

A PLAN TO PRESERVE WINCHESTER'S ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE



©MarkFlannery.com 2003

Prepared for Winchester Planning Board
March 2004

Acknowledgments

This Plan to Preserve Winchester's Architectural Heritage has been prepared for the Winchester Planning Board and the Winchester Historical Commission acting as the Architectural Heritage Committee of the Strategic Plan Task Force.

Gretchen G. Schuler, preservation planning consultant to the Planning Board, has written the plan with the assistance of Ellen Knight, historian, who wrote the chapter on the History of Preservation in Winchester. Maureen Meister consulted on the Historical Development and contributed research information to round out the consultant's understanding of the development of Winchester's cultural landscape. David Dower and Charlene Band contributed information gleaned from their analysis of the inventory of Winchester's historic assets. Mark Flannery contributed two illustrations: the aerial view of Winchester found on the cover of the Plan, and the aerial view of the Town Center found on the title page for the National Register chapter.

Members of the Planning Board and the Historical Commission advised in the preparation of this plan and contributed editorial comments.

Winchester Planning Board

Tom Howley, Chairman
Maureen Meister, Vice Chair
Peter Kuttner
Stephen Parkhurst
Sam Stroud

Winchester Historical Commission

David Dower, Chairman
Charlene Band
Matthew Bronski
John Clemson
Mark Flannery
Bruce Hickey
Paula Swartz

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Introduction -----	4
I.	Historical Development of Winchester -----	6
II.	History of Preservation in Winchester -----	23
III.	Inventory of Historic Assets -----	30
IV.	National Register and State Register Programs -----	36
V.	Preservation Strategies -----	41
VI.	Municipal Policies and Regulations Affecting Historic Resources -----	55
VII.	Action Plan -----	59

APPENDIX

MAPS

- A. Properties included in Winchester Inventory
- B. Properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places
- C. Properties Subject to the Demolition Delay By-Law

DATA SHEETS

- A. Inventory of Historic Assets
- B. National Register of Historic Places List
- C. Properties Subject to Demolition Delay By-Law List

HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

- A. List of potential heritage landscapes

PRELIMINARY LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY REPORT CHECK LIST

ANNOTATED REFERENCES

Introduction

The Plan to Preserve Winchester's Architectural Heritage has been completed as part of the Strategic Plan. The Architectural Heritage of Winchester is part of the vitality of this unique community. Historic properties tell the story from farming to manufacturing to suburbanization. This heritage shown in thousands of buildings, structures and landscapes throughout the town is the pride of residents and is often cited as a reason to live in Winchester.

Preservation of the historic and architectural assets is an opportunity to enhance the quality of life in neighborhoods throughout Winchester. Historic preservation is a three-step process: *Identification – Evaluation – Protection*. The Plan recommends preservation strategies to accomplish these three steps.

The Inventory of Historic Assets documents the rich architectural heritage of Winchester. The first step in the preservation process is *identification* by adding buildings, structures, heritage landscapes, and archaeological sites to the more than 800 properties already included in the historic resource survey. An updated inventory informs the community of its history, can be used to develop educational programs in the schools and to tailor interesting programs for all, and is a requirement for many preservation strategies to follow.

Winchester's National Register of Historic Places Program includes four districts and 55 individual property listings. Amending the National Register nominations to recognize additional architecturally and historically significant properties is part of the *evaluation* step. National and State Register listing is the basis for preservation planning strategies and can instill pride in local resources.

Once the identification and evaluation phases of preservation are underway, it is time to adopt preservation strategies that offer *protection* to significant historical and architectural character.

The demolition delay bylaw offers temporary protection to significant properties. Recommendations include amendments to the existing demolition delay bylaw, which will extend the review under the bylaw to more resources and will increase public awareness of the significance of local historic resources.

Design standards help to preserve the architectural richness of neighborhood character. Some regulatory strategies are the designation of local historic districts, local landmarks, and neighborhood conservation districts. Design standards that are applied through these mechanisms can be useful for infill, for additions, and for alterations to character-defining features on historic buildings.

Adoption of the Community Preservation Act is an opportunity to forge partnerships between and among preservationists, open space advocates and community or affordable housing activists. It could provide a funding source to carry out projects that are consistent with preservation of Winchester's architectural heritage.

Preservation easements are recommended as one of the strongest forms of protection for their permanence and one's ability to tailor the restriction to the specific features of a property. In addition, these contracts can be financially beneficial to the property owners.

Design standards that are advanced in design review guidelines and rehabilitation guidelines are useful to property owners engaging in projects and to boards or committees responsible for considering the impact of changes. Rehabilitation guidelines help property owners to select the best method of fixing or rehabilitating historic fabric.

A municipal properties preservation plan will assist the Town in preserving the very character that attracts people to Winchester by identifying the historic features of town-owned property and planning for its maintenance. A municipal plan can lead to long-term savings through integrated decisions and properly timed maintenance.

At least two taxation mechanisms are available to assist in the preservation of historic buildings. The Local Options Taxation Assessment and the newly adopted Massachusetts Investment Tax Credit can lead to the preservation of properties that otherwise may be demolished and can offer financial gain for the owners.

A careful review of municipal policies and regulation is an essential ingredient in any community preservation plan. If the Town adopts goals that include preservation principles, then the various policies, bylaws, and rules and regulations also should promote those goals. Strategic and master planning will examine goals, objectives, and strategies to develop an integrated approach. For this reason it is imperative that advocates for the Town's architectural heritage be an integral part of the planning team.

Strategies related to zoning and subdivision regulations can promote preservation of the Town's character. The Cluster Residential Housing Bylaw may have incentives to preserve historic properties. A flexible zoning bylaw assists in preserving scenic and man-made elements of heritage landscapes. The requirement of Site Plan Approval in certain residential situations and site plan approval criteria that recognizes historical and architectural significance also can help to preserve neighborhood character.

