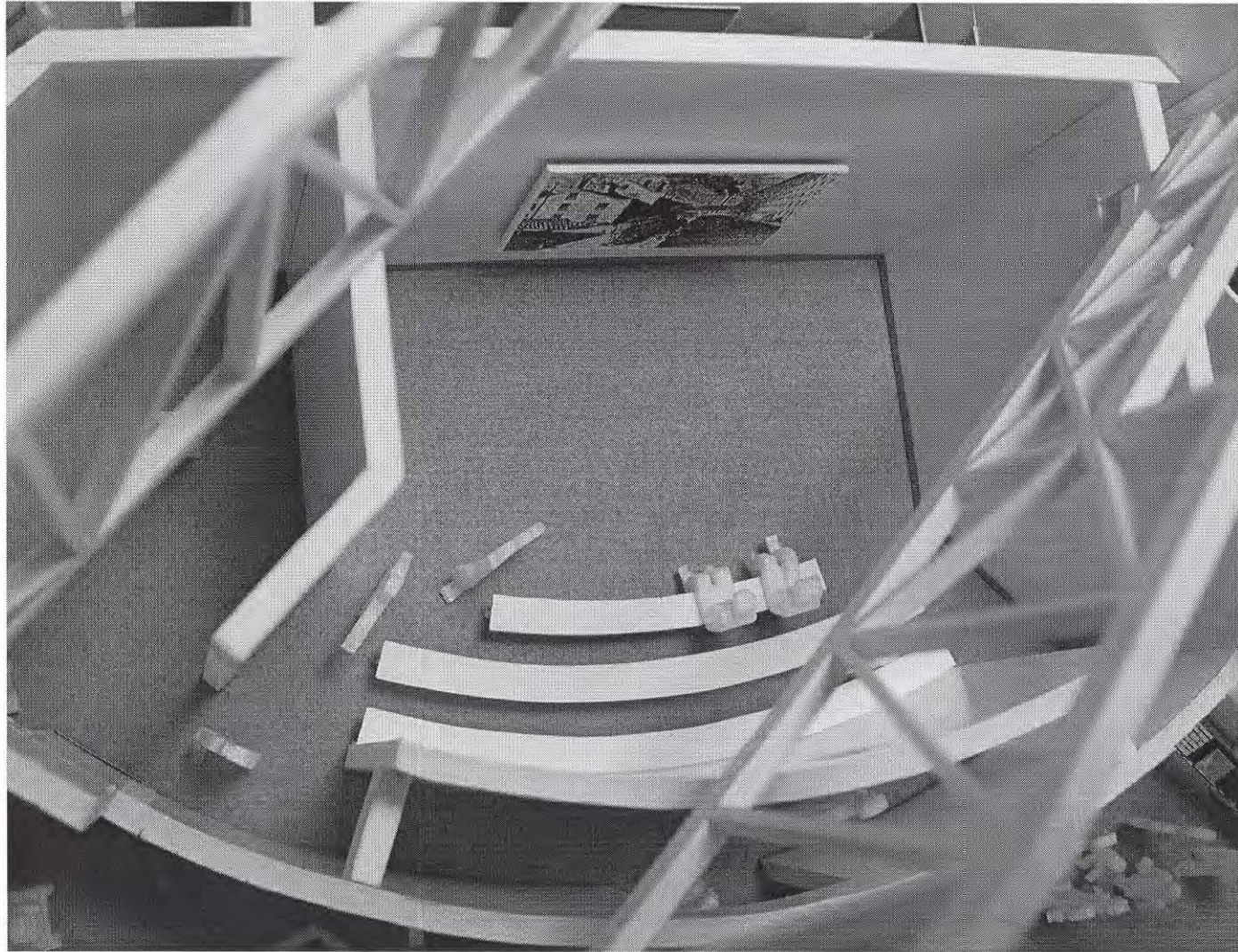
## Genesis of the American Prison

### Newgate Prison Rendering





**Genesis of the American Prison**  
Theater / Changing Exhibit Area





## Key Content

### 1 Introduction/You Are Here

- Sing Sing as it is today
- Sing Sing's longevity
- Evolution of the American prison inseparable from Sing Sing's history
- Security: visitors will be entering a medium security area

### 2 A Prison Primer

- Definition and purposes of the prison, the penitentiary
- Punishment as measured in time
- Jail, state prison, federal prison defined

### 3 Prehistory of the Sing Sing Site

- Geological formation of the marble beds
- Native American occupation of the site: Munsee and Algonquin tribes
- Establishment of the villages of Sparta and Sing Sing

### 4 Why Here?

- Why the Sing Sing site was chosen
- Quarrying and construction of the prison by 100 prisoners brought from Auburn Prison

- Prison labor as retribution and rehabilitation
- Goal of economic self-sufficiency

### 5 Wish You Were Here?

- Sing Sing has received visitors since its inception
- Sing Sing as New York City's prison
- Diversity of visitors – from Alexis de Tocqueville to Woody Allen
- Hidden observation corridors for 19th century visitors

### 6 Colonial Era: Prison Precedents

- Shame
- Public nature of punishment
- British employment of capital punishment for a broad range of crimes
- Capricious sentencing

### 7 The First American Prisons

- The search for punishment appropriate to a republic: rational, certain, humane
- Shift of punishment from the body to the mind
- Influence of Enlightenment thinkers:

Cesare Beccaria, Jeremy Bentham, John Howard

- Influence of European institutions: the monastery, English Bridewell, Dutch and Belgian Houses of Correction
- American experiments: Quaker influence on Benjamin Rush, Walnut Street

### 8 Newgate: New York's First State Prison

- Thomas Eddy, Quaker reformer/prison warden; early success with mild treatment
- Congregate rooms, productive work, cleanliness, education programs
- Overcrowding, riots, fire
- Failure attributed to congregate rooms

### 9 Film: Sing Sing: 85 Million Minutes of Fame and Counting

- Model American penitentiary
- Harsh punishments
- *20,000 Years in Sing Sing*
- Setting for films
- "The Chair"

## Architectural Issues

- Creation of a front entrance.
- Organization of administrative, ticketing, and sales shop areas to minimize number of staff required.
- Coordination of construction of visitor center with adjacent demolition of upper floors and construction of a new administrative facility for the Department of Correctional Services (a.k.a. DOC).
- Coordination with existing mechanical areas and systems scheduled to remain.
- Structural modifications to existing building.
- Insertion of re-created “Last Mile” and Death House within existing walls.
- Creation of building signage and “bill-board” signage.



Existing maintenance garage doors on Powerhouse proposed to be entrance to the Museum.



## C. Up the River...

### SING SING HISTORIC PRISON

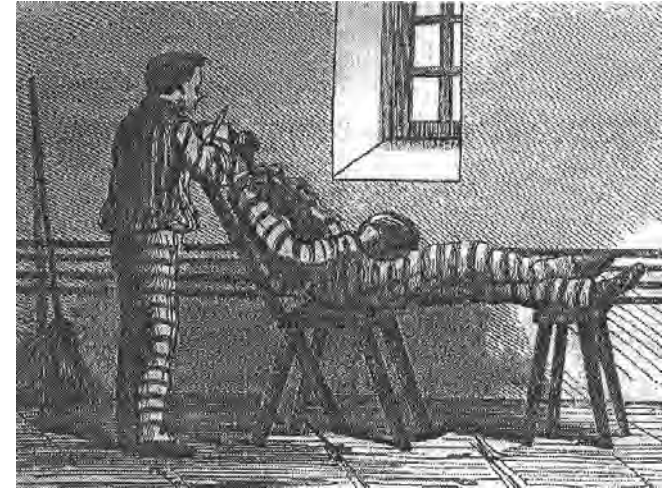
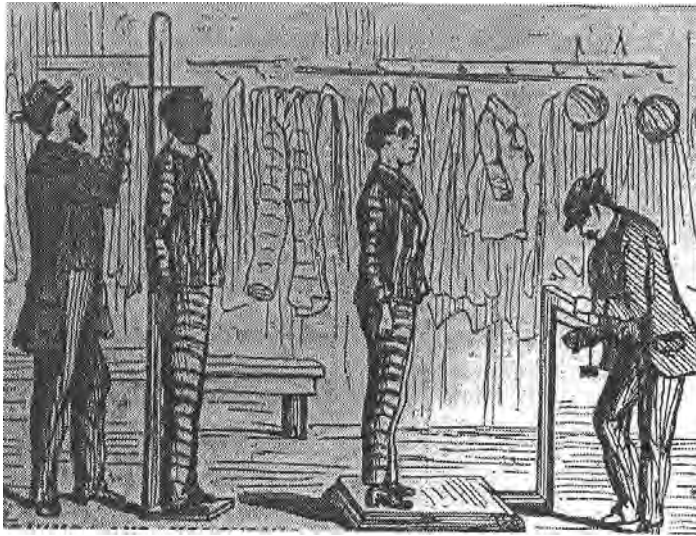
#### Exhibit Walkthrough

This exhibit will be located in the first floor of the power plant area of the Powerhouse. In this segment, interpretation focuses on the modes of transport used to get visitors and inmates to Sing Sing in the nineteenth century: the sloop, steamboat and train.

Before entering, visitors pass through a locked door, manned by an attendant. Here, it is impressed on visitors that they

are in a security area of a working prison, and they may be required to sign a register, or they may be issued identification badges. Within this area there is an introduction about the intake procedure for convicts in the nineteenth century.

The first step in the intake process was the taking off of manacles, and the visitors have an opportunity to place their wrists and/or ankles within mounted manacles and to feel the weight of the restraints. As visitors continue toward the Cellblock exhibit, each step in the intake process is interpreted with text and artifacts — from haircut to final instruction on behavior.





## D. Cellblock 1825 — 1943 Exhibit

SING SING HISTORIC PRISON

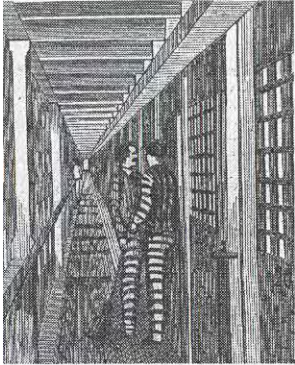


### Summary

Exhibitory and media in this area will span the active life of the Cellblock as it was constructed by convicts and inhabited by them from 1825-1943. A ghost structure of the 1925 Cellblock will be constructed to scale in the taller section of the Powerhouse. This area will simulate the northern end of the 1825 Cellblock where this exhibit was originally proposed to be located. Topics presented will include a summary of the early nineteenth century reform movement that gave rise to Sing Sing and its institutional peers; the architecture of reform institutions; conditions in individual cells over time; mid-nineteenth century and Progressive Era reform thinking; disciplinary measures within the prison, such as the use of isolation cells; contract labor; aspects of daily life at Sing Sing within and outside the Cellblock, and the Mount Pleasant Female Prison.



