

Harriet Jacobs Legacy Committee Proposal for Plan of Action

Created for Dr. Tiya Miles' HIST 12M Course: Abolitionist Women and their Worlds

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¹ "Harriet Jacobs." In *Wikipedia*, November 3, 2024.
https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Harriet_Jacobs&oldid=1255160125.

Overview

To aid in bringing Harriet Jacob's home to life, we provide both immediate resources and ideas for initiatives that can be implemented in the future. Such initiatives include a newsletter, youth programs, local organization partnerships, as well as a website containing a digital history exhibit.

Youth Initiatives

Taking inspiration from the [Hildene Lincoln Family Home](#), the Harriet Jacobs Committee can effectively engage the youth through initiatives such as school programs, essay competitions, and day camps.² Beginning with school visits, we have developed grade-specific curricula centered on Harriet Jacobs' story, tailored to suit the developmental stages of students across various age groups.

For elementary school students, the program focuses on building foundational knowledge about slavery while introducing Harriet Jacobs' life story in an age-appropriate manner. Middle school students will explore her story in greater depth, with an emphasis on themes such as courage, resilience, and justice. High school students, in turn, will engage with Jacobs' autobiography as a literary and historical work, analyzing its significance and exploring its rhetorical strategies.

A detailed outline of an example curricula to use is provided below:

Educational Program Design:

Elementary School (Grades K–5): Building Foundational Knowledge

- **Focus Areas:** Introduction to slavery, Harriet Jacobs' early life, and age-appropriate narratives on resilience and courage.
- **Program Components:**
 - **Storytime Sessions:** Simplified retellings of Harriet Jacobs' childhood and life, using illustrated books and visual aids would be ideal for a younger audience. Following this [teacher's guide](#) for *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, may be a helpful resource to use.³
 - **Interactive Activities:**
 - **Timeline-building:** Creating visual timelines of Harriet Jacobs' life events. An example of a timeline that can be replicated is provided below:

² "School Programs | Hildene." Accessed December 16, 2024. https://hildene.org/learning/school_programs.

³ Manfra, Meghan M. *A Teacher's Guide to the Signet Classics Edition of Harriet Jacobs' Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. Penguin Group, 2008.

<https://www.harrietjacobs.org/timeline.html>.⁴

- “History Detectives” Game: Students explore replicas of artifacts or items from Harriet’s era to learn about her life and the broader historical context.
- **Field Experience:** Guided tours of Harriet Jacobs’ home with storytelling and activity stations designed for engagement in each room.
- **Assessment/Feedback:** Reflection drawings or short oral presentations about what they learned.

Middle School (Grades 6–8): Exploring Courage, Resilience, and Justice

- **Focus Areas:** Deeper exploration of Harriet Jacobs’ narrative, the abolitionist movement, and themes of justice and resilience.
- **Program Components:**
 - **Workshops:**
 - **Creative Writing:** Students can compose letters or diary entries from the perspective of someone in Harriet Jacobs’ time.
 - **Interactive Exhibits:**
 - **"Freedom Trail" Activity:** A scavenger hunt-style tour that teaches students about key events and figures of the abolitionist movement around her home.
 - **Discussions:** Facilitated conversations around morality, human rights, and the impact of slavery on modern society.
- **Assessment/Feedback:** Group presentations or essay submissions on the importance of Jacobs’ legacy.

High School (Grades 9–12): Analyzing Historical Significance and Rhetoric

- **Focus Areas:** Critical analysis of *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Harriet Jacobs’ role in literature and history, and the abolitionist narrative.
- **Program Components:**
 - **Literary Analysis:**
 - Examination of rhetorical strategies, narrative techniques, and the historical significance of Jacobs’ autobiography.
 - Comparison with other abolitionist writings and narratives.
 - **Debate and Dialogue:**
 - Students engage in debates on topics like the ethics of resistance and the role of women in the abolitionist movement.

⁴ Historic Edenton State Historic Site. “Harriet Jacobs - Timeline.” Accessed December 16, 2024. <https://www.harrietjacobs.org/timeline.html>.

- Roundtable discussions featuring scholars and professors with expertise in the abolitionist movement, such as Professor Miles!
 - **Project-Based Learning:**
 - Research projects on abolitionist figures or events tied to Harriet Jacobs’ story.
 - Public presentations or digital storytelling projects shared with the community.
- **Assessment/Feedback:** Detailed essays, multimedia projects, or performances.

In addition to the established curriculum during school visits, scheduled day camps (open to all ages) is another approach that combines hands-on, engaging activities with meaningful educational experiences. These camps would immerse children/young adults in the history and legacy of Harriet Jacobs while providing interactive ways to learn about the broader themes of slavery, resilience, and freedom.