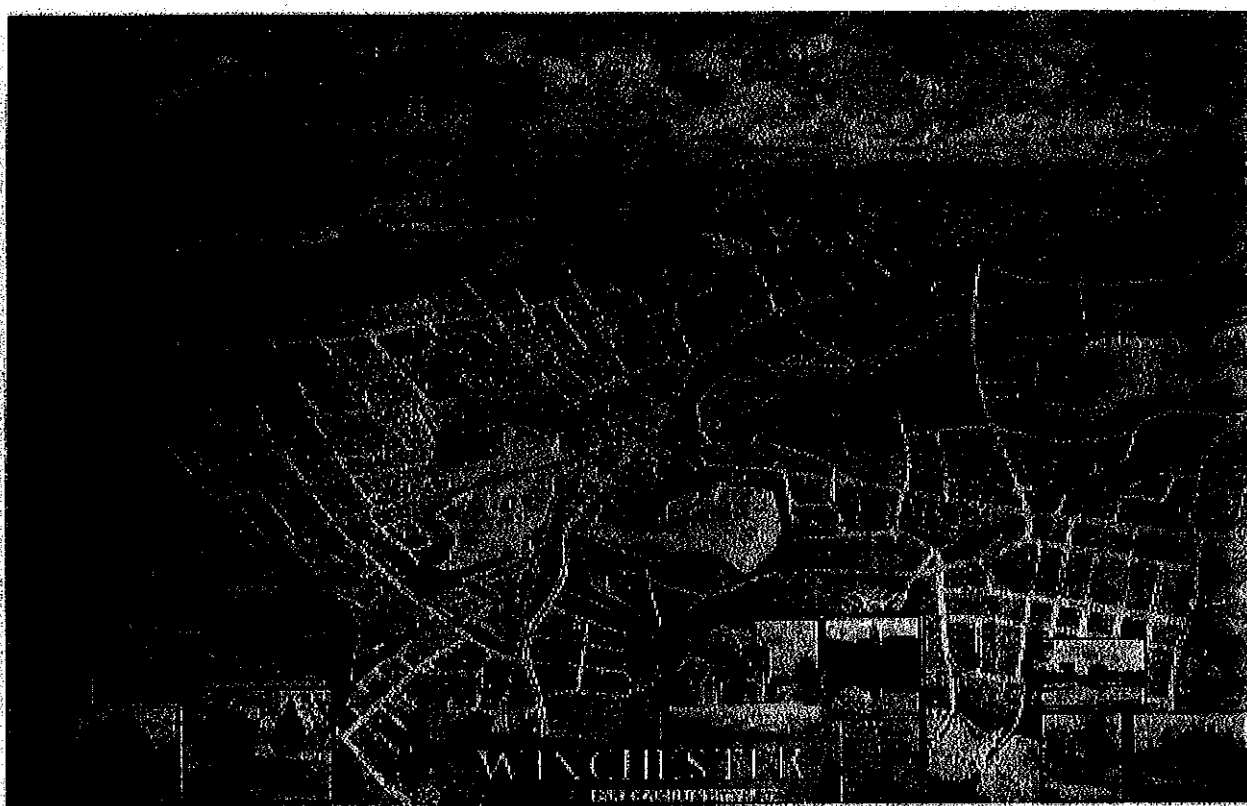
This Plan to Preserve Winchester's Architectural Heritage describes the historical development through extant resources that articulate that development. It lays out the history of preservation in Winchester. Next, the Plan describes the identification and evaluation steps of preservation, the Inventory of Historic Assets and the National Register of Historic Places Program in two chapters with recommended strategies for improvement of these steps.

Protection of Winchester's heritage is addressed in two chapters: one dedicated to traditional preservation strategies, the other to municipal policies and regulations affecting historic character.

The last chapter is an Action Plan which will guide Winchester's preservationists in implementing the Plan by providing in list form the recommendations, the responsible entities and a proposed time frame for each step.

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF WINCHESTER



1898 Panoramic View of Winchester
Library of Congress Collection

Historical Development of Winchester

Introduction

Winchester's architectural heritage tells the story of the Town's evolution from an agricultural economy to the development of manufacturing, to the suburbanization of the town with the arrival of the middle and upper-middle classes who took advantage of the passenger rail. These themes of development are overlapping, and evidence of each theme or pattern remains in Winchester's cultural landscape to tell the story. It is a matter of peeling back the layers to see the overlapping events and patterns – to know the uses and reuses of the land over time. Each theme has continued through overlapping periods, so that agricultural uses coincided with industrial uses and extended into the time in which Winchester became a suburban ideal with remnants of the agricultural theme becoming part of the suburbanization of Winchester.

Many factors contributed to the patterns and the periods of development including the geography, the advances in transportation, and the political, social and religious leanings of those who moved to Winchester. The location in the Mystic Valley with the chain of lakes and ponds, the river and brooks shaped Winchester's landscape. The water sources served as irrigation, water power, and then as picturesque settings for the more affluent. Winchester's location between the centers of Boston and Lowell played a role, and the fact that it was in the path of least resistance – the valley flanked by the western ridge formed by a series of hills and the rise of the Fells to the east – meant that it was chosen for transportation routes from the colonial period through the time of suburban development.

This path of least resistance and the proximity to Boston and Cambridge played a significant role in how the Town was formed. Transportation was greatly enhanced and the Town was affected by the route of the short-lived Middlesex Canal followed by the Boston & Lowell Railroad. Both were used to transport raw materials to Winchester and to return the finished products to commercial centers as well as to send farm products to outside markets. The railroad also was pivotal in the development of the suburban neighborhoods once the passenger rail was firmly established. Following the railroad was the streetcar and then the parkway system through the community. The laying out of the parkway system, recognizing and capitalizing on the natural features of the area, enhanced the desirability of Winchester as a residential community.

A study of those who were drawn to Winchester also is one of the layers that is intertwined with the built landscape. Early families such as Converse, Gardner, Johnson, Richardson, Russell, Symmes, Thompson and Wyman were among those whose names remain as part of Winchester's history – recalled in place and street names. Some of the early families became the industrialists of the nineteenth century including Richardsons and Thompsons. They were joined by other businessmen and industrialists who helped shape the community and whose contributions also are recognized in place and streets names such as Bacon, Cutter, Whitney, and Manchester. From the mid-nineteenth century Boston businessmen, architects, and even artists arrived in Winchester for its bucolic setting. Others came to work in the factories, first Irish immigrants, followed by Italian immigrants who also worked on farms. Some of the late arrivals such as Skillings, Bangs, and Ginn made their mark on the landscape as did the next generation of wealth such as McCall, Schrafft, Downes, and Sanborn. These businessmen of moderate

wealth came from other regions in New England by way of Boston for the most part. The old wealth of the Boston Brahmin society whose members settled in more western suburbs was not found in Winchester. Rather it was industrialists from Maine and New Hampshire, followed by Irish, then Italians, who rose in society that shaped the future of the Town by their involvement in local government and in community service.

