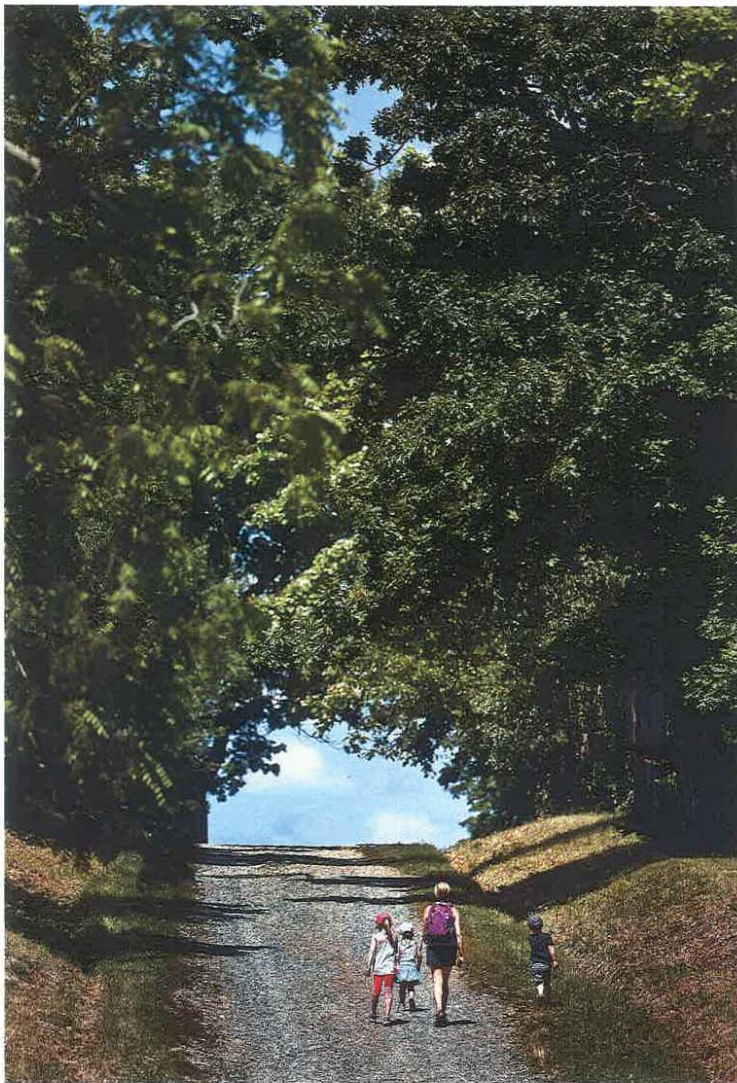


REALITY CHECK



■ In 1890, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted was hired to lay out a subdivision at World's End, but the homes were never built.

A 'SPRINT' FOR DONATIONS SAVED WORLD'S END



GREG DERR PHOTOS/THE PATRIOT LEDGER

■ Above, an adult and three children head out on a hike at the Worlds End Reservation in Hingham. The 251-acre peninsula is owned and protected by the Trustees of Reservations.

■ A wooden bridge crosses a salt marsh creek in the World's End Reservation.



By Lane Lambert
THE PATRIOT LEDGER

HINGHAM

By mid-afternoon on a Saturday, the parking lot at World's End was filled. Pairs and groups of walkers strolled up and down the shaded, tree-lined paths that rise and descend across the meadows, hills and seaside perches. Many paused to take in the sweeping views of Hingham Bay and the Boston skyline.

In the beginning and for hundreds of years, the 251-acre peninsula was a sheep, cattle and crop farm. Now it's owned and protected by the Trustees of Reservations, and the 70,000 visitors who come every year may have Boston Edison to thank.

In 1965, the utility that has since become part of NStar and Eversource gave World's End a serious look as the possible site for the nuclear power plant it was planning to build.

Boston Edison soon looked farther south, to Plymouth, and built the Pilgrim nuclear plant there. In 1967, a group of Hingham and Cohasset residents raised \$450,000 to match Trustees of Reservations money, and World's End was safe.

"We put on quite a sprint," said retired attorney Thomas O'Donnell, who was on the committee that raised the matching money in just two months. "We visited many living rooms."

O'Donnell doesn't think Boston Edison's interest was crucial to Hingham's fundraising, though he said it was a fresh reminder that the property was likely to be sold at some point. Everyone had assumed that the buyer would be a real estate developer.

"People had gotten used to enjoying it," O'Donnell said. "The family who owned it had allowed people to use it quite freely, so we wanted to preserve it as a public space. We wanted to forestall the other possibility."

World's End had already escaped at least two other such possibilities: a 19th-century real estate project and the more fleeting prospect of being the United Nations headquarters.

In 1945, with the end of World War II in sight, a Massachusetts committee picked by then-Gov. Maurice Tobin put World's End on a list of possible Greater Boston sites for the U.N. building. But U.N. officials soon chose New York City.