Day Camps

- **Target Audience:** Students aged 7–18
- **Sample Theme:**
 - “Activists in Action”: Role-play sessions where participants advocate for abolition using historically accurate arguments and methods.
- **Program Ideas:**
 - Interactive exhibits with hands-on artifact handling. Close analysis of [Harriet Jacobs’ letter to Amy Post](#) alongside other primary sources.⁵ Discuss its historical context and infer its significance, examining how it reflects Jacobs’ personal experiences, her resilience, and her strategic efforts in the fight for freedom and justice
 - Take a guided tour of Harriet Jacobs’ home, where students will explore each room while learning about key moments of her story, immersing themselves in her history through interactive engagement.
 - Invite special guests, such as scholars and professors with expertise in the abolitionist movement, to engage with students in thought-provoking discussions that inspire deeper reflection and meaningful dialogue

Partnering with local public school districts offers a practical and effective approach to engaging students and encouraging them to explore the home of Harriet Jacobs. To initiate these partnerships, the Harriet Jacobs Legacy Committee would need to establish itself as a recognized

⁵ Autograph letter, signed: Harriet Jacobs to Amy Post June 21, 1857. Isaac and Amy Post Family Papers. University of Rochester Library

community partner within each district. For example, the process for becoming a community partner with Boston Public Schools is outlined in this [file under section 3](#).⁶

Feel free to reach out if you have any questions about the youth initiatives we proposed—we'd be happy to discuss them further!

⁶ Boston Public Schools. "Guide for School-Community Partners." Google Docs, June 2020. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Rjj3UPIzf6qBcvVwV76UsiCLr5HmhdKbyb--_9m1Wf0/edit?tab=t.0&usp=embed_facebook.

Newsletters

Email newsletters crucially engage with supporters and the community-at-large, updating them on your progress, soliciting donations, and most importantly, sharing Harriet Jacobs’s story far and wide, at little cost to you. We’ve put together a guide, of sorts, to spark ideas and to generally make an implementation process smoother — and we promise that it is less overwhelming than it seems!

Below are examples of effective emails — and aspects from each we found to be effective:

- [Newton Food Pantry Seasonal Newsletter](#)⁷ (via **Mailchimp**)

Highlights:

- **Staff, Volunteer, Client Spotlights** spotlight *humans*, through photos and a story
- **Newsworthy update from board members** opens the email
- **Clean design** incorporates branding, logo
- **“Did You Know” section** conveys new information

Lowlights:

- Less visually-appealing because of **large amounts of white space**

- [Hildene, Lincoln Family Home Monthly Newsletter](#)⁸ (via **Mailchimp**)

Highlights:

- **Visually-appealing and clearly distinct sections**
- **Photos, easy-to-read layout**
- **Engagement with readers** through fundraising, upcoming events, volunteer appreciation sections

Lowlights

- Design is a bit clunky

Below are aspects we found make newsletters most visually-appealing and engaging, based on the above examples, online research (from [Constant Contact](#)⁹, [WeConservePA](#)¹⁰, and [EmailTooltester](#)¹¹), and our own ideas.

Features:

- Photos: add a personal touch and break up text
- Equal and intentional amounts of white space: ensure visual-appeal and break up text

⁷ “September News from the Newton Food Pantry.” Accessed December 16, 2024.

<https://mailchi.mp/newtonfoodpantry.org/happy-holidays-from-the-newton-food-pantry-20194494?e=3dbf227638>.

⁸ “News from Hildene.” Accessed December 16, 2024.

<https://mailchi.mp/hildene/hildene-may-newsletter-9867311?e=e283817e3a>.

⁹ “11 Nonprofit Newsletter Ideas to Engage Your Readers | Constant Contact.” Accessed December 16, 2024.

<https://www.constantcontact.com/blog/nonprofit-newsletter/>.

¹⁰ “Effective Email Newsletters for Nonprofits : WeConservePA Library.” Accessed December 16, 2024.

<https://library.weconservepa.org/guides/177-effective-email-newsletters-for-nonprofits>.

¹¹ Wibowo, Inka. “9 Best Email Marketing Platforms for Nonprofits (+ Discounts).” EmailTooltester.com, October 18, 2023.

<https://www.emailtooltester.com/en/blog/email-marketing-platforms-for-nonprofits/>.

- Distinct headers: separate sections and ensure consistent branding
- Various sections for: human stories, opportunities for enrichment about Jacobs' story, and upcoming community-building events

Below are more specific sections ideas for the content-portion of your newsletter:

Sections:

- Stories
 - “Origin stories” of Legacy Committee members: What drew them to this work? Where do their interests lie? What is their role on the team?
 - Historic anecdotes from Harriet Jacobs' life
 - Profiles of donors or supporters
 - Q&A with Janet, student interns
- Organizational updates (as applicable/available)
 - Mission statement
 - Broader timeline, emphasizing points for public engagement, like the zoning approval process or important fundraising deadlines
- Photos of the house's interior and exterior
 - Could recruit Harvard student-photographers or local artists to photograph the space
- Historic elements
 - Primary documents (e.g. scans of Jacobs' letters)
 - Excerpts from “Incidents”
 - Notes from HJLC archivist, Dr. Miles, other historians to orient Jacobs' story and legacy amidst current-day events
 - Summaries of our class's products
- Upcoming events
 - Tours of the house (if applicable)
 - Any events organized by HJLC
 - Events held by other academics or organizations (could be local or across the country) spotlighting or related to Jacobs' legacy
- Action items
 - A call for volunteers
 - Appeal for donations
 - An ask to spread the word (could incentivize: 10 newsletter forwards earns a postcard of Jacobs, 20 earns a copy of the novel, etc.)
- Community highlights
 - Any events attended by HJLC members
 - Other local groups/non-profits' events, to strengthen community partner relationships, community ties and supporters' engagement

- Art shows, university events, public school showcases, neighborhood festivals, etc.
 - Could indicate whether a member of HJLC will also attend, as a way for readers to connect with HJLC and to facilitate community-building
- News articles
 - Other efforts that highlight Jacobs’ legacy ([ARTNews](#)¹² on Johnica Rivers’ project), the effort to preserve the house ([The Crimson](#)¹³)
 - Less-directly related to the effort: highlight updates/accomplishments/work by members of the HJLC, efforts across the country to preserve historic buildings, updates on Harvard’s Legacy of Slavery report, etc.

There are many options for email platforms out there, and each specializes in different features, offers different prices (and discounts for nonprofits), and perhaps most importantly, each requires a different amount of time and effort to learn to use.

Here are the most important features to look for, according to [EmailTooltester’s](#) “9 Best Email Marketing Platforms for Nonprofits (+ Discounts).”¹⁴

- Ease of use
- Range of visually-appealing email templates
- Degree of contact segmentation, which allows directed-campaigns based on subscribers’ shared traits, like prior interactions with emails, whether they have donated, age, gender, and place of living, and more

Possible email platforms (and their pros and cons), according to [EmailTooltester](#):

- [MailerLite](#)¹⁵

Pricing: 30% discount for nonprofits. Free for first 1000 contacts, \$9/month for 500 contacts on Growing Business Plan which includes more features ([more information](#))

Highlights:

 - Renowned for ease of use: simple, intuitive, centralized features
 - Most affordable options for beyond 1000 subscribers

Lowlights:

 - Free plan lacks premade templates
 - Does not have spam feature to prevent emails from going directly to recipients’ spam folders

¹² “The Harriet Jacobs Project Resurrects the Story of North Carolina Icon.” Accessed December 16, 2024.

<https://www.artnews.com/art-news/artists/harriet-jacobs-project-edenton-north-carolina-1234712751/>.

¹³ “The Fight to Preserve Harriet Jacobs’ Legacy in Cambridge | News | The Harvard Crimson,” November 22, 2024.

<https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2024/11/22/harriet-jacobs-house-cambridge-legacy/>

¹⁴ Wibowo, Inka. “9 Best Email Marketing Platforms for Nonprofits (+ Discounts).” EmailTooltester.com, October 18, 2023.

<https://www.emailtooltester.com/en/blog/email-marketing-platforms-for-nonprofits/>.

¹⁵ EmailTooltester.com. “MailerLite Review (2024) - A Game Changer or a Deal Breaker?,” November 25, 2024.

<https://www.emailtooltester.com/en/reviews/maillite/>.

- [Mailchimp](#)¹⁶

Pricing: 15% discount for nonprofits. Free for first 500 contacts, \$13/month for 500 contacts on Essentials Plan with limited analytics, \$20/month for 500 contacts on Standard Plan with analytics ([more information](#))

Highlights:

- Clean, simple, powerful template editor
- Thorough reporting on analytics
- Easy and comprehensive integration with other software/elements already in use (WordPress, Shopify, etc.)
- Extra (and continuously-added) features like appointment booking

Lowlights:

- Plans have grown more expensive in recent years, likely to continue to
- Requires high-level of organization of your contacts and schedule for sending emails

- [Constant Contact](#)¹⁷

Pricing: 30% discount for nonprofits. \$12/month for 500 contacts; \$30/month for 1000.

Highlights:

- Specialized event marketing capabilities, including event registration, etc.
- High delivery rates, meaning emails were opened by a large number of contacts

Lowlights:

- Segmentation only available for higher-tier payment plans
- Not a great price for the provided services, as compared to other platforms' pricing and services

- [ActiveCampaign](#)¹⁸

Pricing: 20% discount for nonprofits. Starter plan: \$19/month for 1000 contacts, \$49/month for 2500

Highlights:

- Best platform for automation (i.e. sending automated emails soliciting donations one day after a user browses your fundraising page, etc.)
- Offers free account migration (if you are coming from a different email software)

Lowlights:

- Not easily intuitive

¹⁶ EmailTooltester.com. "MailChimp Review 2024 - Unbiased Pros & Cons of the Email Giant," October 31, 2024. <https://www.emailtooltester.com/en/reviews/mailchimp/>.