Winchester first was known as Waterfield in the seventeenth century, recalling its many lakes and ponds as well as the river, meaning field of water. The Mystic Lakes and the Aberjona River were important early water sources running through the center that influenced early settlement patterns. The seventeenth century main routes, particularly Grove and Main streets on the east side and Cambridge Street on the west side, were the north-south connectors between Cambridge and Woburn, while Church Street was the first east-west route connecting the two parts of South Woburn, later to be incorporated as Winchester. Other early roads were limited to Cross Street in the northeast, Washington Street running from Main Street at the Aberjona River northeast towards eastern Woburn and Stoneham, and Ridge and High streets following the topography of the western hills. The Town was part of Medford, Woburn and Charlestown. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth century it was known as South Woburn before its incorporation as Winchester in 1850.

Farming

Early settlement was sparse with a few families locating in clusters along the laid out routes. By the end of the eighteenth century there were only thirty-five dwellings housing about 200 residents. The major economy was farming with some saw, grist and fulling mills on the Aberjona River and Horn Pond Brook. Only remnants of Winchester's agricultural past remain to recall this early heritage of the town. On the western side up on the ridge, two major farms sprawled over the hills. The first was the Johnson-Thompson Farm, which included much of the land along Johnson Street and Ridge Street where today there are mid-twentieth century subdivisions, the Vinson-Owen School and the oldest remaining dwelling, the Johnson-Thompson House (201 Ridge Street). Although adapted by succeeding generations of Johnsons and Thompsons who farmed the surrounding land on Ridge Street, the mid-eighteenth century house retains its gambrel roof to remind one of the early farmhouse.



Farther south at 78 Ridge Street is the late eighteenth century farm of Philomen Wright, sold in 1800 to Josiah Locke who in turn sold to his son, Asa Locke in 1804. The existing farmhouse was built by Asa Locke in 1828 and may well have incorporated parts of an earlier house. The significance of this farm is that even today it retains its farmstead setting with surrounding agricultural fields. It is the best local example of a nineteenth century farm with Federal style farmhouse, New England barn, and ice house retaining their arrangement and their setting. The farmhouse displays architectural elements from several

periods reminding one of the adaptation of properties over time. The paneled center entrance door with fine elliptical fan light is reminiscent of the Federal Period at the transition to the Greek Revival period noted by the half sidelights. The pediment dormers, the side piazza and the open entrance porch are likely to have been added near the turn of the last century in the Colonial Revival period. The New England barn is reminiscent of the mid- to late-nineteenth century design by its length, the sliding doors in the gable end and the ventilator straddling the ridge. Other structures are important elements of the farmstead setting.

As noted above, Cambridge Street was a main thoroughfare from the seventeenth century. While the Gardner family was active locally from the mid-seventeenth century, their earliest extant house is the Georgian style Gardner-Swan House (Gardner Place) constructed in ca. 1764. Positioned to face south the house retains its center chimney, nine-over-six double hung sash and its gable roof with no rake or return in the eaves. Later changes are the Greek Revival center entrance with half side lights and a projecting lintel. In the early twentieth century the farmstead was owned by one of Winchester's suburban architects, F. Patterson Smith (1870-1943), who relocated and adapted the nineteenth century outbuildings in 1926 and 1928. Today, the three buildings are located off Cambridge Street on Gardner Place and display the suburbanization of this example of the agricultural past.

On the east side of town, farming families of note were the Richardsons, the Converses and the Symmeses. Edward Converse settled here in 1640 and his farm comprised all the area that is Winchester Center. Although none of his family's buildings survives, the Mill Pond at the Town Center dates from the 1640s when Converse dammed the Aberjona River to harness the power for his grist mill, an example of the early industrialization of the Town. The Richardsons built north along Washington Street and south on Main at Black Horse Village. The latter is no longer extant but at least one late eighteenth century house survives known as the Zachariah Richardson House at the northern end of Washington Street. In the early nineteenth century local farmers also took in outside work especially in the winter months. The most prevalent cottage industry in Winchester was shoe work; hence several shoe shops were erected or established in the wings and ells on farmsteads. Near Medford on Main Street was Symmes Corner which retains its name and has two surviving examples of Symmes' houses near Grove Street. The most distinctive is the Marshall Symmes House (230 Main Street) built in 1817 displaying four tall chimneys placed just inside the brick end walls, corner pilasters and an elliptical blind fan over the center entrance.

The number of dwellings and population nearly doubled in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. An important change in transportation was the construction of the Middlesex Canal from 1793 to 1803 when farmers were able to ship goods by way of the Canal that connected Boston with the Merrimac Valley. This engineering wonder was only the second canal to be built in America and while it did not significantly change the course of development in Winchester, it provided a market for farmers to ship produce to Boston. In spite of the ingenuity behind the Canal, winter months were lost to easy transportation when the Canal would freeze.

Some farms stayed in business throughout the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century. One of Winchester's largest immigrant populations, the Italians, came to work on local

farms and eventually had their own market gardens in the Swanton Street area. Succeeding generations of these turn of the last century farmers worked in tanneries and in stonework.

There remain a number of dwellings that started as farmhouses, in addition to those mentioned above, scattered throughout the Town. At the end of the First World War there were ten working dairy farms, most in the western part of Winchester. Besides those early farmhouses that are referenced, there are two establishments on Cambridge Street worth noting for the continued agricultural use. The Henry Grover House (223-225 Cambridge Street) constructed in 1885 has some of its twentieth-century outbuildings and agricultural fields making up the setting of Purcell's Pansy Patch. The substantial farmhouse is a four-bay, side-gable, duplex with simple Colonial Revival porch. The house rests on a high granite block foundation and has a single-story, side projecting bay, a long two-story rear ell and rear entrance porch, all with simple rafter-like cornice brackets. Across the street is Mahoney's Garden Center, which began as a roadside stand and grew to the substantial greenhouse and garden business that it is today. The Mahoneys married into the Russell family who had farmed land along Cambridge Street from the late 1700s.