## Exhibit Walkthrough



Exploration of the Cellblock begins with an impressionistic treatment of the subject of prison reform. Visitors enter the theatrically-dark Cellblock and find themselves in a space defined by portions of the Cellblock's east and

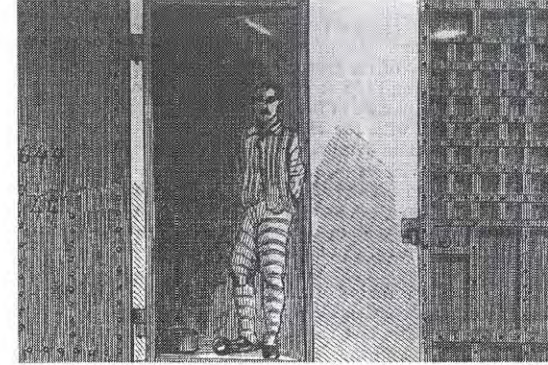
west walls and, before them, a six-tiered ghost structure suggesting the original block of cells contained within those walls. "Floating" within this grid are three fully-realized cells corresponding to different time periods.

To the entering visitor's right, on the east Cellblock wall, a sequence of historic images (drawings and photographs) of prisoners are projected at an enormous scale, fading in and out, one after the other. Opposite of these, across the space on the west wall, images

of wardens, guards and other prison personnel are projected at the same pace, at the same scale. The effect is at once phantasmagoric, eerie, but also sobering in the reminder that prisoners and keepers alike are just people. Yet, as the oppressive stone walls remind the visitor, there is a gulf between the two groups: the criminal and non-criminal. An introductory panel orients the visitor and explains that the various theories about what constitutes that gulf and the different strategies devised to bridge it is, in sum, what constitutes the history of prison reform in



the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The visitor is enjoined to look at the Cellblock and assess how it answers the question of how a criminal is turned into a citizen. The visitor proceeds to the tiered, ghosted cells, accurately scaled and positioned back-to-back. There are



exhibits on the ground floor and on the third or mezzanine level of cells. In each of the exhibit areas, a timeline serves as a backbone for the exhibitry, and also as a flexible matrix that can receive new information and artifacts. Throughout the Cellblock, changes in administration, routine, reform and public attitudes are interwoven with stories of individual prisoners, wardens and correction officers.

Visitors are directed first to the west side of the ground floor. Here, exhibitry interprets the social, political and economic climate of the country following the War of 1812, and how theory was translated into



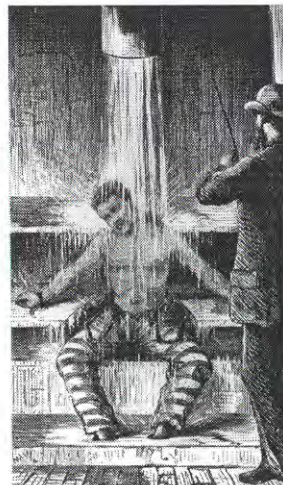


architectural design and prison administration to render the second generation of American prisons. Architectural models help illustrate architectural theory and debate.

Visitors move from this exhibit area to the third tier of cells in an elevator that doubles as an isolation cell experience. Entering the elevator, visitors see what appears to be an eight-ounce glass of water and a ten-ounce slice of bread. These are holograms, and during an audio program it is explained that these items at one time consti-

tuted the entire daily food ration for an isolated prisoner.

*Visitors exit the relative darkness of the elevator to a platform area where there is a binocular viewer area that allows the visitors to view sections of the 1825 Cellblock. The binoculars have set views to eliminate the possibility of the visitor from viewing the existing prison population. Interpretation covers visible architectural features. There is a touchable model of the Cellblock and a block of Sing Sing marble.*

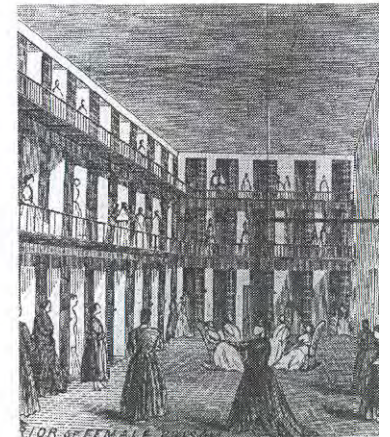


*Re-entering the ghost structure, visitors are directed to an exhibit area that interprets Sing Sing from 1825 to 1840. Here, there is a lever-lock interactive and interpretation about how Sing Sing differed from Auburn Prison. Another*

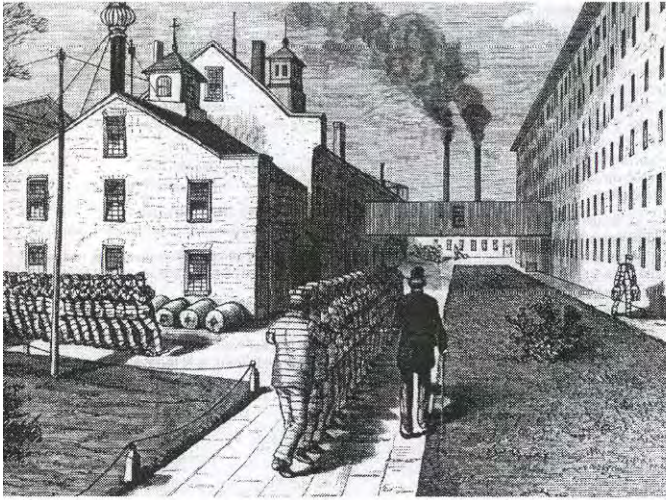
exhibit focuses on Sing Sing's first warden, Elam Lynds. There is a re-created cell evoking the 1830s that visitors can enter and get a visceral sense of what it was like to be confined in the "house of fear." The most notorious architect of that fear after Lynds was Warden Charles Wiltse, and he and the severe disciplinary measures he employed are fully interpreted.

At the end of the mezzanine, opposite the elevator, is exhibitry focused on the reform efforts of the 1840s, the establishment of Mt. Pleasant Female Prison and Eliza Farnham and her phrenology-based reforms.

Following that exhibitry visitors investigate an exhibit area that interprets the second half of the nineteenth century. Included is a re-creation of a cell







from the 1860s that houses two prisoners and extensive interpretation on contract labor, the controversies surrounding it, its elimination and resulting idleness.

Visitors either re-enter the elevator to descend to the ground floor or take the stairs located at the north end of the mezzanine. Re-entering the ground floor, they take in a final exhibit area that interprets the Cellblock and penology in the twentieth century. There is a re-created cell from the 1930s in this area; and exhibits on the

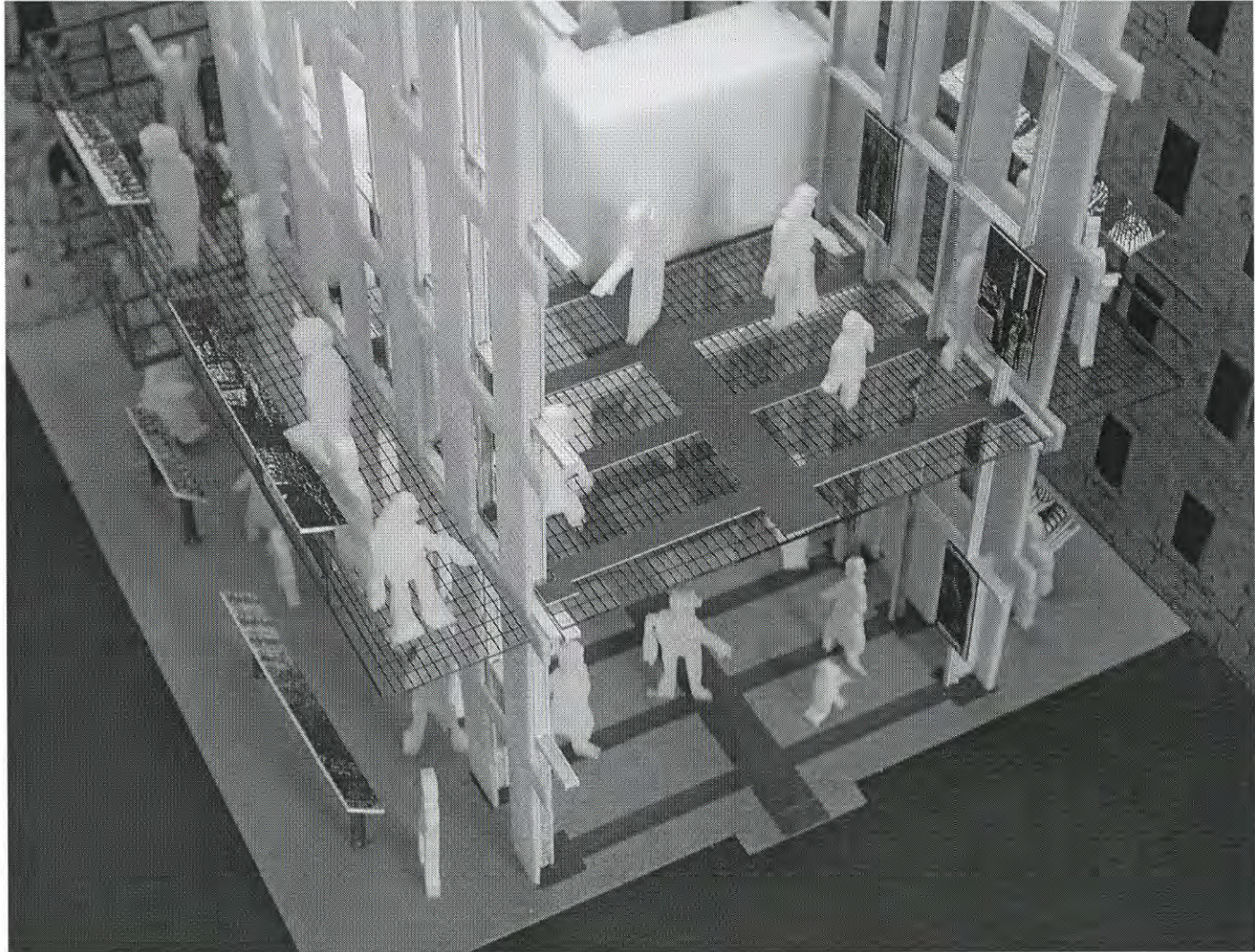
wardens, Thomas Mott Osborne and Lewis Lawes are included.

As visitors exit the Cellblock through the door in which they entered they see a display on what prisoners were given when they had served their time in the Cellblock and were released, e.g., at one time they were given ten dollars.