¹⁷ EmailTooltester.com. "Constant Contact Review (2024): Some Pros, Many Cons!," April 8, 2024. <https://www.emailtooltester.com/en/reviews/constant-contact/>.

¹⁸ EmailTooltester.com. "ActiveCampaign Review 2024 - When (and When Not to) Use It?," December 16, 2024. <https://www.emailtooltester.com/en/reviews/activecampaign/>.

- Very advanced, requires frequent maintenance
- Not catered towards beginners

We tried MailerLite’s 30-day free trial. There are several prerequisites to creating an account, accessing email templates, and sending emails.

Here is what you will need:

1. Mailing address, to be embedded in the website’s landing page and in emails’ footers
2. Email address that is verifiable
3. Email address domain, which then must be authenticated by the email platform, in order to send emails from a designated “sender email address.” This also helps prevent emails from directly funnelling into a recipient’s spam filter.
 - a. An email domain is the portion of an email address that succeeds the “@” — for example, in name@college.harvard.edu, **college.harvard.edu is the domain**
 - b. Email domains often match the website url, so both should be set up at the same time
 - c. The domain is available for purchase through a variety of sites, including <https://workspace.google.com/> (click “Get Started”), which grants you access to the Google Suite, like Gmail, Google Drive, Google Docs, etc.
 - i. Costs range from \$12 - \$20 per/year, and depend on the number of email addresses expected to be in the domain
 - ii. The “harrietjacobscommittee.com” domain is currently available via Google Workspace and priced at \$12/year
 - d. Other services that establish domains include [SquareSpace](#) (which priced the same “harrietjacobscommittee.com” domain at \$14). SquareSpace is more specialized in website-building.
 - e. MailerLite (and whichever platform you choose) has [detailed steps](#) for authentication, once you have secured your domain

Technical Tips for newsletter-writing:

- Write intentional headlines that grab readers’ attention and inspire urgency
- Ensure “headlines” that delineate sections are strong, effective, and visually-appealing
- Make call to action stand out and be easily visible (e.g. a differently-colored “DONATE” button)
- Prime time for sending emails, particularly from non-profit organizations, is 10 a.m., according to MailerLite’s data
- Most organizations send emails no more than 11 days apart, according to MailerLite’s data
- It is possible to track the newsletter’s efficacy by tracking the rate of people who open the email, as well as those who click the links embedded

Please let us know if you have any questions about any of the points or processes enumerated above. We hoped to clarify, delineate, and otherwise demystify the process of creating a newsletter, which, honestly, is much smoother sailing once you select your platform. Each has a multitude of templates and tutorials specific to its particular software, which will be immensely helpful for getting started, working out the kinks, and quickly and efficiently designing newsletters. We encourage you to select the platform option that is cheapest and most easy for your use, to discuss your website strategy as you select your domain (although you do not necessarily need a website in advance of sending out the emails), and to again, reach out with any questions. We have a long winter break ahead of us, and technology skills that we are happy to help put to use. You can reach us at emilyschwartz@college.harvard.edu.

Note: There are many FAQs and comprehensive guides for newsletter-writing that we referenced, but did not fully summarize, like “Effective Email Newsletters for Nonprofits” ([WeConservePA](#)) and “11 Nonprofit Newsletter Ideas to Engage Your Readers” ([Constant Contact](#)).

Collaborative Initiatives

The Harriet Jacobs Legacy Committee could largely benefit from fostering partnerships with local organizations and using these connections to create joint initiatives. This, in turn, can garner attention for the Harriet Jacobs house and establish a network of allies and collaborators for the future. We have included examples of real local partners that the Jacobs Committee can choose to reach out to and ideas of what initiatives could look like depending on the nature of what the partnership could look like.

1. Partner: The Cambridge Commission on the Status of Women
 - a. Contact information
 - i. Kimberly Sansoucy, Executive Director: ksansoucy@cambridgema.gov
 - b. [Website link](#)
 - c. Possible collaboration: Detailed below in Case Study #1. Refer to the ‘How this Applies’ section. Together, the Harriet Jacobs Legacy Committee and the Cambridge Commission on the Status of Women can make a walking tour that integrates the Harriet Jacobs home into it.
2. Partner: Cambridge Women’s Heritage Project
 - a. Contact information
 - i. Sarah Burks: sburks@cambridgema.gov, 617-349-4687
 - b. [Website link](#)
 - c. Possible collaboration: The Cambridge Women’s Heritage Project has a database of around 150 women and women’s organizations in order to “celebrate the contributions of women from the early days of Cambridge to the present”. It currently has an [entry](#) on Harriet Jacobs with a short two paragraph biography, a reference to her book, and a [video history](#) of Harriet Jacobs' life produced by Mount Auburn Cemetery.¹⁹ The Harriet Jacobs Legacy Committee could work with the Women’s Heritage Project to add information about Harriet Jacob’s house to her biography. So far, the biography only mentions “she lived in Cambridge for five years, renting a house on Trowbridge street that she ran as a boarding house for two years for Harvard students from 1870 to 1872. She then spent three additional years in a house on the corner of Story and Mount Auburn streets before moving to Washington D.C.”²⁰ One key change to this entry could be to add the exact address where Jacobs lived and to mention it still exists in Cambridge to this day. Although slightly unconventional for their database, the entry could include a brief sentence describing the current Legacy Committee’s