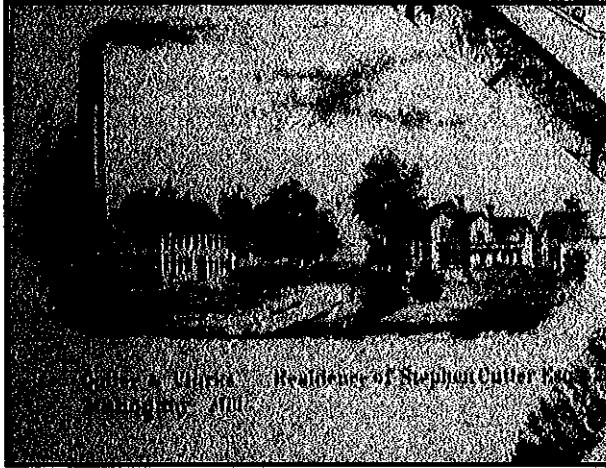
Manufacturing

With the advent of the Boston & Lowell Railroad, which opened in 1835, came the decline of the Middlesex Canal. Sporadic service during winter months and the efficiency and speed of the railroad led to the Canal's closing in ca. 1850. Only a few remnants of the canal tell this short-lived story - one building, the Canal Toll House on Middlesex Street, and a couple of areas of stone work associated with canal abutments. The railroad led north from Cambridge to Lowell, first a freight line to transport goods. Soon after the Railroad was opened, the potential for passenger traffic was realized and a station was opened in South Woburn near the old Converse Mill on the Aberjona, at the Center. Two other stops were located at Baconville, which is now called Wedgemere, and at Cross Street, which no longer exists. The Woburn Loop Railroad was laid in the 1845 parting from the main Boston & Lowell line just north of the Town Center and following the path of Main Street north to Woburn Center. The early industries that benefited from the railroad were tanneries and shoe-making facilities and veneer cutting manufacturing. In addition, factories were set up to make the machinery for some of these businesses including leather-cutting and veneer-cutting machines. The success of these businesses led to the division of farms along Main Street for housing followed by the laying out of house lots on a newly created street system off Main Street.

Industrial clusters and associated housing from the mid-nineteenth century were located in five areas of Winchester, in most cases using early mill privileges for the water power: Baconville in the south, Mill Pond at the center, Cutter Village north of Wedge Pond, Canal Street area, and adjacent to Washington Street in the northeast part of town. Baconville was south of the Center along the Aberjona and Upper Mystic Lake where Robert Bacon established the Bacon Felt Mill as early as 1824. Other nearby mills eventually became the home of the Parker & Company Mahogany Mills and successor businesses throughout the nineteenth century. Several modest workers' houses remain along the railroad on Grove Place to remind one of the mills' histories. Richardson mills on the site of the old Converse mills at the Town Center extended the industrial life of Mill Pond with incubator mills that housed several businesses. Only the Mill Pond

adjacent to Town Hall and the old New England Laundry building are the only remnants of the industrial life that once dominated the Center.

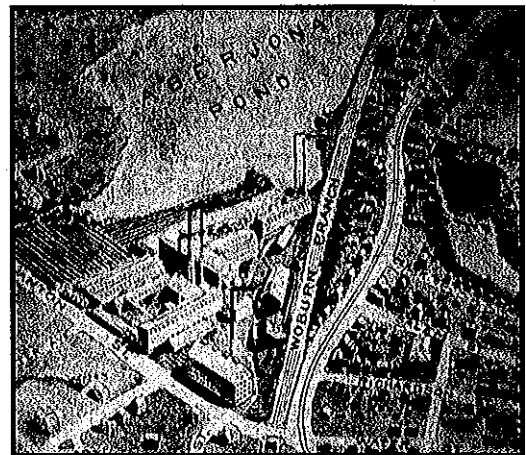
Cutter Village was established north of Wedge Pond where the Cutters had mahogany mills



and several houses including the 1845 Henry Cutter House on Main Street, now part of Lane's Funeral Home. North of Cutter Village was the Canal Street neighborhood, the area of the former Rumford School. It was flanked by two important industrial complexes; the large leather tannery that eventually became Beggs & Cobb on the banks of the Aberjona River at Main and Swanton streets, and the Church and Lane Piano Forte factory, which later became the Cowdry, Cobb & Nichols Piano Case Factory, located on Horn Pond Brook just west of the Canal Street neighborhood. Many of the late nineteenth century residences of those who

worked in these factories remain in the Canal Street neighborhood displaying several building types including single family houses, two-family houses with separate dwelling units on each floor and duplexes with two dwelling units side-by-side. Ornamentation is sparse with occasional Italianate bracketing and doorhoods. In the northeast section of town off Cross Street there were a couple of mid-nineteenth century mills on early Richardson mill privileges; however these – one a mahogany mill, the other a tannery – petered out by the late nineteenth century. Housing clusters remain dating from the mills era.

This separation of industries and associated housing from the suburban development for the middle to upper-middle class became even more fixed in the late nineteenth century when industries at the center were abandoned and future growth of factories and housing for its workers were directed to the northern part of the Town. This was a logical move due to the natural resources and access in the northern section with two railroad lines, the Aberjona River and Horn Pond Brook and by the late nineteenth century at least two streetcar lines. The construction of housing and



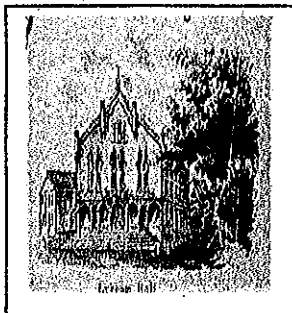
services in the north, like the Canal Street neighborhood mentioned above, accommodated the mill workers, many of whom rented from banks or out-of-town owners. In the same neighborhood there were modest one and one-half story side-gabled dwellings lining Main Street near Swanton Street, built in the 1890s for workers at the Beggs and Cobb Tannery, and remaining today to remind one of this industrial theme. In the 1870s a small neighborhood just north of the Winchester High School and west of Washington Street was laid out for the construction of modest sized dwellings on small lots. A few examples of houses with mansard roofs and bracketed cornices are found on Nelson (former Sumner Street) and Oak Street, but

most of the housing dates from the ca. 1890s with modest end houses (gable front) close to the street. This area was adjacent to the upper end of Judkins Pond, most of which was filled in during the early 1900s. Another area in the north, near Swanton Street, was on Harvard and Irving streets where several houses from the late 1890s – three-deckers, and two-families as well as modest end houses some with Victorian Eclectic detailing – remain to tell the story. The first stream of factory workers to populate these areas was the Irish followed by the blacks in the late 1880s. In fact, by the early 1900s half of the residents in the Harvard and Irving streets neighborhood were black and it was about this time that the New Hope Baptist Church was formed in 1896 and used an old Winchester schoolhouse on Cross Street for worship. It is important to note that most blacks first worked as domestics or day laborers, rather than in factories. The 1851 building remains at 12 Cross Street. By the 1920s the blacks in this neighborhood had been replaced by Italian immigrants. It is interesting to note that many of the Irish workers rose quickly to positions of leadership in local government, and moved to more elaborate housing east of Washington Street or in the Flats, west of the Center.