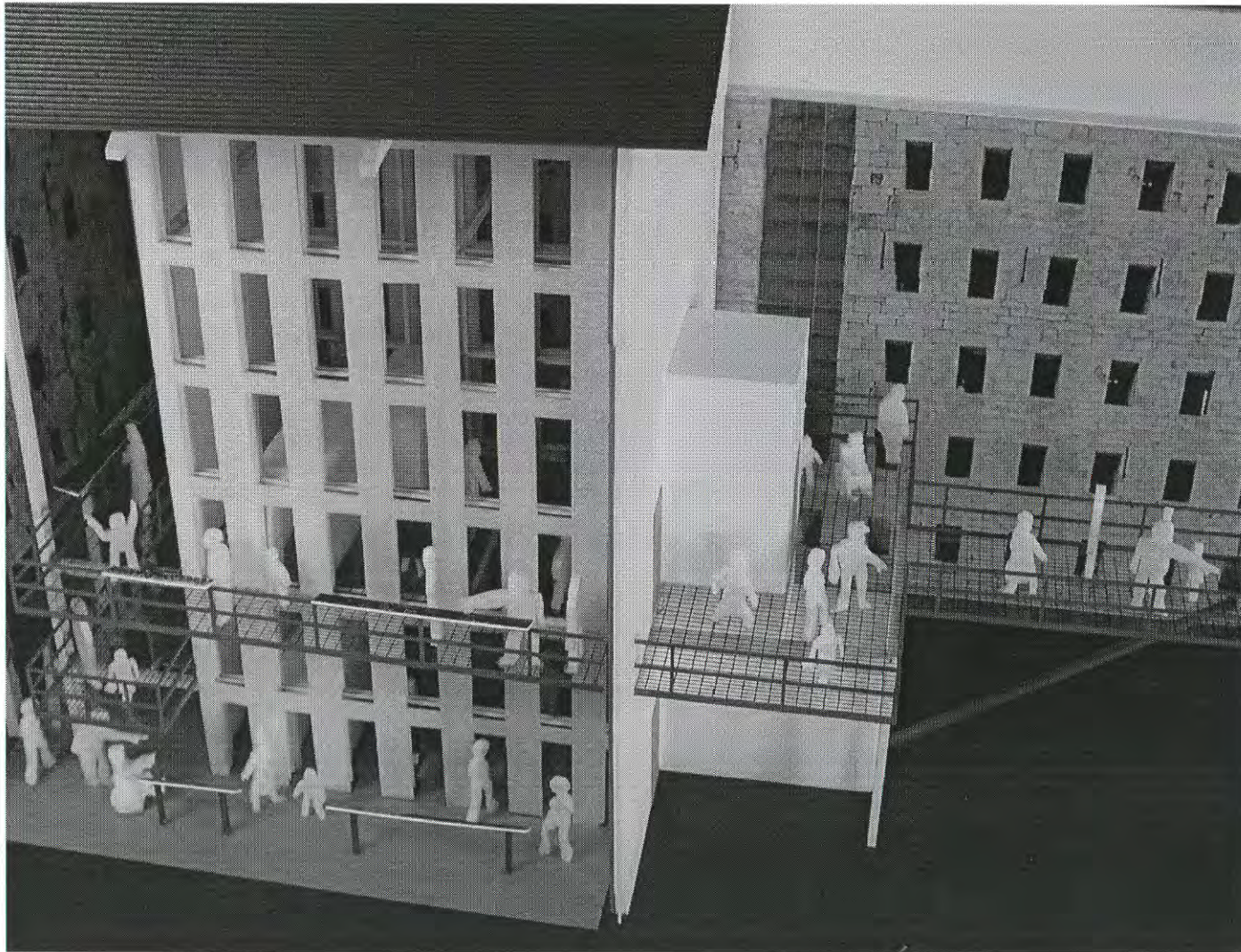




**Cellblock 1825 — 1943**  
Cellblock Ghost Structure

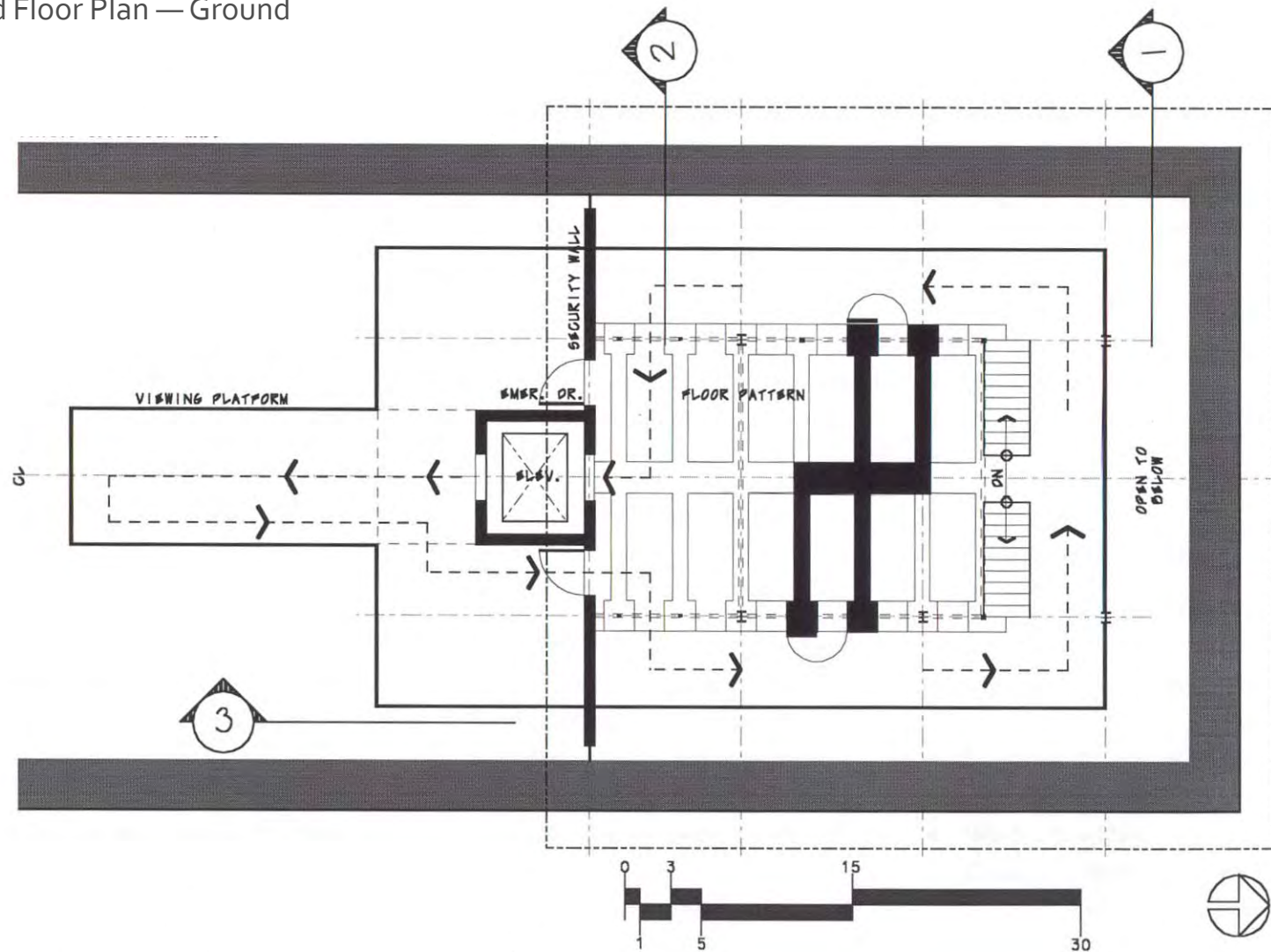






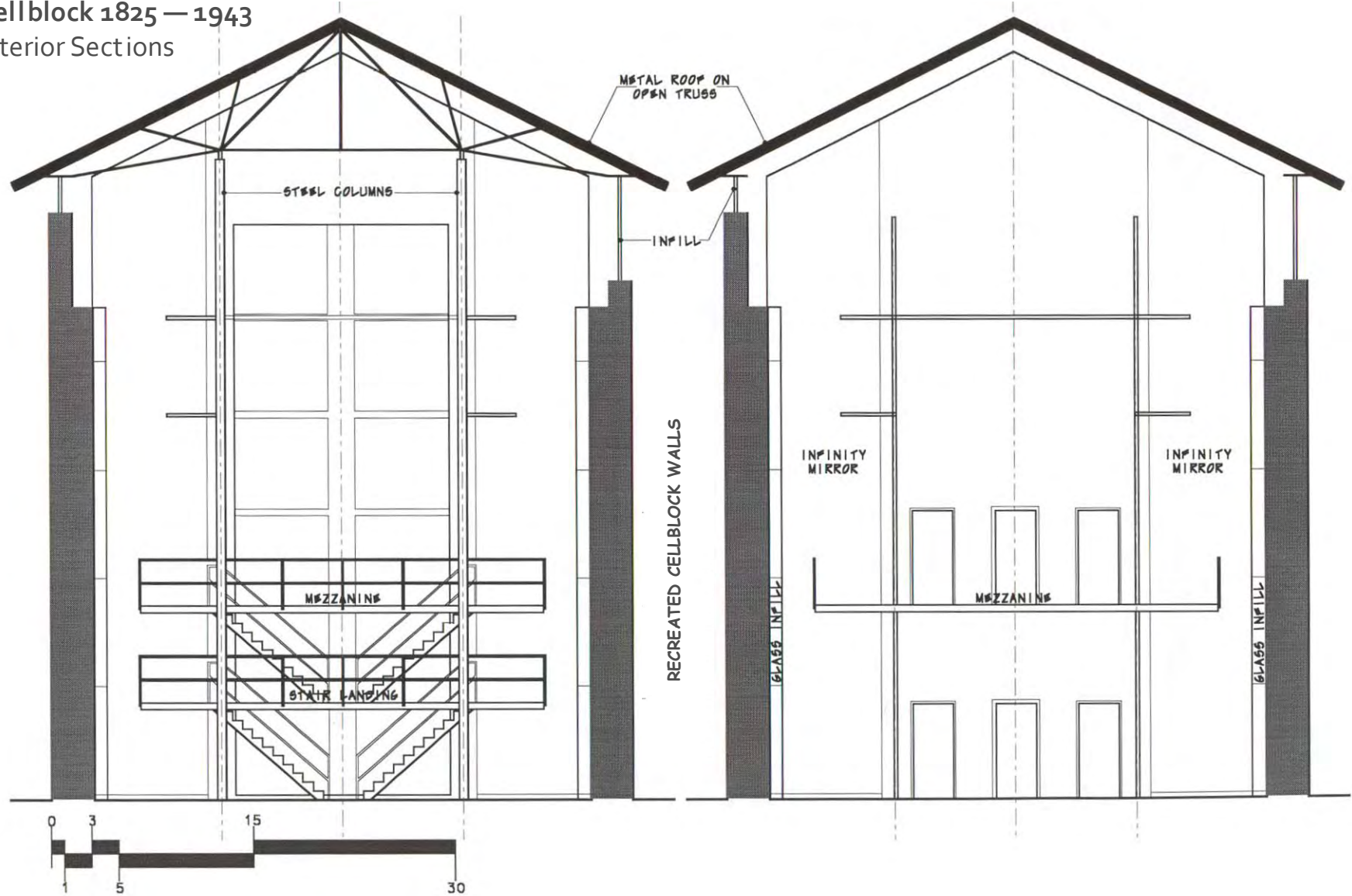


**Cellblock 1825 — 1943**  
 Proposed Floor Plan — Ground





Cellblock 1825 — 1943  
Interior Sections



## Content

### 1 Projections: The Stones Speak

- Historic images of prisoners and prison personnel

### 2 Cellblock Introduction

- 102,000 prisoners housed here from 1825-1943
- Size and number of cells
- Inmates were isolated from the world and from each other
- How does the building serve the goals of retribution and rehabilitation?
- Reform theories address the question of what divides criminal from law-abider
- Statistics gathered from prisoners aided in distinguishing one from the other