¹⁹ Cambridge Women’s Heritage Project. “Cambridge Women’s Heritage Project Database, J,” June 2020. https://www.cambridgema.gov/cwhp/bios_j.html.

²⁰ Cambridge Women’s Heritage Project. “Cambridge Women’s Heritage Project Database, J,” June 2020.

efforts to help preserve the home and can feasibly add a link to a Committee website (if one were to be made in the future).

3. Partner: History Cambridge

- a. Contact information: info@historycambridge.org
- b. [Website link](#)
- c. Possible collaboration: History Cambridge is a versatile history organization, previously known as the ‘Cambridge Historical Society’, which focuses on archival material and frequently shines a light on certain historical stories through articles, events, and ‘History Café’s, types of virtual interviews which are streamed and also shared on their website. They have previously written an article named ‘Crossing Paths in Cambridge: Harriet Jacobs, Imogen Willis Eddy, and the Harvard College Observatory’, which details how Jacobs and one of the earliest female “computers” who worked at the Harvard College Observatory crossed paths due to Jacobs’ boarding house at 17 Story St.²¹ Nevertheless, the article only shows photos and the address of the house today, with not many more details. Additionally, History Cambridge conducted a ‘History Café’ with Dr. Miles and some of her students from her 2021 class of ‘Abolitionist Women and their Worlds’, where in this [video](#), the Jacobs house is also discussed but one of the students mentions she is “not sure who owns 17 Story St. now” and does not provide any details which could focus attention on the house or any funding efforts.²² Therefore, we believe that History Cambridge has enough precedent with the Harriet Jacobs boarding house to collaborate with the HJLC for a large event. In it, participants could go to 17 Story St. where one of the HJLC members could conduct a tour of the outside/inside of the Jacobs home, similar to what was done for our class when we visited. After the tour, HJLC members could mention the Jacobs house is in need of funding and donations to help preserve it. History Cambridge could help by advertising this event but also by maybe using the many friends it has in Cambridge to possibly help with catering, including one of their board members who is the co-founder of Cambridge’s Petsi Pies.²³ As such, History Cambridge and HJLC could create an event giving an exclusive inside look to the Harriet Jacobs home and in return, garner attention and donations to help preserve the home.

4. Partner: Cambridge Public Library

- a. Contact information: Administrative Offices, 617-349-4032
- b. [Website link](#)

²¹ Tarnapol, Paula. “Crossing Paths in Cambridge: Harriet Jacobs, Imogen Willis Eddy, and the Harvard College Observatory.” *History Cambridge* (blog). Accessed December 16, 2024. <https://historycambridge.org/articles/crossing-paths-in-cambridge-harriet-jacobs-imogen-willis-eddy-and-the-harvard-college-observatory/>.

²² Sherley, Eshe. “History Café: Harriet Jacobs and the World of Abolitionist Cambridge Women - YouTube.” Youtube, May 24, 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gqHEY_74xw&t=2692s.

²³ History Cambridge. “May 18 Event Recap: Good Gumbo: A History Cambridge Fundraiser with Chef Renee McLeod,” May 18, 2023. <https://historycambridge.org/events/good-gumbo/>.

- c. Possible collaboration: Detailed below in Case Study #2.
5. Partner: Cambridge Community Foundation
 - a. Contact information: Geeta Pradhan, President gpradhan@cambridgecf.org, Christina Turner, Vice President, Programs and Grantmaking cturner@cambridgecf.org
 - b. [Website link](#)
 - c. Possible collaboration: Cambridge Community Foundation has a specific Equity and Innovation [Report](#) detailing the demographic and socioeconomic changes that have occurred in Cambridge, specifically the ‘State of Black Cambridge’.²⁴ Their main mission is to reduce economic disparities within Cambridge, and one way they do this is through providing grants for local nonprofits. The authors of this proposal are not aware if the HJLC has ‘501(c)(3) tax-exempt status’, which is a requirement to apply to one of the CCC’s ‘Community Funds Grants’.²⁵ If the HJLC does obtain the 501c3 status, this would allow them to apply to this grant, which “In FY24, the Community Fund distributed \$920,500 to 129 Cambridge-serving organizations”.²⁶ If HJLC does not have this status, the CCC website still provides many [resources](#) for nonprofits.²⁷ We believe a collaboration between HJLC and the Cambridge Community Foundation would be more low-key in nature. If not already on their website, CCC might be open to working with HJLC to guide you to resources which can help you obtain 501c3 status, especially given its mission of helping local nonprofits. This will open doors for your chances of obtaining [fiscal sponsors](#) and through that, funding to help preserve the house.²⁸

²⁴ Editor, Staff. “Special Focus: The State of Black Cambridge.” *Cambridge Community Foundation* (blog). Accessed December 16, 2024. <https://cambridgecf.org/ei-report/special-focus/>.