Another small neighborhood west of Washington Street and north of Cross was laid out in 1893 with small lots on winding streets such as Brookside and Garfield avenues, and Forest Street. The modest houses, many with gambrel roofs and others with minor Queen Anne detail such as small turrets and wrap porches were erected for tannery and machine shop and other industrial workers. Farther west on Cross a couple of other small neighborhoods cropped up in the late nineteenth century, again modest-sized houses with minor architectural elaboration, compared to those that were part of the suburban movement west of the Center.

Although several district schools and at least one meeting house existed in South Woburn before the 1850s, extant civic and institutional buildings hark back only to the time of Winchester's incorporation in 1850. The First Congregational Church up on the hill overlooking Church Street and Winchester Center was constructed in 1854 following a fire that had destroyed the society's first building. The First Congregational Society had been organized in 1840 and had built on the Church Street site. The second building was designed by Alexander Rice Esty (1826-1881) in the Romanesque Revival style, retaining its commanding position. It has been altered with the resurfacing in stone and stucco in 1959. The context of the Town Common, situated between the church and the railroad, was quite different in the 1800s as the railroad came through the center at grade and on the east side was the former Converse mill that had been taken over by Samuel Steele Richardson.

After Winchester was incorporated, the center took shape as a commercial and institutional center. Another important institution constructed in 1851 at the town center was the Lyceum Hall at 2-8 Mount Vernon Street, designed by Theodore Voelckers. The South Woburn Social Lyceum had been formed in 1846 but quickly folded until the Hall was built to house stores, offices, and a large meeting room or hall. The interesting Gothic Revival building lost much of its architectural fabric to remodeling and fire. However, it is an important institution for the shelter that it provided for so many of the civic, institutional and commercial enterprises of the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Town meeting was held in this hall until the Town Hall was constructed in 1887. The First Baptist Church met in Lyceum Hall until 1864 when it



Winchester Preservation Plan
March 2004

built its first church on Washington Street at Mount Vernon (replaced by the present building in 1928). The Winchester Unitarian Society formed in 1865 also held services in Lyceum Hall until it built on Main Street in 1869 (replaced by the present building in 1899).

Commercial businesses housed on the ground floor of the Lyceum Building included grocers, druggists, and a bank among others. Henry K. Stanton, grocer, was a tenant of the Lyceum Building and eventually built the Brown & Stanton Block in 1879 on Mt. Vernon and Main streets. The Winchester Savings Bank, incorporated in 1871, moved to its Romanesque building in 1892. One important industry that was established at the center in 1898 was the Winchester Laundry, which by the 1920s became New England Laundries, Inc. established by Arthur T. Downer. The business was located on Converse Place abutting Mill Pond at the Town Center. The building remains although in a substantially altered state.

The first Catholic parish, St. Mary's on Washington Street, was established in 1874 to provide a place of worship for the many Irish immigrants working in Winchester factories and living north of the center. The church was built in 1876 in the neo-Gothic Revival style as a frame structure, which was renovated in 1897 with brick exterior walls. The St. Mary's campus expanded in the early twentieth century with the purchase of the nearby 1840s Judkins estate in 1912, and the construction of a rectory on the estate in the same year. In the early days of the parish the nearby neighborhood of Stevens, Elm, and Kendall streets was home to many Irish. This was the exception to the rule of where the Irish immigrants lived; here they had moved into a neighborhood that had been home to earlier well-to-do Protestant businessmen and their families.

Winchester's industries remained strong well into the twentieth century. Just after World War I there were seventeen industries that yielded more than \$1 million in wages to their 1200 workers. And even though the statistics were not much different in the 1960s and 1970s it represented thirty-three establishments employing just under one thousand workers. Up until the 1950s two major manufactories enjoyed a over a century of work. The Bacon Felt Mill on Grove Place burned in 1957; however, the business had left for Taunton in 1951. Beggs and Cobb Tannery closed in 1957 and most of the buildings burned in 1959. The rest were demolished for the unusual Parkview Apartment building constructed in 1965.

Suburbanization

Evidence of Winchester's residential pattern is woven throughout the community and spans its full history. There are some early examples of farmsteads that now are suburban houses. There are mill workers housing along Main Street and other parts of northern Winchester. And there are architect-designed commuter neighborhoods in the Flats, Myopia Hill and east of the Town Center. The real thrust to build extensive housing began in the mid-nineteenth century at about the time of the incorporation of Winchester in 1850 and took off following the Civil War.

When Winchester was incorporated it was a simple rural community with a small industrial base. As that part of the town grew so did the middle to upper-middle class housing. The proximity to Boston and the improved access due to the passenger railroad made Winchester an increasingly desirable place to live from the mid-nineteenth century on. One was able to escape the ills of the city for the bucolic settings in the Mystic Valley overlooking the many bodies of water – lakes, ponds, and the river. In concert with this move towards suburban development the town

purchased land in 1852 near Wedge Pond land on which was laid out a rural garden Wildwood Cemetery in 1852. The designer and supervisor was Amasa Farrier of Stoneham. Some design elements such as the pond at the entrance and the dell were added to the curvilinear carriage roads and footpaths in the 1870s.