### 3 Constructing Reform

- Search for a new form: creation and evolution of Auburn
- Pennsylvania's search for a new form
- Jacksonian America: crime as threat to republican society; perceived loss of the authority of traditional institutions
- Architecture as a moral science

- Reform through design: prisons, almshouses, orphanages, asylums
- Individual characteristics of silent/congregate model (Auburn) and separate system (Pennsylvania)
- Common foundation of both penitentiary types: separation, obedience, labor
- Rivalry between Auburn and separate system
- European prisons; Bentham's panopticon
- Lessons of Auburn would be built upon at Sing Sing

### 4 Elevator / Isolation Cell

- Use of "dark cells" as punishment at Sing Sing

### 5 Sing Sing's Early Years 1825-40

- Represents second generation of reform; emphasis on architecture, order, discipline and work for profit rather than to develop "habits of industry"
- First warden Elam Lynds, transferred from Auburn
- More detail about brutal nature of labor involved in construction

- Evolution of the cellblock and Sing Sing complex
- Military-like atmosphere; lockstep, striped uniforms
- Hard labor; diversification of labor
- Constant observation, fear, punishments
- Warden Charles Wiltse, his attitudes, "catocracy;" close connection to Ossining
- Starvation
- Cold
- Treatment of mentally ill and of African-Americans

### 6 1830s Cell Re-creation

### 7 Reform at Sing Sing (late 1830s-late 40s)

- Whigs take power; investigation and removal of Wiltse
- Shift from deterrence and repression to faith in reformability
- Warden David Seymour; humane treatment
- Crime not individual responsibility, but rooted in family and city
- Rev. John Luckey; evangelical reform;



- Creation of library; Sunday school choir; temperance pledges
- Restoration of family and community ties
- Removal of mentally ill patients to Utica asylum
- Legal abolition of flogging
- Brief reappointment of Lynds

#### **8 Mt. Pleasant Female Prison: First U.S. Women's Prison**

- Temporary lodging of women in the old Cellblock, beginning 1837
- Opens in 1839
- Greek temple outside, Auburn plan cum nursery inside
- Major problems within 5 years
- Arrival of matron Eliza W. Farnham and her assistant Georgina Bruce in 1844
- Institution of controversial reform measures based on phrenology
- Reformers turned out with new election

#### **9 Unravelling of Reform: 1848-1900**

- Introduction or stepping up of other punishments: shower bath, dark cells, yoke, bucking

- Demise of Prison Discipline Society
- Public disinterest in penal reform; reduced financial support
- Understaffing, low pay, high staff turnover
- Overcrowding; double bunking
- Corruption
- Attitudes toward immigrants
- Inmate violence, riots, escape attempts
- Contract labor; changes in wake of 1842 law; loss of
- Over-stint labor system
- Idleness, deficits; crisis of 1890s
- Tobacco, opium use, other contraband
- Prison argot

#### **10 1860s Cell Re-creation** (houses two inmates)

#### **11 1900-1943**

- Progressive Era: by turn of century, medical or therapeutic model of reform
- Criminals changed by "curing" them
- Crime ascribed to social and psychological causes
- Prison opened to social workers,

psychologists, psychiatrists

- Classification of prisoners; creation of institutions with different security
- Indeterminate sentencing
- Warden Thomas Mott Osborne
- The Mutual Welfare League: "Do good. Make good."
- Anti-institutional approach: more varied day; elimination of stripes and lockstep
- Introduction of outdoor and indoor recreation, inmates court, store, classes
- Warden Lewis Lawes
- Lawes' books, radio program, innovations
- Lawes' opposition to the death penalty
- Modernization of Sing Sing and construction of new cellblocks 1922-34
- Prisoners moved out of the old cellblock in 1943

#### **12 1930s Cell Re-creation**

#### **13 Discharge from Sing Sing**

- Release of prisoners: what they were given on release timeline

## E. Death House / Sing Sing Today

### SING SING HISTORIC PRISON



#### Summary

*Capital punishment by electrocution cannot be excluded from the story of Sing Sing and punishment and reform in America. Therefore, as visitors leave the 1925 Cellblock exhibit area, they will have the option to bypass this exhibit on the Death House. Interpretation will situate death by electrocution within the historical continuum of reform thinking and public attitudes towards punishment. The authentic Sing Sing electric chair will be set in near complete re-creation of the death chamber, and interpretation will include the design and evolution of the Death House facility; the development of the electric chair, and stories of individual condemned prisoners. In addition, visitors will have the opportunity to have a video visit with a condemned prisoner (and actor).*

*Concluding the visitor experience will be an exhibit that provides a snapshot of the correctional facility that is Sing Sing today. Here, visitors may listen to oral histories recorded in recent years.*



## Exhibit Walkthrough

In the corridor-like space leading to the Death House exhibit is a panel that advises visitors that the exhibit can be bypassed. The corridor has a moveable wall that allows this space to merge with the temporary gallery.

Visitors move down the corridor toward a representation of one of the “dance hall” or holding cells. Here, a panel introduces the topic and presents a plan of the unique Death House complex.

Visitors then proceed into another corridor space, which they recognize and have interpreted for them as the “last mile,” or hall that the condemned traversed on the way to the chair. At the end of the hall is the door into the Death Chamber. Visitors can look in, but they cannot get in the room at this point, and they cannot get a full view of the chair itself from here because it is blocked by the open door.

Adjoining that doorway is an entry into a room of exhibits. Here, centered around a

nineteenth century dentist's chair, the story is told of the creation of the electric chair and how it was adopted at the end of the nineteenth century with the idea it was more humane than hanging and other forms of capital punishment. The story of the competition between Edison and Westinghouse as it related to the electric chair is presented as well, as is the ongoing debate about capital punishment.

Stories of individuals that were executed, including photos, information about their crime, official and personal correspondence and personal effects are included in this room. A computer interactive supplements the telling of these stories.

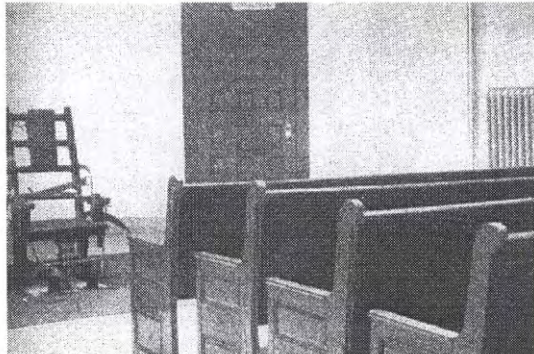
In a niche a video interactive allows visitors to “visit” with a condemned prisoner. Here, the mesh screen that would have separated visitor from the condemned is replaced by a monitor screen. The actor's script will be drawn from memoirs and other accounts of life on death row.

Visitors move from this room into the Death Chamber, re-created in its disconcerting blandness as it looked when the last execution was performed in the early sixties. Before them, visitors see the witness gallery, the electric chair with skylight above, and the doorway from the “last mile.” From this point of view, visitors can now see the “Silence” sign posted above that door.



Visitors may sit in the witness gallery and, as they do, read through published accounts of actual witnesses. Mounted on the wall behind the witness area are reproduced front pages of newspapers reporting on executions. The other part of the room that contains interpretive material is an alcove where the electrician operated the chair. Text provides technical description of the procedure, information on the electricians, as well as the ritual sequence of events surrounding each execution.

Visitors leave this room for a final exhibit area that provides follow-up interpretation on the death penalty in New York State,



and current methods of execution. In addition, there is a timeline highlighting major events and changes at Sing Sing since the mid 1940s, as well a summary description of Sing Sing as it currently exists, with an emphasis on changes in the architecture, population and prison administration. This space also holds seating where visitors can select and listen to Sing Sing oral histories of inmates and personnel.



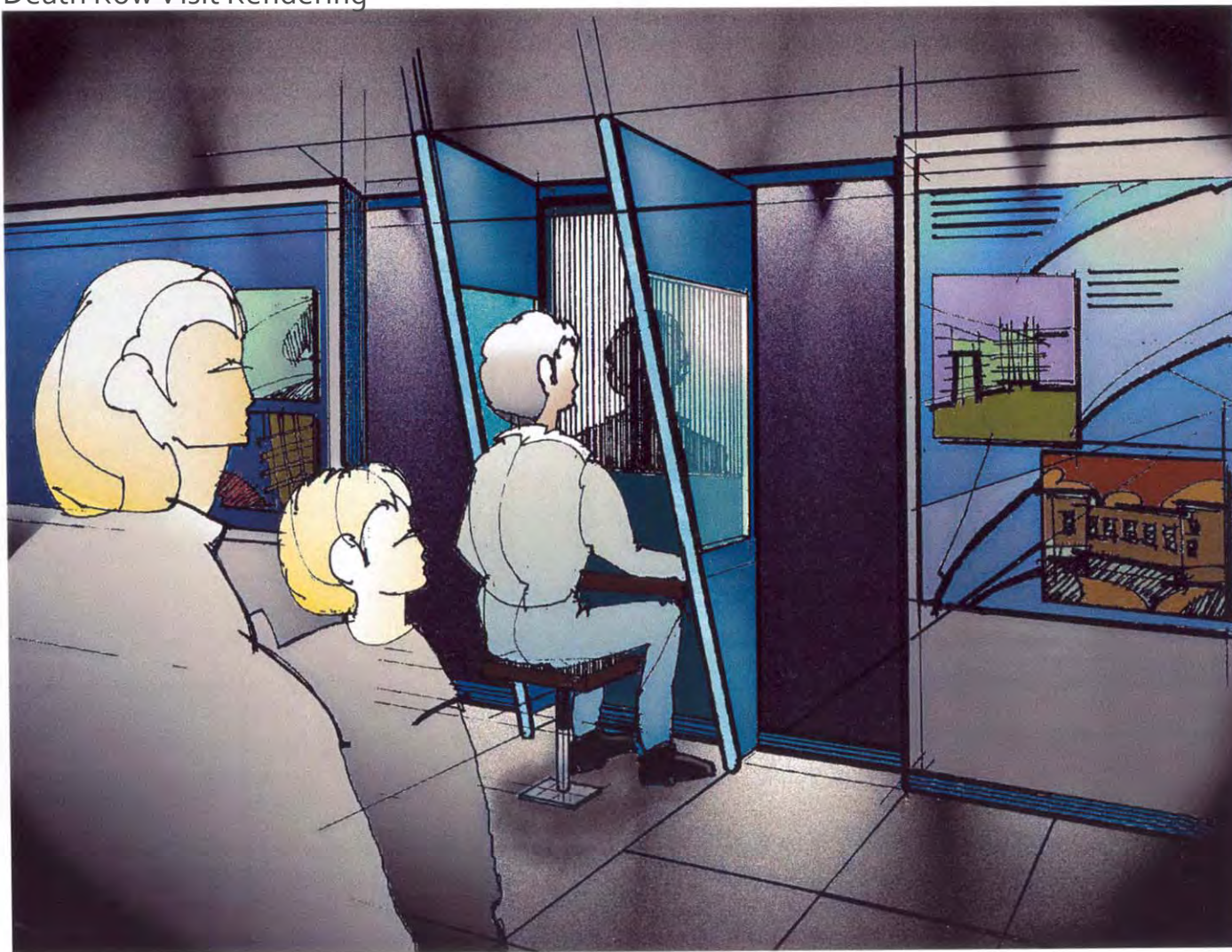
Existing 1825 Cellblock with Hudson River in distance