²⁵ White, Jenny. “Community Fund.” *Cambridge Community Foundation* (blog). Accessed December 16, 2024. <https://cambridgecf.org/community-fund/>.

²⁶ White, Jenny. “Community Fund.” *Cambridge Community Foundation* (blog). Accessed December 16, 2024.

²⁷ White, Jenny. “NONPROFIT RESOURCES.” *Cambridge Community Foundation* (blog). Accessed December 16, 2024. <https://cambridgecf.org/nonprofit-resources/>.

²⁸ Fiscal Sponsor Directory. “Massachusetts | Fiscal Sponsor Directory.” Accessed December 16, 2024. https://fiscalsponsordirectory.org/?page_id=711.

We have also included two case studies below for the Committee to also see an example of what the execution would look like between local partners toward a collaborative initiative.

Case study #1: [Walking tour](#) collaboration between The Cambridge Commission on the Status of Women and the City of Cambridge²⁹

The Cambridge Commission on the Status of Women (CCSW), in collaboration with the City of Cambridge, developed “Mapping Feminist Cambridge 1970 - 1990”, a comprehensive walking tour that highlights historical feminist movements and landmarks in the city. This initiative aimed to amplify awareness about women’s contributions to local history while fostering community engagement.

Relevance to the Harriet Jacobs Legacy Committee: A similar walking tour could be developed for the Harriet Jacobs boarding house to integrate it into Cambridge's rich historical narrative. This tour can be designed to educate people about Harriet Jacobs’ life and work while connecting it to broader themes of abolition, resilience, and community building in 19th-century Cambridge. The [tour pamphlet](#) provides a great example of one approach to a walking tour.³⁰

- Establishing clear goals and themes: The CCSW walking tour was designed to highlight feminist history in Cambridge and connect local landmarks to broader narratives. It emphasized both historical events and their relevance to current issues like gender equality and achieving it through community empowerment.
 - **How this applies:** The Harriet Jacobs walking tour should center on Jacobs' legacy as a writer, abolitionist, and survivor of slavery. The narrative would not only have to discuss her personal history but could also make stops at any other relevant locations connected to the abolitionist movement in 19th-century Cambridge. Nevertheless, due to the fact that HJLC would be the organizers of this ‘abolitionist walking tour’, the former boarding house would serve as a focal point of the tour, and help draw attention to it.
- Building strategic partnerships: CCSW is a commission which is part of the City of Cambridge and therefore has ties to larger funding sources. In the last page of the pamphlet it also includes many websites of other commissions and some nonprofits in Cambridge. We can assume there may have been some collaboration between these organizations and CCSW, too.
 - **How this applies:** By partnering with CCSW, the Harriet Jacobs Legacy Committee could also have access to similar resources and create partnerships that can be used for future efforts, too. In a walking tour example, collaborators

²⁹ City of Cambridge. “Mapping Feminist Cambridge Harvard Square Walking Tour 1970-1990s,” July 25, 2024. <https://www.cambridgema.gov/en/citycalendar/2024/07/25/mappingfeministcambridgeharvardsquaretour>.

³⁰ Cambridge Commission on the Status of Women. “Mapping Feminist Cambridge Pamphlet,” September 2024. https://cambridgewomenscommission.org/download/CCSW_MFCamb_Harvard_book_Web.pdf.

like CCSW could also provide research support for all the other houses, excluding the Jacobs house, that would be included in the tour. Engaging universities like Harvard for this effort, as HJLC has done in the past with Dr. Miles' History class can bring in academic expertise and student volunteers for ongoing support.

- Creating educational and promotional materials: CCSW produced a high-quality pamphlet that provided historical context, maps, and images. It was designed as both a guide for the tour but also provided enough information that one could learn enough about each stop without having to actually attend in person.
 - **How this applies:** The Harriet Jacobs walking tour could include a similar brochure and include photographs of the house, letters by Jacobs, and any other historical maps of the area. This can also incorporate information from other groups who have taken Dr. Miles' HIST 12M course in this year or in 2021.
 - An online version of the resource could also include an audio narration or more virtual tour options. This would make the tour more accessible and increase engagement online, as opposed to the pdf version CCSW provides. Additionally, the walking tour would provide printed versions of these pamphlets that participants could keep.