Examples of mid-nineteenth century residential development not associated with the industries that were expanding in the north are found predominately in the eastern side of Winchester. By the mid 1850s, houses were clustered on Myrtle, Walnut and Winthrop streets east of the town center and Washington, Stevens and Elm streets just north of the center. Several Greek Revival, Gothic Revival and Italianate examples remain on these streets. The handsome two and one-half stories Greek Revival house built by Deacon Nathan Brooks Johnson (later known as the Jacob Stanton House, 21 Washington Street) in ca. 1840 displays a templar gabled facade carried by monumental columns. Two Gothic Revival cottages at 8 and 14 Stevens Street were built in ca. 1850; the Samuel White Jr. House and the Charles Pressley House, the latter having a verge-board trim with acorn drop finials also found on the Oliver Gardner House at 5 Myrtle Street. One of the more unique houses from this mid-nineteenth century period is the Edward Brackett House at 290 Highland Avenue, unusual for its design in the shape of an octagon. Brackett was a painter and a naturalist who designed his house and ran a nursery on his property.

By mid-century there also was a residential cluster on the west side of the at-grade railroad crossing near the Congregational Church and at the edge of Wedge Pond, including a wood frame school that stood on Dix Street opposite the Congregational Church. Nearby, at 19 Dix Street, is the house of an architect-turned-artist and educator, Albert Fitch Bellows, who in 1853 built his residence in the rural cottage style with Gothic Revival details. As noted above, the Center was taking shape with the construction of the Lyceum, the Congregational Church and the reconfiguration of the old Converse mill to house small commercial and industrial businesses as early as the 1830s. But it was not until the last quarter of the nineteenth century that the commercial and institutional center known today took its form.

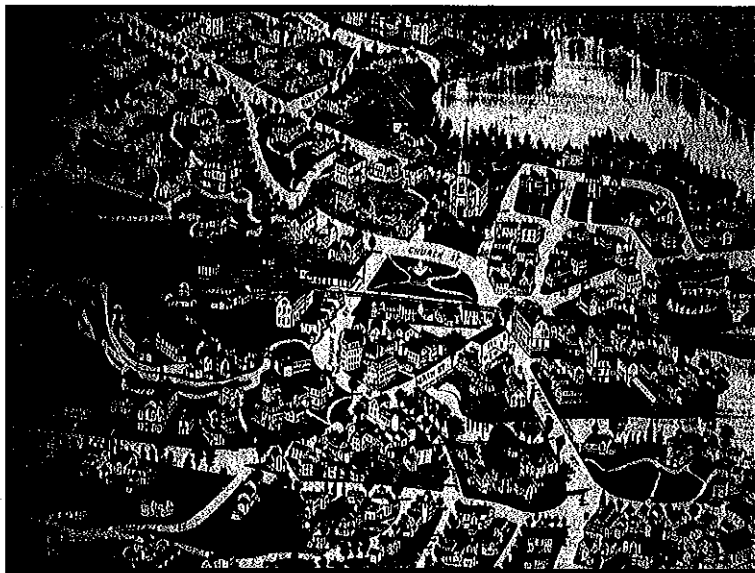
Amenities such as gas and light were introduced to Winchester in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. In 1888 the Winchester Electric Light Company was established and purchased electricity from Somerville until 1890 when it became Woburn Electric Light Company. The first Sewer Commission was established in 1894 by which time the Metropolitan sewer system had been designed by Ernest W. Bowditch and extended to Winchester. The Village Improvement Association was formed in the 1882, with an interest of beautifying the Center, which was done in part by planting trees and shrubs, defining the Town Common and even building fountains and walkways. The streetcar system also was introduced in the late nineteenth century and played an important role in the expanding suburbanization of Winchester as well as sustaining transportation needs for the industrial development in the northern section of the Town. In the 1880s it was a horse-drawn streetcar and by 1896 converted to electric cars with branches from the Town Center in several directions. These connections between neighborhoods and the center with its amenities, including the railroad, were important attributes to the development of Winchester as a desirable residential community. The Eastern Massachusetts Street Railway Company had routes along Main Street, Cambridge Street, Church and Mt. Vernon.

The solid masonry buildings that characterize the town center were constructed in these last twenty years of the 1800s as well. The picturesque 1879 Brown and Stanton Block, by George Dutton Rand (1833-1910), rounding the corner of Main and Mt. Vernon streets featured the Queen Anne style with corner turret, panel brick work, a variety of window forms and a corbelled and bracketed cornice. In 1892 the Winchester Savings Bank erected its Richardsonian Romanesque Revival building on Mt. Vernon Street, again articulating the permanence of this evolving institutional and commercial center with its brick and brownstone exterior and bold architectural design of local architects, Edwin K. and William E. Blaikie. Next to the Brown and Stanton Block was the White Building constructed in 1890.



Town offices had been scattered and the Lyceum was used for town meeting; however this system had become woefully inadequate. Thus a committee was appointed in 1885, and in 1887 the robust Town Hall in the Richardsonian Romanesque Style was designed and built by the prominent Boston firm of Rand and Taylor with George D. Rand, who lived in Winchester, as the lead architect.

Wyman Plain or the Flats as it is known today was a large undeveloped area west of the Center and on either side of Church Street. Four late nineteenth-century suburban neighborhoods



emerged on estates of wealthy Winchester residents, built by Boston architects and portraying the suburban ideal of large architect-designed houses in park-like settings. Each of the late nineteenth century developments has a distinct feel yet all blend well in part due to the high quality of design and materials. The number of architects living in Winchester at the end of the nineteenth century is of note and so is the number of architect-designed buildings, institutional and residential. In 1865 David N. Skillings, lumber business owner from Maine, purchased land just

outside the Town Center and developed a park-like estate with a stone wall and piers along the Church Street frontage of his estate, which he called Rangeley. In the 1870s he built several fine brick Queen Anne houses, which he rented. The local architect was George D. Rand, prominent Boston architect who also lived in Winchester at 1 Wildwood Street, which he built for himself. His best known local building was the 1887 Town Hall. Skillings' successors, son-in-law, Elisha Bangs, president of the Boston Stock Exchange, added to the estate as did Edwin Ginn, textbook

publisher, who owned the estate in the early 1900s. Also included on the estate was the short-lived Rangeley Hall (1877), a theatrical hall and club that later served as a school, run by Mary Winsor before she began the all girls Winsor School in Boston.