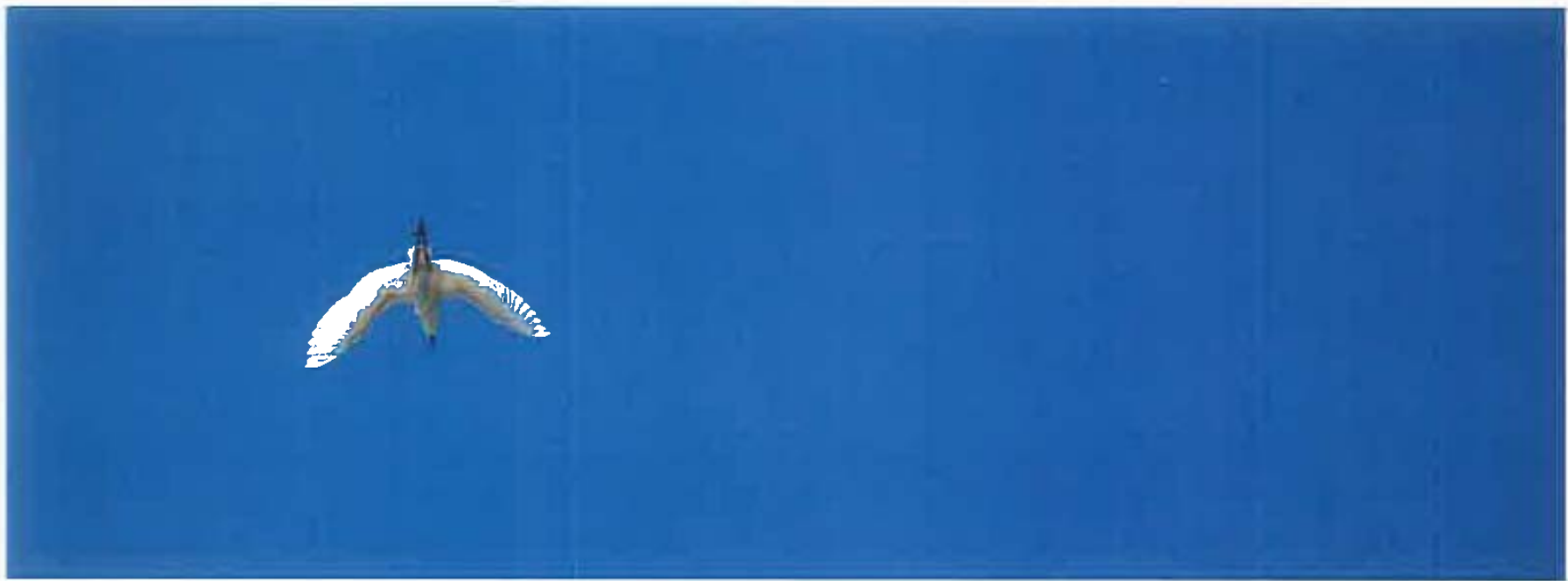
Six decades earlier, in 1890, a real estate development looked likely. The farm's then-owner, John R. Brewer, hired nationally known landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted — the designer of New York's Central Park and Boston's "emerald necklace" park system — to lay out a 163-lot subdivision on World's End and the adjoining Planter's Hill, which is connected to World's End by the narrow causeway called "The



■ Ranger Ryland Rogers has been greeting visitors to World's End for 21 years.

If you go

- **Location:** Martin's Lane, Hingham, off Route 3A and Sumner Street
- **Hours:** 8 a.m. to sunset all year
- **Admission:** Non-member adults, \$6; children, free
- **Walking paths:** 4.5 miles
- **Facilities:** Restroom, drinking-water fountain, benches
- **Phone:** 781-740-6665 (gatehouse)
- **Website:** thetrustees.org/places-to-visit/greater-boston/worlds-end



■ A snowy egret flies over Worlds End in Hingham.

GREG DERR/THE PATRIOT LEDGER

‘Sprint’ for donations saved World’s End

WORLD’S END/FROM PAGE 11

Bar.”

Olmsted’s plan called for tree-lined carriage paths and groves on hilltops and along the steep banks above the shore. Tree planting and road building lasted until around 1903, a decade after Brewer died. Brewer’s descendants didn’t follow through with the development, and World’s End remained a farm until the Trustees of the Reservations acquired it.

The Olmsted venture is a generally forgotten bit of town history, as are the U.N. and nuclear plant possibilities. But O’Donnell, Hingham Historical Society President Robert Curley and others say the legions of visitors who have gone to World’s End over the decades are familiar with the stories.

“And, boy, we’re glad those things didn’t happen,” O’Donnell said.

Ed Pitcavage, who manages World’s End and the nearby Weir Riv-

er Farm for the Trustees of Reservations, said World’s End is drawing more Boston-area and out-of-state visitors these days. Earlier this week, he took a group from England on a walking tour.

“For a long time, people didn’t really know about us,” Pitcavage said. “The word’s getting out.”

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