View of Sing Sing Correctional Facility from the Hudson River (photo source : Wikipedia)



Death House / Sing Sing Today  
Death Row Visit Rendering



## Content

### 1 Introduction

- Electric chair originally in a building adjacent to Cellblock
- Design of Death House, years of operation
- The “last mile;” from first step down it to execution took less than 5 minutes
- Death House argot, e.g., “Old Sparky;” “dance hall;” “in back” to refer to the chamber, etc.

### 2 Video “visit” with a condemned prisoner

- Daily and weekly routine in the Death House
- Routine of the last week

### 3 The Invention of the Electric Chair

- Electrocution as more humane than hanging; “botched” hangings
- Accidental electrocution leading to the promotion of capital electrocution by a Buffalo dentist
- Public attitudes toward progress and new technologies at end of the 19th c.
- Development of electricity, electro-

therapy, other uses, attitudes toward

- Experiments on dogs and other animals

### 4 To Westinghouse or Not to Westinghouse

- Controversy between George Westinghouse and Thomas Edison
- Westinghouse’s attempt to prevent electrocution
- Purchase by State of used Westinghouse equipment; Edison plot
- Edison propaganda; Westinghousing

### 5 Initial Use of Chair

- Execution of Arthur Kemmler at Auburn
- Opposition before and after Kemmler’s execution
- Installation of the chair at Sing Sing
- All electrocutions at Sing Sing after 1914

### 6 The Condemned: Stories of Individual Executed Prisoners

- (Graphic presentation and computer database)
- Number and sexes electrocuted at Sing Sing and in New York State

- Crimes and sentences
- Personal and legal correspondence
- Press
- Selections from Lawes’ *Life and Death in Sing Sing* about different prisoners

### 7 Witnesses

- Warden issues invitations on execution week: 12 “reputable citizens,” 3 court officials
- Also present are 2 doctors, a clergyman 7 keepers, the executioner, warden
- Relatives were not allowed
- Many sought invitations
- Reproductions of press accounts and other published recollections of witnesses

### 8 The Executioner

- Initially they wore disguises; other precautions to remain anonymous
- Total number of executioners, their recollections
- Many requests made to wardens to come in and throw the switch
- Lawes received over 700 applications



for a vacant executioner position, few qualified

- Ritual procedure surrounding the execution
- Technical information: voltage, duration etc.

## **9 Death of the Death House**

- Removal of electric chair in 1963; public attitude
- Abolition of death penalty in New York State
- Reinstatement of death penalty in New York State
- Lethal injection
- Continued use of the electric chair in other states, countries
- Subsequent uses of Death House building

## **10 Sing Sing to the Twenty-first Century**

- Timeline 1943-2000

## **11 Sing Sing Today**

- Facilities; personnel
- Prisoner population

- Size and conditions of cells and other accommodations

- Recreation and educational programs

## **12 Audio Stations**

- Recent Sing Sing oral histories

## F. Proposed Artifact List

### SING SING HISTORIC PRISON

#### Genesis of the American Prison exhibits:

##### *Introduction / You Are Here*

- Resonant object(s) that date(s) back to Sing Sing's earliest days, things that will make an impression in terms of their age, scale and weight, e.g. a set of keys, a lock, chain
- Movie poster from John Ford's "Up the River"
- Authentic or reproduced local newspapers, magazines describing the opening of Sing Sing

##### *Prehistory of the Sing Sing Site*

- Samples of rock types on site
- Munsee and/or Algonquin artifacts
- Artifacts of early settlers: Sparta, Sing Sing vicinity
- Artifacts of the Silver Mine Farm

##### *Why Here?*

- Quarrying tools
- Cut marble pieces

- Harness men wore in moving rock

##### *Wish You Were Here?*

- Stereoscopic views of Sing Sing
- Brochures or advertisements for trip to Sing Sing
- Sing Sing postcards; any other related souvenirs
- Letters to or from well-known visitors
- Gifts to or from well-known visitors
- 19th c. edition of *Democracy in America*

##### *Colonial Era: Prison Precedents*

- Noose, mask, gallows, platform
- Stocks, whipping post, pillory, public cage

##### *The First American Prisons*

- Artifacts related to Walnut Street Jail

##### *Newgate: New York's First State Prison*

- Prisoners' uniforms, personal belongings
- Bed boxes, other furnishings
- Bibles, other books
- Shoes made, cloth woven, nails cut, iron made by prisoners

- Tools and machines associated with prisoners' work
- Furniture, doors, locks used by prisoners
- Period container for alcohol

#### Up the River exhibits:

##### *Modes of Transport*

- Sloop-related artifacts, including schedules
- Steamship-related artifacts, including schedules
- Rail-related artifacts: schedules, tickets, seats, tools prisoners used in laying track

##### *Becoming an Inmate: The Intake Process in the 19th century.*

- Manacles and keys
- Haircutting tools
- Striped roundabout coat, cotton/wool blue striped shirt and trousers, wool socks, leather shoes
- Possessions taken on admission that never were returned or issued to others
- Prison register



- Wood bucket or tub (toilet)
- Water can

### Cellblock exhibits:

#### *Constructing Reform*

- Auburn-related artifacts: uniforms, furniture, personal items
- Early 19th century manuals on childrearing, e.g., *The Father's Book*, *The Rollo Code of Morals*
- Sunday school books
- Artifacts from any other early 19th c. New York state institutions, e.g. orphanages
- Model of Eastern State Penitentiary, Petonville prison

#### *Elevator / isolation cell*

- A door, bed plank, food trays etc used in dark cells

For the timeline that spans the exhibit areas covering 1825-1943, items such as the following will be inserted corresponding to

their period of origin:

- Shanks (prisoner-made weapons)
- Prisoner-made calendars
- Art, craft or utilitarian objects made by prisoners
- Objects made in an effort to escape or elude constant observation: e.g., some thing made to dig a hole in the wall to conceal objects, or a prisoner-made rope
- Contraband confiscated from prisoners; items used to smuggle things in, e.g., shoe with hollow heel
- Original letters or journals of convicts and personnel
- Mirrors

#### *Sing Sing's Early Years 1825-40*

- More clothes including cotton/wool cap
- Keepers' uniforms
- Muskets used by keepers to guard prisoners outside
- Cat (six strand whip), cord cat (rawhide version), cudgel (cane or stick possessed by keepers)
- Wood food kit

- Tins cups
- Iron spoon
- Comb
- Original cell door, bed board, blankets
- Leverlock hardware
- Stove that heated cell block
- Bed or equipment from hospital
- Kitchen equipment
- Death certificates of prisoners who died within Sing Sing
- Barrels, shoes, saddle hardware, locks, hats, cane seating made by prisoners
- Tools and machines associated with prison-made items
- Copies of early memoirs such as *A Voice from Sing Sing* and *Five Years in State's Prison*

#### *Reform at Sing Sing (late 1830s-late 40s)*

- Tracts issued by the Religious Tract Society (New York City)
- Certificate of membership in the Temperance Society
- Prisoner correspondence to family
- Copy of Rev. Luckey's *Life in Sing Sing*

*Mt. Pleasant Female Prison: First U.S. Women's Prison*

- Sewing supplies
- Furniture
- Items from nursery
- Measured head diagrams
- Phrenological chart of cranium
- Novels Farnham added to library
- Clothes worn by women

*Unravelling of Reform: 1848-1900*

- Shower bath equipment, yoke, head cage, ball and chain
- Personal belongings indicating ethnicity of immigrant prisoners
- Tobacco tins, pipes; same for opium
- Ironing and laundry-related equipment
- Appropriate period contract and State labor-related items

*1900-1943*

- Early fingerprints
- Unstriped uniforms
- Sports equipment
- Musical instruments

- Radio
- Period magazines
- Educational materials
- In-house newsletters
- Papers and objects of Lewis Lawes, Thomas Mott Osborne

*Discharge from Sing Sing*

- Street clothes, money as would have been given in 1830's and 1930-40s.

**Death House exhibits:**

*The Invention of the Electric Chair*

- A dentist's chair circa 1880s
- Electrotherapeutic equipment
- Early generator, lights

*The Condemned: Stories of Individual Executed Prisoners*

- Original correspondence to and from prisoners, legal and personal
- Personal belongings of condemned prisoners
- Furnishings of cells, dishes eaten off of etc.