The three other suburban developments west of the Center were laid out and constructed from 1890 to about 1920. Nearest the town center was the estate of William and Isabella Firth, who purchased the 1865 Charles Curtis House on Grassmere Road and laid out Glengarry and Grassmere roads with picturesque lots some overlooking Wedge Pond. Most houses first were rented to professionals and business owners from Boston who could use the nearby commuter line and electric streetcar. These dwellings were designed in the Colonial and Tudor revivals as well as the Queen Anne styles using textured shingles and assorted window treatments to create variety and interest.

Winchester's largest nineteenth century subdivision, Wedgemere Park, was laid out by a land syndicate established in 1891 by Frank B. Forsyth who lived nearby on Central Street. In spite of the Panic of 1893 which brought construction to a standstill for a couple of years, ninety houses were built by 1916. The uniformity of lot size laid out in a grid pattern on seventy-five acres was varied by the use of several architectural styles – Queen Anne, Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival. Location of houses on each street created boulevards with deep setbacks on the avenues and more intimate settings with houses closer to the street on the roads and streets. The Wedgemere Park Plan of 1891 showed a cross section of the avenues with a thirty-eight foot road bed and a fifteen foot grassed separation between the road and the [side]walks. Trees were planted on each side of the lawn and concrete walk. Certainly Wedgemere Avenue displays this layout with broad lawns creating a boulevard effect and houses set far back from the roadway. The blocks of the north-south streets between Church Street and Foxcroft Road are lined with commodious houses displaying styles popular at the turn of the last century. There are a few unique properties such as the Spanish Mission Style 1908 Arthur Lombard House on Church Street at Oxford Street and the 1894 Augusta Boynton Street in the Shingle Style located at 29 Calumet Road.

South of Church Street was the fourth subdivision in Wyman Plains, the old name for this area west of the Center. Unlike the grid pattern of streets in the Wedgemere Plan, Everett Avenue and connecting streets displayed a curvilinear plan following the gentle curves of the nearby Mystic Lakes. Everett Avenue is reported to have been named after Edward Everett, orator at Gettysburg, Governor of Massachusetts and President of Harvard. Developers, Phineas Nickerson and Dexter Blaikie, constructed most of the houses along Everett and Sheffield. Between 1898 and 1916 the housing stock in this area grew from two houses to thirty-three, many designed by Robert Coit, two by Frank Patterson Smith, as well as others by Boston architects. These commodious houses were designed in Arts and Crafts styles, incorporating Tudor Revival and Colonial Revival elements. The Blaikies finished many of their houses in stucco. It was purported to be the finest turn of the century neighborhood surpassing Wedgemere for its cohesive design due to scale, setbacks, styles, and general elaboration in a picturesque setting.

Just as these suburban developments in the Flats were germinating, the Metropolitan Park System was established in 1893 and was pivotal in transforming the entrance to Winchester from

Cambridge, as well as preserving the natural settings in the Middlesex Fells and along the Mystic Lakes. In 1891 Charles Eliot, a partner in the Olmsted firm, had founded the Trustees of Reservations followed by the Metropolitan Park Commission in 1893. The broad vision was to develop a metropolitan system of parkways connecting neighborhoods and parks. Frederick Law Olmsted had established the pattern with the Emerald Necklace connecting the Boston Public Garden to Jamaica Pond. The Middlesex Fells Reservation of which many acres formed the eastern border of Winchester was one of the first purchases of the Metropolitan Park System. This firmly established Winchester as an integral part of this metropolitan system and only enhanced the desirability of the town. This purchase and the laying out of the Mystic Valley Parkway along the Aberjona River led to replacement of the industrial landscape that had blighted the center of the town. By 1894 there were miles of roadways, trails and bridle paths in the Reservation and a forestry plan of 1904 described the types of landscapes found in the Reservation: "close woods", "open woods", and "open ground." Spurred by this beautification Forrest Manchester and Edwin Ginn, two wealthy newcomers to Winchester, urged the relocation of a tannery, lumber yard and the railroad freight yard all situated just south of the center between Main Street and the Mystic Valley Parkway. Eventually with a generous donation from Ginn, Manchester was able to carry out his plan of cleaning up this blighted area, and Manchester Park was completed in 1902 and turned over to the Town in 1905, and named after Manchester who had died in 1899.

The introduction of public space and parkways, which included the first clean-up of the waterways, paved the way for the early twentieth century transformation of Winchester Center away from the ills of the industrial landscape. Although attempts had been made to improve the Center, the water sources continued to be polluted by the industrial wastes on the banks of the Aberjona; however in the early twentieth century with the rise of the middle and upper-middle class in Winchester, the interest in good architecture and in the beauty of natural features was firmly rooted in the psyche of residents, and certain leaders again turned to reclaiming the water sources that had become polluted by the industries, just as Manchester and Ginn had worked hard with the Metropolitan Park Commission to clean up the approach to the Town Center and make Manchester Field.

In 1909 the Committee on Waterways, recognizing the continued ill effects of the brass foundry, the railroad, and the Beggs and Cobb Leather tannery to mention a few, hired Herbert J. Kellaway (1867-1947), a landscape architect who had worked in the Olmsted office from 1892 to 1906, to conduct a study of Winchester's waterways. The report confirmed the dire condition of the waterways and that the effects of industrial waste were compounded by poor sewerage disposal, lack of storm water disposal, weeds, and trash disposal. He recommended a comprehensive plan to clean up and beautify the waterways starting with the southern section from the Mystic Lakes up to Swanton Street. The dam and the course of the Aberjona were changed slightly at the town center. Two bridges over the Aberjona were designed and built and the grounds around the Pond adjacent to the Town Hall and the nearby Cutter estate that eventually became the Library also were enhanced along the pond and river. The implementation of parts of the Kellaway plan was in part due to the generosity and civic commitment of the Waterways Commission chairman, Lewis Parkhurst, who had arrived in 1881 to serve as principal of Winchester High School and later joined the textbook publishing company founded by Edwin Ginn. Kellaway was hired again in 1928 and developed a second,

more comprehensive plan that had recommendations for the northern section of the river, Wedge Pond, and Horn Pond Brook.

Following the success of Manchester and Ginn in developing Manchester Field and Kellaway's plan that redirected a bit of the Aberjona at the town center, Eustace Brigham built a series of houses along the Mystic Valley Parkway overlooking the River, fields and the playground that had been financed by Ginn.