Case Study #2: [Black Trailblazers](#) bookmark collaboration between the Cambridge Black History Project, Cambridge Public Schools, and Cambridge Public Library.³¹

The Cambridge Black History Project (CBHP), in collaboration with Cambridge Public Schools and the Cambridge Public Library, developed the Cambridge Black Trailblazers initiative, which distributed the biographies of 18 'Trailblazers' fulfilling the following criteria: born and/or raised in Cambridge; educated in Cambridge public schools; lived or worked in Cambridge during a significant period in their lives; and are or have been associated with Black History or significant events either individually or collectively. They then made bookmarks of each of these biographies which were distributed to all school libraries in the Cambridge public schools and to all Cambridge Public Library branches.

Relevance to the Harriet Jacobs Legacy Committee: Although Harriet Jacobs does not fulfill this criteria because she did not attend school in Cambridge, a similar initiative could be replicated through direct collaboration with Cambridge Public Library, with bookmarks being made of Jacobs and with funding information to help preserve the home.

³¹ Cambridge Black History Project. "Cambridge Black Trailblazers • Cambridge Black History Project." Accessed December 16, 2024. <https://cambridgeblackhistoryproject.org/trailblazers/>.

- Expanding public access to history: The Trailblazers initiative was made with the goal of emphasizing these narratives to local students and those who visit Cambridge Libraries. By focusing on schools AND public libraries, the resources are made widely accessible.
 - **How this applies:** The Harriet Jacobs Legacy Committee could use a similar approach by creating bookmarks or brochures that detail Jacobs' life, her abolitionist work, and the significance of her boarding house. These bookmarks could also be distributed to local libraries by partnering with Cambridge Public Library. Also, the bookmarks could be saved and given for free in any future events or collaborative initiatives that the HJLC might participate in. For example, in the educational program initiatives which we detail at the beginning of this document, bookmarks could be given as prizes or as extra material at the end of day camps.
- Highlighting stories through simple, tangible resources: CBHP's bookmarks are a practical and impactful way to share the stories of African American trailblazers in Cambridge. Each bookmark features a biography, offering a concise, portable resource that can be shared in classrooms, libraries, and community events.
 - **How this applies:** The Harriet Jacobs Legacy Committee could adopt a similar format by designing bookmarks with a portrait of Harriet Jacobs, key details about her life and boarding house. These bookmarks could feature her 17 Story St. address and a QR code linking to any relevant digital content or maybe even a donation page.
 - Important to note: Other groups in Dr. Miles' Abolitionist Women class are currently making final products which talk about the lesser known parts of Jacobs (not covered in *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*) which could be featured on the bookmarks, avoiding any extra work for HJLC and featuring unique information about Jacobs.

Website

A well-designed website can serve as the cornerstone of the Harriet Jacobs Legacy Committee's efforts to engage with the public, preserve Jacobs' legacy, and provide accessible educational resources. By creating a digital space that is visually appealing, informative, interactive—and importantly, sustainable—the committee can reach audiences regardless of distance and reinforce the significance of Harriet Jacobs House as a historical landmark. Below, we present a proposal for a website concept, highlighting its main objectives, essential features, and technical recommendations. These insights are informed by observations of usability consultants who have made “important discoveries about the quite odd ways people approach a web page that historians looking to use the web without frustrating their audience should note and consider.”³² We hope this provides a preliminary framework that not only addresses the committee's immediate needs but also remains flexible and adaptable for future growth, additional content, or expanded programming.

Here are *three main objectives* we believe are essential for creating an effective website:

- **Accessibility:** We believe Harriet Jacobs' story and the history of her boarding house should be accessible to a broad audience, including those unable to visit Cambridge in person and individuals with visual or mobility impairments. This can be achieved through implementation of audio narration, high-quality photographs, descriptive captions, and compatibility with screen readers and other assistive technologies.
- **Education:** The website should offer digital resources one would encounter in-person at Harriet Jacobs House or by researching her story. Thus, the committee may consider incorporating primary documents and the work of our class' other groups (such as the timeline). Additionally, they may consider collaborating with scholars and experts to contribute blog posts, review materials for accuracy and depth, or participate in interviews that can be published on the website.
- **Engagement:** The committee can use the website as a place to build connections with the local community by promoting events, offering clear opportunities to volunteer with the committee's work, and issuing other related calls to action regarding preserving the Harriet Jacobs House story. This can overlap with the newsletter and incorporate insights from the collaborative initiatives sections.

Here are *five key features* the committee might consider in creating the website, organized by what we believe should be prioritized:

1. Homepage (high priority):

³² Daniel Cohen and Roy Rosenzweig, *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

- a. We recommend designing a visually striking landing page featuring images of Harriet Jacobs, her boarding house, and excerpts from her writings, such as the document that was shown to us when our class visited.
- b. Essential to an organization’s website is a mission statement or paragraph, which can also include quotes from interviews the committee has done with news outlets.
- c. Additionally, quick links to upcoming events, donation opportunities, and educational resources can help streamline navigation.