- Uniforms as they were in the early 1960s.
- Prison-issue black shirts (worn for execution)
- Face masks

*Death Chamber*

- Bench seating for witnesses
- Electric chair
- Silence sign
- Doors

*Sing Sing to the Twenty-first Century and Sing Sing Today*

- Newsletters
- Weightlifting equipment
- Educational materials



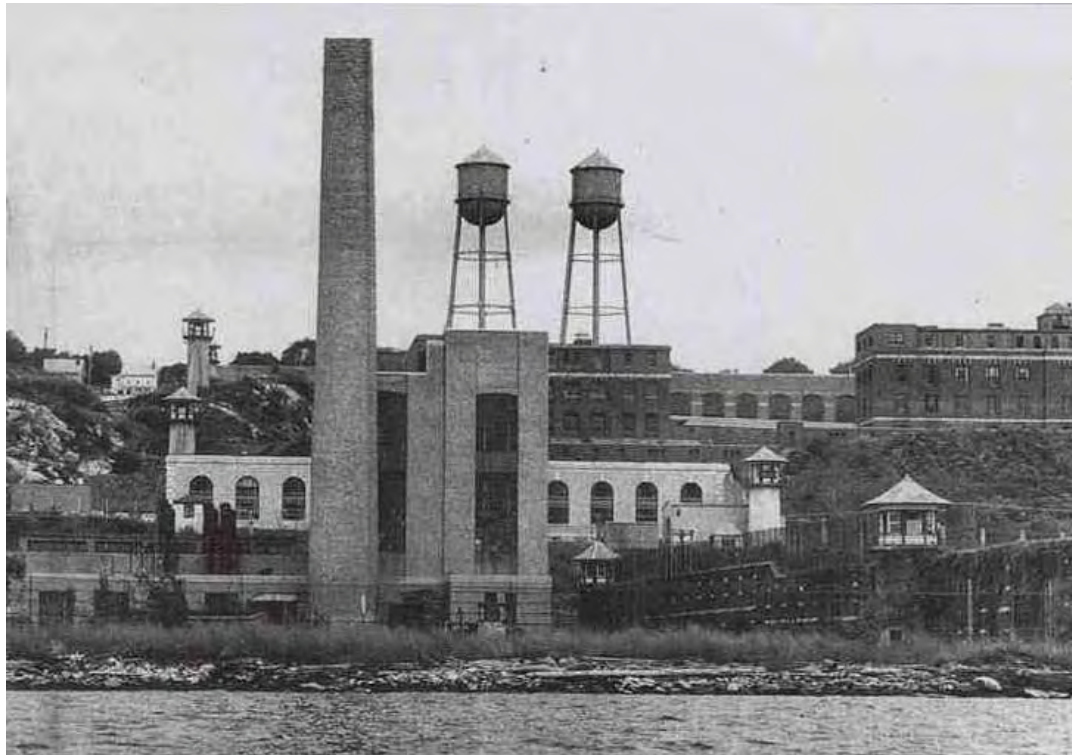
## G. Former Powerhouse Structural / Architectural Issues

SING SING HISTORIC PRISON

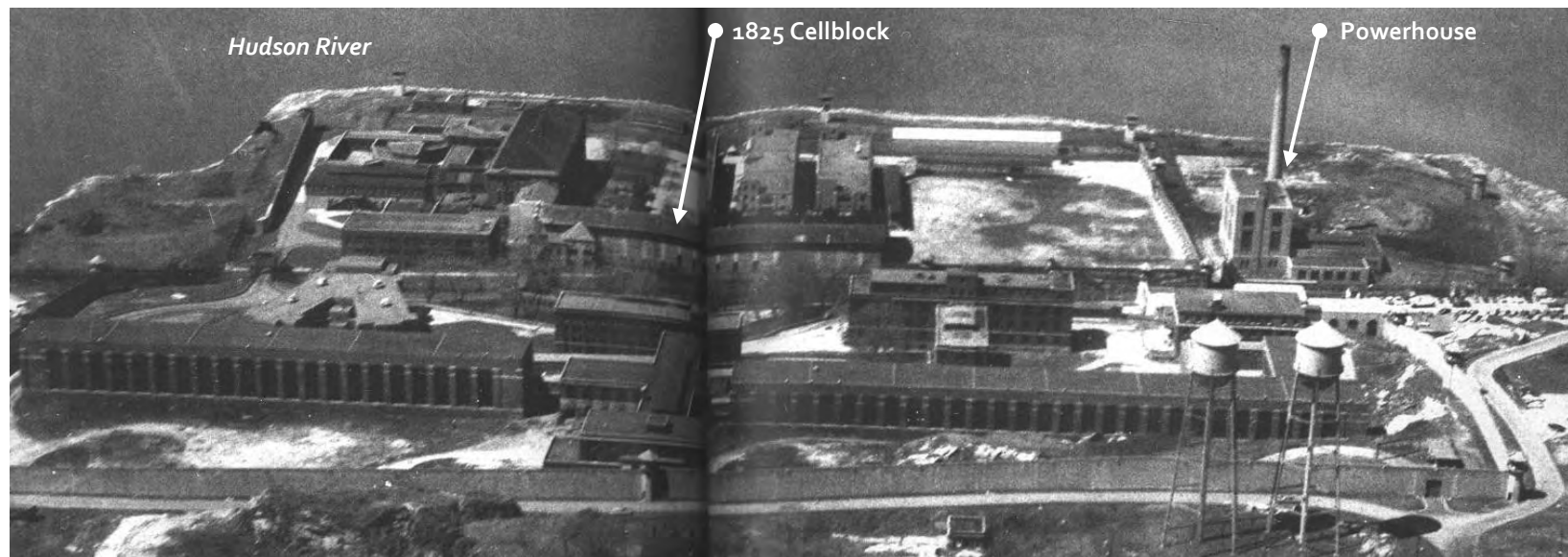
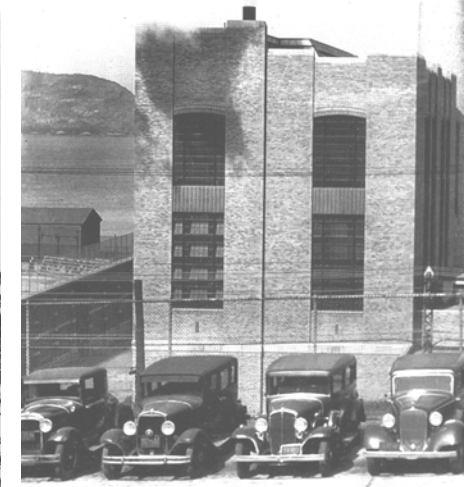
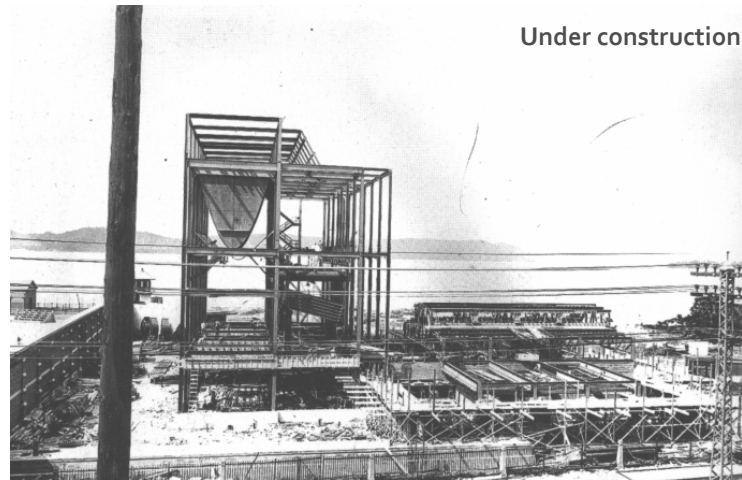
*Completed in 1936 at a cost of one million dollars, the Sing Sing Prison Powerhouse is reportedly to have been built using laborers from the prison exclusively.*

*The original Powerhouse complex featured four interconnected building forms of vari-*

*ous heights composed of a steel frame structure clad with buff color face brick backed by standard brick and featuring a concrete water table, limestone banding and accents, steel awning windows, arched lintels, cast stone coping and concrete slab roof.*



*The Powerhouse's chimney, almost twice as tall as the building, was located adjacent to the western side of the building. Freestanding at its base, the chimney was attached to the Powerhouse near the middle of its shaft.*





### **Historic Status**

*According to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, the Powerhouse structure has been determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Place as a contributing element of the Sing Sing Prison complex as part of the later development of the prison.*

### **Structural Assessment**

*Based upon initial visual inspection, the complex's exterior superstructure does not appear to have any significant structural issues. The catwalks and floor levels with the former plant portion of the structure require further investigation to assess their integrity.*

### **Adaptive Re-use Potential**

*The plan to utilize locker room and garage facilities portion of the original power house for the Sing Sing Prison Museum interpretive / gallery space is feasible given the configuration and condition of the*

*structure. Retaining the building's steam equipment operation in a portion of the building would not compromise the new museum. The building's architectural detail, massing and placement on the site contribute to its high degree of prominence on the waterfront.*

### **Additional Reuse Opportunities**

*Use the former power plant section of the building for future museum expansion and public assembly space*

*Reconstruct the plant's chimney at its original location using alternate materials to serve as an elevator, beacon or observatory point for the complex.*

*The large interior volume of the former power plant section would allow for monumentally sized exhibits including replication of multi-tiered cell blocks*

*The structure's preservation inherently yields environmental gains through retention of the embodied energy in the materials and labor utilized in its construction*

*Green architecture opportunities exist in the rehabilitation of existing structure's windows and HVAC system*

*Selected views from the power house's upper levels could be established to provide a visitor with a greater understand of the prison complex and its relationship to the railroad and the Hudson River.*



*Powerhouse Today*





### ***Maintenance Garage***

*Single story / 3 bays wide and 6 bays deep /  
approximately 5,400 sq. ft ground coverage /  
truss roof and integrated monitor / approxi-  
mately 30 feet high*



### ***Officer's Locker Room***

*Single story, 2 bays wide and 5 bays deep / approximately 2,750 sq. ft ground coverage / flat roof / approximately 20 feet high*





***Steam Plant Equipment Room***

*Single story / 2 bays wide and 5 bays deep /  
approximately 2,750 sq. ft ground coverage /  
flat roof / approximately 20 feet high*



**Former Power Plant**

*Three level / 4 bays wide and 2 bays deep / approximately 6,500 sq. ft ground coverage / two tiered flat roof with integrated northern facing skylight / approximately 75 feet high.*

*Original windows in upper level of former power plant area featured steel awning windows arranged in two stacked sets per bay divided by a metal spandrel panel*





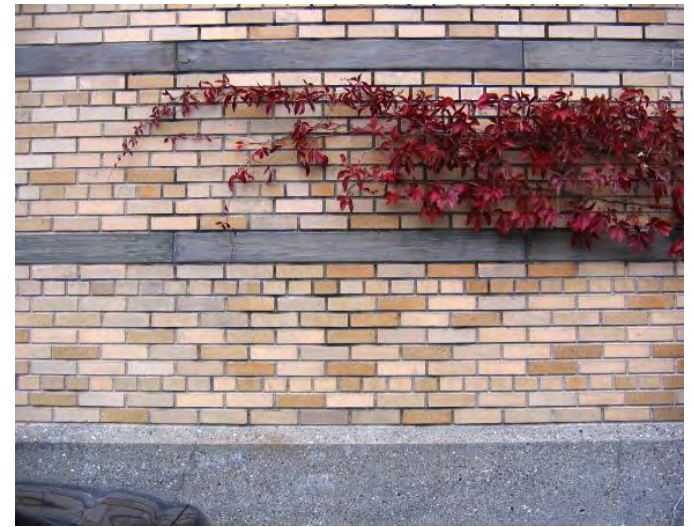
## Architectural Features

*The Powerhouse was designed in the Moderne style, newly emerging as a pre-dominant architectural style for civic and commercial structures in the 1930's.*

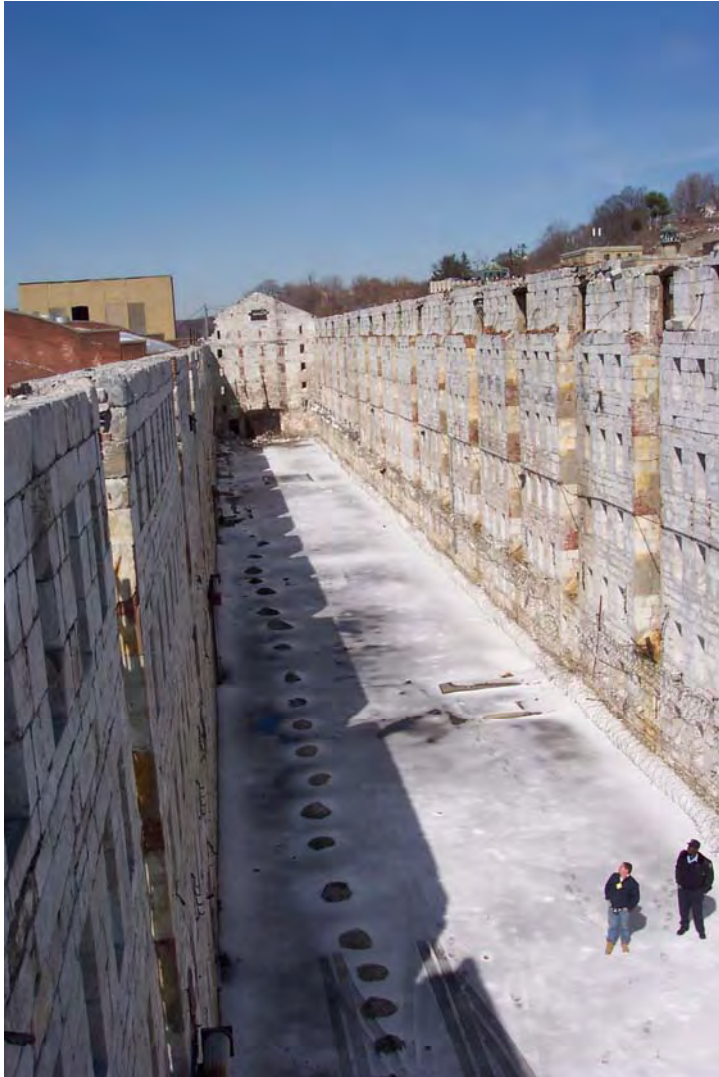
*Moderne buildings tend to be low and box-like in proportion with tall elements balanced by lower sections.*

*Ornament is sparingly used on Moderne-styled buildings. Design details are accomplished through alternating brick patterns and bonds. Windows are grouped in bands, and spandrels are expressed as continuous horizontals.*

*Although designed to evoke the Modernism of the day, certain details on Moderne-styled buildings allude to precedents in Classical architecture.*



### 3. Component Two: 1825 Cellblock Historic Site



#### Summary

*The 1825 Cellblock is the original Cellblock of Sing Sing and is the primary attraction and "artifact" of the Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum Complex. The revised design concept calls for the 1825 Cellblock to be stabilized and preserved as an archeological ruin. A secure tunnel will be designed and constructed to connect the Cellblock to the Museum. Visitors will be able to enter the original cellblock where a portion may be reconstructed.*

#### Structural Issues

- *Lateral Bracing: Cellblock walls are not laterally braced as the roof no longer exists.*
- *Stability: Wall lime mortar has severely deteriorated and the wall itself has little or no tensile capacity. Localized areas of the upper walls have failed. Walls could not withstand window loads imposed from a 100-year storm.*

#### Architectural Issues

- *Historic Preservation: The entire facility at Sing Sing is eligible for list on the National Register of Historic Places. The 1825 Cellblock is the original structure of Sing Sing.*
- *Historic significance: The Cellblock's historic significance is for a period of over one hundred years. While the outer walls stand, the cells themselves have been removed.*
- *Security with the Cellblock: A high secure fence south of the viewing area could provide security.*
- *Materials: Department of Correctional Services is to provide a list of acceptable materials for use within the Museum Complex.*
- *Emergency egress: Alarmed doors in the east/west masonry wall would provide emergency egress into a fenced holding area. Alarmed doors in the fence exiting into the larger area of the Cellblock might be required.*



## 4. Component Three: Archives and Research Library

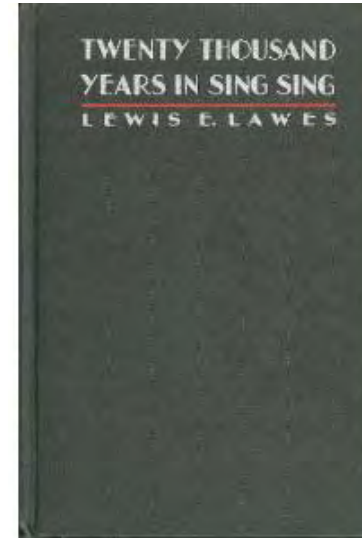
### Summary

*The third component of the Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum Complex would be the Archives and Research Library (Library) located on the upper floors of the Powerhouse. Selected views the Library could be established to provide a greater understand of the prison complex and its relationship to the railroad and the Hudson River.*

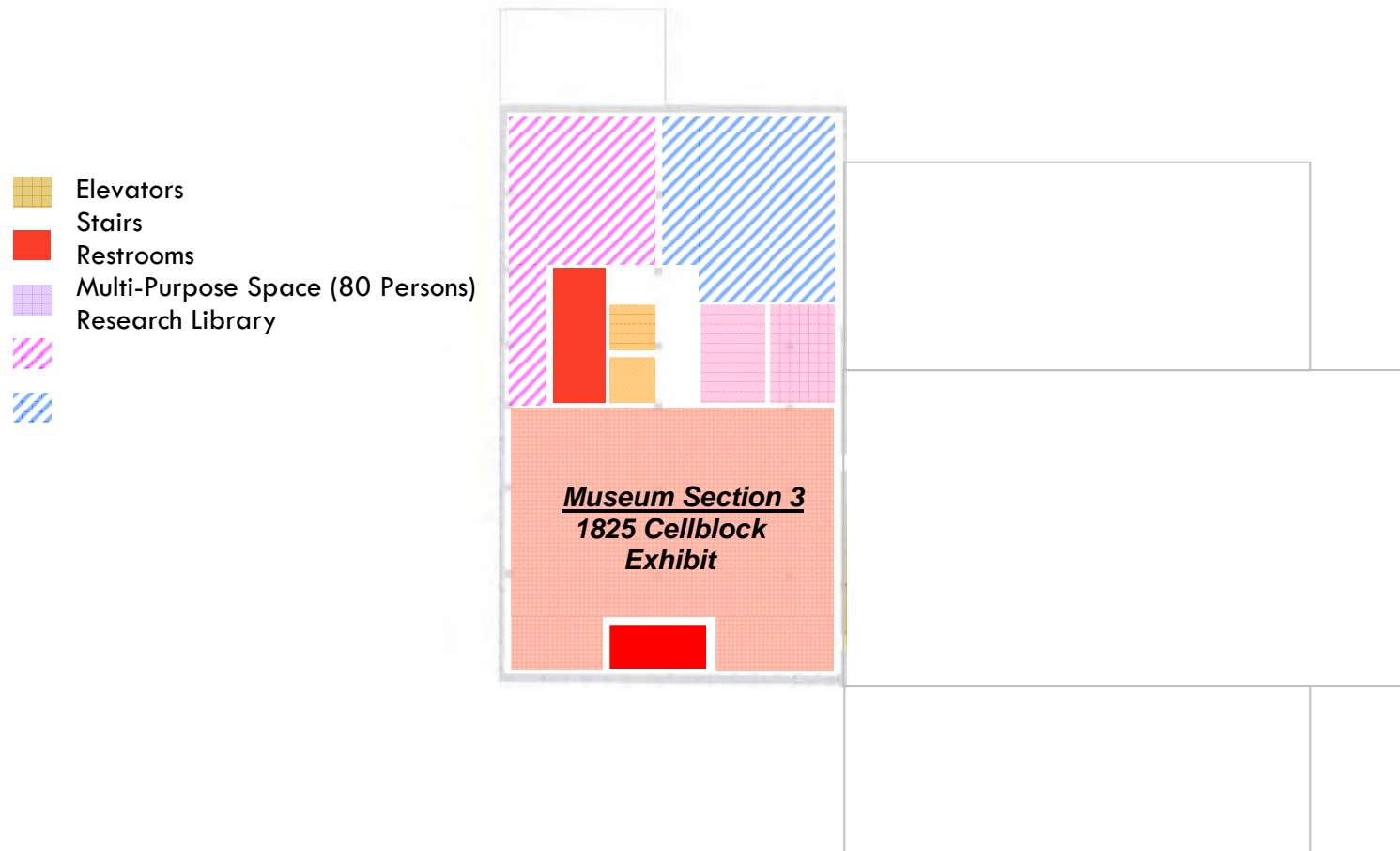


*The Ossining Heritage Area Tourism Committee met with staff from John Jay College of Criminal Justice. It was agreed that there will be a need for an archival research library to bring together the significant artifacts, books, and journal essays on penology. The Library will make available to researchers, teachers and students of penology an extensive range of essays which are indispensable for obtaining an overview of the historic theories and findings of this subject.*

*There also is the opportunity for multi-purpose rooms on the third and fourth floors. These rooms could be used for conference space, meeting rooms or office space.*