2. Digital History Exhibit (high priority):

- a. There are two ways the committee might want to consider organizing Harriet Jacobs’ history. For both, the committee may implement a virtual tour of the house.
 - i. The [Lowcountry Digital History Initiative](#)’s project on Burke High School in Charleston, South Carolina, as an example chronicles the school’s evolution from a segregated institution for African Americans in the late 19th century to a hub of student activism during the 20th-century civil rights movement. It organizes the school’s history into decade-based segments, a format the committee could adopt. The creators of this website effectively broke up the text with strategically placed photographs.
 - 1. *Slavery*: This section could delve deeply into Harriet Jacobs’ early life and the harrowing experiences she endured under slavery, drawing on key excerpts from [Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl](#) to provide a vivid, personal voice.
 - 2. *Activism*: The section could highlight Jacobs’ public speaking engagements, her connections to other abolitionists like Amy Post, and her broader advocacy for the equal rights and justice for Black people. There could be a timeline of key abolitionist events and perhaps audio clips that read parts of her speeches, like [“American Slavery Must be Crushed.”](#)
 - 3. *The Cambridge Years*: Here, the committee can focus on Jacobs’ life in Cambridge and the boarding house’s history. See “Creation, Legacy, and Preservation” below.
 - ii. Another model is the [University of Houston’s digital exhibit](#) on Frederick Douglass’ letter to Mary Todd Lincoln, which organizes content by themes—such as reading the letter, viewing its transcript, and exploring the cane mentioned—rather than chronologically. Similarly, the Harriet Jacobs house exhibit could focus on key aspects like its construction, its residents, and its historical significance.

1. *Life Within the Walls*: This section can prominently feature the work of the group who researched the residents of the house during its time as a boarding house. It can include letters, personal accounts, historical artifacts, and the dinner table graphic to bring these experiences to life.
2. *A Hub for Resistance*: The committee can examine the house's connection to Jacobs' abolitionist activities, and to other prominent figures like Harvard affiliates, which may provide interesting complexity.
3. *Creation, Legacy, and Preservation*: This section could focus on the construction of the house, its architectural features, and its physical evolution and wear over time. The committee can think about its role as a witness to historical events and social change in Cambridge and the struggle to preserve it today. The committee can use details/quotes from the recently published [Harvard Crimson article, "The Fight to Preserve Harriet Jacobs' Legacy in Cambridge"](#).

3. Educational Resources and Community Events (medium priority):

- a. The committee can upload and share educational resources designed for teachers, public historians, and everyday individuals, enabling more people to access and disseminate this knowledge:
 - i. Downloadable lesson plans tailored for elementary, middle, and high school students.
 - ii. Videos and interviews with historians such as Professor Miles.
 - iii. Links to external resources for readings, such as the [Teacher's Guide to the Signet Classics Edition of Harriet Jacobs' Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl](#).

4. Get Involved (lower priority)

- a. The website could feature a robust community events section that includes a calendar showcasing upcoming activities such as walking tours, lectures/talks at the house, and highlights of past events with photos and testimonials.
- b. To encourage active participation, the website should include clear calls to action such as "Donate," "Volunteer," and "Spread the Word." A donation tracker could display progress toward funding goals for the preservation of Harriet Jacobs' house. Additionally, volunteer sign-up [Google Forms](#) for school programs, tours, and events would make it easy for supporters to directly contribute to the committee's efforts.

5. Blog Section (lower priority)

- a. Here, the committee can provide regular updates on the committee activities, progress on the house's preservation, and new insights into Jacobs' house's historical significance.
- b. The committee should also consider inviting guest posts from historians, students, and local partners, such as the [Cambridge Black History Project](#).³³ This will not only diversify the content but also leverage their audiences and networks.

Here are *some technical recommendations* to guide the development and functionality of the website, which relate closely to the technical tips for newsletter-writing.

- **Domain and Hosting:**
 - a. Suggested domain, as noted in the prior section: harrietjacobscommittee.com (\$12/year via [Google Workspace](#)).
- **Design Principles:**
 - a. *Clean Layout:* Use a consistent color palette and ample white space to enhance readability. Divide text with images.
 - b. *Mobile-Friendly:* Ensure the site is optimized for mobile devices.
 - c. *Interactive Elements:* Incorporate buttons, graphics, and videos to make the site more engaging.
- **Audience Engagement:**
 - a. Use Google Analytics to monitor site traffic and engagement. Here's a simple guide from the [University of Colorado](#).
 - b. Enable email subscriptions to link website visitors to the newsletter.
- **Other:**
 - a. If the committee wants to do media training, they can consider looking at [Cambridge Community Television](#), most of which are free to nonprofits and Cambridge residents, on topics ranging like social media marketing and media production.

³³ Cambridge Black History Project. "Cambridge Black Trailblazers • Cambridge Black History Project." Accessed December 16, 2024. <https://cambridgeblackhistoryproject.org/trailblazers/>.

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