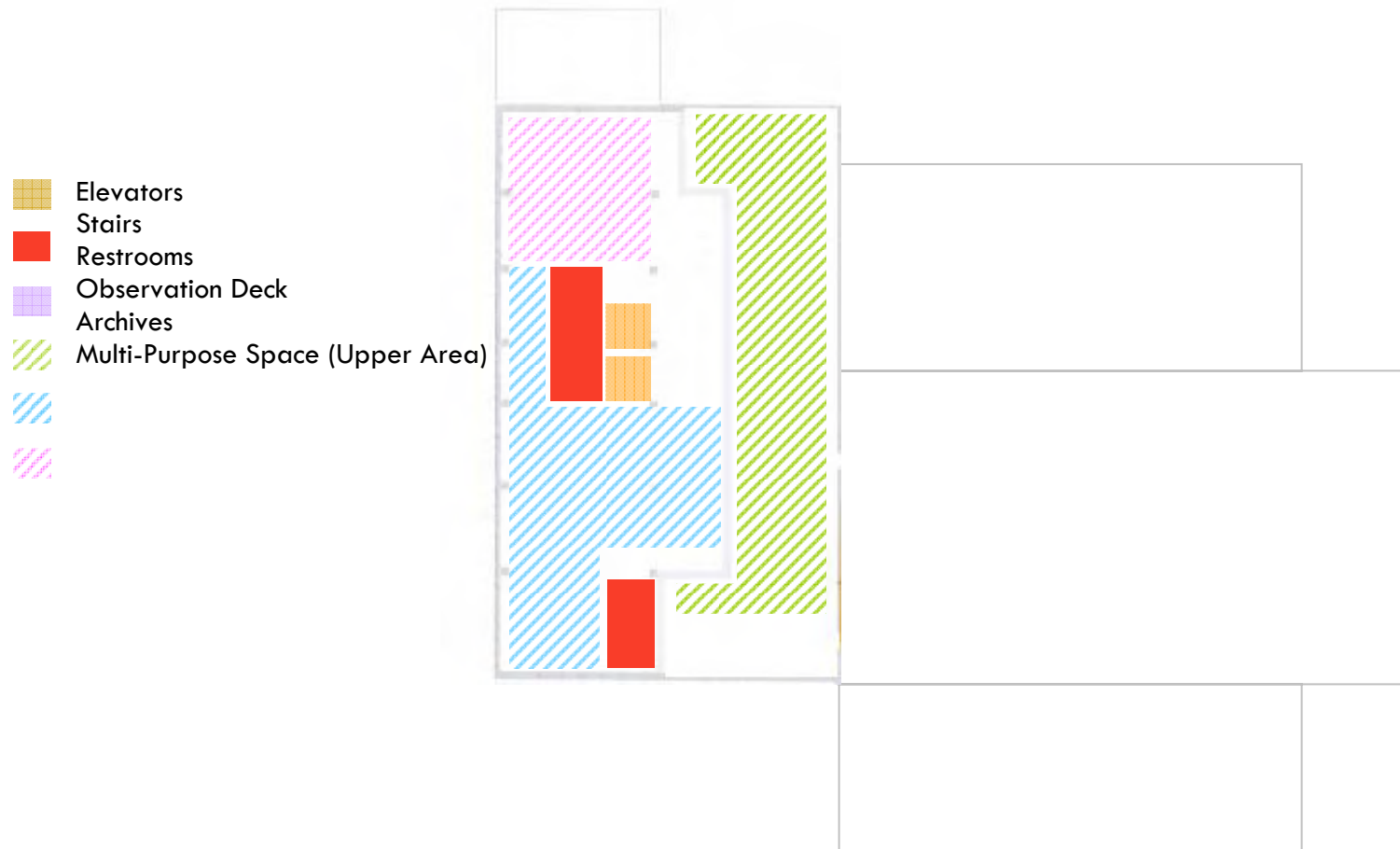
## Powerhouse: Third Floor



Westchester County Department of Planning 2008



## Powerhouse: Fourth Floor



Westchester County Department of Planning 2008

## 5. Operational Approach\*

The operating model selection for the Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum was based on analysis of three types: (a) a stand-alone organization, (b) a contractual operation and (c) an institutional partnership. Based on an analysis of these models, Model B "Contractual Operation," was identified as the best fit for the Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum by the Ossining Heritage Area Tourism Committee. Model B allows the museum to remain open year-round, rather than only nine months as proposed under Model C. In addition, it eliminates the need for a full start-up budget and the significant initial investment of Model A. Data regarding the pre-opening costs for personnel salaries and benefits for the three models are illustrated in Table 3-2. Annual total salaries and benefits associated with Model B are \$777,872. As mentioned in the marketing report (2001), this model utilizes a management organization that would charge a fee for services. Because the management organization would be a regional group, such as

Historic Hudson Valley, the economic benefits would stream throughout the region.

Benefits of this model include lower operational costs the ability to "piggyback" onto the management organization's established marketing and promotion programs. As discussed in the Tourism chapter of this report, organizations such as Historic Hudson Valley use integrative marketing strategies to promote the exciting attractions throughout the region.

However, as with any operating model, there are always potential risks. Anticipated risks of Model B include a lack of exclusive focus on the Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum's mission and goals (as the museum would not be the organization's only responsibility) and risk that the operational cost savings would not be as significant as anticipated.

In an effort to minimize these potential risks, the museum should negotiate in ad-

TABLE 3-1: CALCULATIONS OF ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION PERIOD IMPACTS: SING SING HISTORIC PRISON MUSEUM

Projected Development Expenditures	\$14,952,080		
Direct Person-Years of Development Related Employment	73		
Estimated Average Annual Construction Wages	\$62,599		
		Multipliers	
		Expenditures	Earnings
Applicable Multipliers	1.6197	0.3481	11.4
		Total Direct, Indirect, and Induced	
		Expenditures	Earnings
Estimated Total Economic Impacts	\$24,217,884	\$5,204,819	121

Note: Table based upon Sing Sing Marketing Report, Table IX-1.

Note: For Direct Person-Years of Employment, construction wages are estimated to be 40% of total hard costs less start up costs. All workers are assumed to have 30% overhead costs in addition to annualized salary.

Note: Average Annual Construction Wages from NYS Department of Labor Workforce and Industry Data. 2005 average wages of \$55,618 for Westchester County adjusted upward at 3% inflation rate.

Note: All estimates in \$2009.

\*This section from "Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum: Assessment of Economic Impacts and Planning Framework," May 2007.



vance the amount of time the management organization should devote to marketing and managing the Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum and supplement any additional needs with volunteers or interns. This additional staff could be located on-site at the museum or at the management organization's office, working closely with designated parties to ensure the museum's needs are met. The proposed museum would be a unique and interesting opportunity for students and volunteers to experience history and culture in the workplace.

Initially, the Village of Ossining should use Model B, as it will be the most likely to result in operation savings. However, in the event that these savings are not realized as expected, the museum should consider moving to a stand-alone operation where it would have more autonomy over the management and marketing. Unfortunately, these operational savings are not factors that can be fully determined prior to the museum's opening.

### **Sensitivity Analysis for Model B: Contract Operation**

Based on the sensitivity analysis presented in Table 3-3, it can be seen that the mid-range attendance scenario of 152,000 an-

nual visitors is profitable for Model B. At this visitor level, the price of admission for the Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum is \$12 for adults. This ticket price is approximately on par with other museums in the

**TABLE 3-2**  
**SALARY STRUCTURE FOR MODEL B: "CONTRACT OPERATION"**

Personnel	Model A: "Stand Alone"	Model: "Contract Operation"	Model C: "Institutional Partnership/9 months"
Executive Director/General Manager	\$118,976	\$54,080	\$54,080
Executive Assistant	\$48,672	n.a.	n.a.
Marketing/Group Sales Coordinator	\$65,978	\$37,856	\$37,856
Director of Finance	\$65,978	n.a.	n.a.
Bookkeeper	n.a.	\$40,019	\$40,019
Secretary	\$44,346	\$44,346	\$44,346
Curator	\$52,998	\$29,203	\$29,203
Assistant Curator: Programs (for education)	\$44,346	\$44,346	\$44,346
Development Director/Membership Technician	\$73,549	\$34,611	\$34,611
Shop Manager	\$44,346	\$36,774	\$36,774
Shop Clerks (1.5 FTE @ \$12.15/hr.)	\$51,176	\$51,176	\$38,382
Admissions Clerks (1.5 FTE @ \$12.15/hr.)	\$51,176	\$51,176	\$38,382
Guides/Docents (4 on the floor at all times @ \$14.80/hr.)	\$163,987	\$163,987	\$122,990
Security (2 FTE positions @ \$10.80/hr.)	\$60,653	\$60,653	\$45,490
Benefits (@20% average for hourly and FT employees)	\$176,240	\$129,645	\$113,296
<b>Total Salaries and Benefits</b>	<b>\$1,063,415</b>	<b>\$777,872</b>	<b>\$679,775</b>

Adapted from Sing Sing Prison Interim Concept Design and Sing Sing Marketing Report, Table VII-1.

Note: Salaries adapted from Westchester County Civil Service Titles and Sing Sing Prison Interim Concept Design, p. 72.

Note: 1 FTE= 54 hours per week\*52 weeks\*salary per hour

Note: Hourly salaries based upon Sing Sing Marketing Report, Table VII-1, p. 72, adjusted 4% inflation per year.

Note: Model based on \$2009.

**TABLE 3-3**  
**SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS FOR THREE OPERATING MODELS AT MID-RANGE ATTENDANCE SCENARIO**

	Weighted Average Admission Price (\$2008)	Model A "Stand Alone"		Model B "Contract Relationship"		Model C "Institutional Partnership/8 Months"	
		2009	2013	2009	2013	2009	2013
Mid-Range Scenario: Mid-Range Attendance/\$12 nominal adult admission	\$9.76	\$12,855	-\$100,896	\$210,343	\$120,751	\$566,376	\$547,534

Note: Scenarios are based upon "Attendance and Pricing Factors" table and the three operating model tables.

Note: Weighted Average Admission Price from "Attendance and Pricing Factors" table.

Hudson River Valley. Admission at Dia:Beacon and Lyndhurst is each currently at \$10 for adults, and Phillipsburg Manor in Sleepy Hollow costs \$9.

The weighted average adult admission price based on \$12 is \$9.76. This takes into account the reduced admission for children, senior citizens and groups. At the mid-range, the museum is expected to post an annual operating surplus of \$120,751 in year 2013 under Model B.

(Summarized from "Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum Assessment of Economic

Impacts and Planning Framework," NYU Capstone Program, 2007. For the full report, please contact the Westchester County Department of Planning, 914-995-4400)



## 6. Construction Budget

The following construction costs estimates are preliminary and are going to be refined as work progresses. The costs for construction were prepared using 2009 dollars.

### Component One:

#### Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum

Museum Construction	\$6,056,000
Contingency (10%)	\$605,600
Preliminary Site Costs	\$1,423,250
Contingency (10%)	\$142,325
Exhibit Installation	\$2,976,750
<u>Contingency (10%)</u>	<u>\$297,675</u>
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,501,600</b>
<u>Development Costs</u>	<u>\$3,450,480</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$14,952,080</b>

### Component Two:

#### 1825 Cellblock Historic Site:

Initial estimate of cost to stabilize and preserve the 1825 Cellblock, reconstruct a section of the original interior cellblock, sitework and access is between \$3,000,000-\$5,000,000. These estimates are preliminary and will be further refined as the project progresses.



### Component Three:

#### Archives and Research Library

Archives/Library	\$2,688,000
Contingency	\$268,800
Development Cost	\$887,040
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,843,840</b>