Even before these public projects were begun, other areas of Winchester were developed by new residents of substantial wealth. Myopia Hill was the first organized and commodious suburban development on the west side of Cambridge Street. It was laid out at the turn of the last century when Samuel McCall and George Fernald acquired the land between Cambridge Street and Arlington Street along Myopia Road and hired the Olmsted Brothers to develop a plan for the house lots along roads taking advantage of the prospects from the hill above the Mystic Lakes. The plan was completed between 1902 and 1903 and showed thirty-one spacious lots on Myopia Road and two new roads named after the developers – McCall Road and Fernway. The plan also recommended locations for houses and stables. Frank Patterson Smith, a Winchester resident and Boston architect working with H. Langford Warren, oversaw the construction of roads and the laying out of the site plans shown in the Olmsted plan. He also designed some of the houses and gardens on Myopia Hill. He had had a long-term relationship with one of the developers, George Fernald whose house he had designed on Bacon Street in 1895. Another Boston architect, Robert Coit, who lived in Winchester and also had worked on designs in the late nineteenth century neighborhoods in the Flats, designed Samuel McCall's English Revival mansion in 1902 and Samuel Elder's 1905 Grey Rocks (demolished in 1978). While governor of Massachusetts, McCall lived in his Myopia Hill house. Many of the spacious lots were developed with significant architect-designed main houses and stables; others were subdivided to accommodate denser development. However, the sense of privacy developed in the original layout was retained due to the way in which the plan responded to topography, the quality of views, and the richness of plant material. Just north of the McCall-Fernald development is Swan Road laid out in 1911, soon after the construction of the 1909 Classical Revival estate for Joseph Remick at 4 Swan Road. On the western side of Myopia Hill the Schrafft candy magnate built his English Revival mansion with twenty-six rooms (80 Myopia Road, was 40 Arlington St.). The scale and the elaboration of some of these early twentieth-century main houses with accompanying stables or other outbuildings confirm the suburban ideal for which Winchester became well known.

Another important addition in the early 1900s was the construction of the Oren S. Sanborn House, known as Aigremont, at 15 High Street. Sanborn, like some of the other turn of the century newcomers, was heir to a profitable well-known company, in this case, Chase and Sanborn Coffee. The architectural firm of Hill and James designed two Beaux-Arts mansions in Winchester between 1905 and 1908, the Sanborn House and the Joseph Remick House on Swan Road, mentioned above. The elaborate stucco Sanborn House, became a Catholic school in 1947 before it was turned over to the Winchester School Department in 1968.

Besides savvy businessmen and professionals, there were a number of artists who sought the fine views overlooking the string of lakes or the river and the pastoral quality of the Mystic Valley.

Many of the architects who are noted above were published while living and working in Winchester. Architect-designed houses were models and many of the architects lived in the neighborhoods that they were designing adding an interesting element to the development of these suburban ideals. Besides the many architects who practiced and lived in Winchester, there were a fair number of artists who chose to live in the bucolic settings in Winchester with studios in Boston or in Winchester. As noted above, Edward Brackett was an artist and naturalist who lived near the Fells in his octagon house on Highland Avenue. In the 1880s Foxcroft Cole, a Barbizon painter, lived on Everett Avenue. Annie Nowell was an artist living on Church Street in Winchester. Hermann Dudley Murphy, a painter and frame-carver, lived in an English Revival house at 314 Highland Avenue. His wood-carving studio, Carrig-Rohane, which was on his property, eventually turned into a sizeable picture-frame industry. Another frame-carver in Winchester was Charles Prendergast. Also Winchester's proximity to Boston and Cambridge attracted a certain group of intelligentsia – professors, musicians. Many of these artists and architects at the turn of the twentieth century were influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement.

The early twentieth century was the time in which the housing boom continued in Winchester with subdivision of larger lots and construction of infill housing. The population doubled from 1890 when there were 4861 residents to 1910 when Winchester had grown to 9309 persons. In the same period the overall value of real estate tripled.

In response to this increase in population many new neighborhoods were laid out and others were built out to a higher density. There were a couple of examples of apartment complexes; the brick Allan Boone Apartment Building (31 Church Street) constructed in 1902 in the Colonial Revival Style, facing the Town Common, and farther west on Church Street, the stuccoed Lewis Road Apartments, constructed in 1913 in the Craftsman Style. And in this same period a couple of public buildings were added at the Center to accommodate the public services necessary for the increased population. In 1904 the Winchester High School, now the Lincoln School on Mystic Valley Parkway, was constructed in the neo-Classical style influenced by the Beaux Arts training of the architect, Herbert D. Hale (1866-1909). In 1914-1915 the Fire and Police Station, designed by Edward Riggs Wait, was built in the Colonial Revival style at the Town Center. And religious institutions also built anew. The First Unitarian Society built a stone Gothic Revival church on Main Street in 1899. It was designed by George F. Newton. In 1904 the Church of the Epiphany on Church Street was designed in the Gothic Revival style by well-known local and Boston architectural firm, Warren, Smith and Biscoe with F. Patterson Smith as the lead architect.

In about the same period extending to after World War I, nearly all of the short streets connecting Washington Street and Highland Avenue, north of the St. Mary's neighborhood, were built out – Park Avenue, Governors Avenue, Lincoln Street, Prince Avenue, Stone Avenue, Lebanon Street up to Fairmont Street. Interspersed among Colonial Revival architecture are houses in the Craftsman and Bungalow styles, none of which has been documented. By this time the Winchester Hospital had been established in this northeastern part of town with an architect-designed building in 1916. It was altered substantially with a new wing in 1924 and reoriented to Highland Avenue.

Twentieth century suburban developments of the 1920s and 1930s that demonstrated the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement were laid out near the eastern border of Winchester along South Border Road at the edge of the Fells. Jefferson and Lawson roads were parts of a model development designed by Edward Riggs Wait, an architect who went to England to study model housing before designing many of the houses in this neighborhood. It was called Felsdale, within walking distance to the Middlesex Fells – a reservation set aside by the Metropolitan Parks in the 1890s. Another development of the 1920s and 1930s was Lantern Lane, nearer the Mystic Valley Parkway than Felsdale. “Winchester’s rising middle-class” was targeted in these developments. The architect of Lantern Lane was Edward Sears Read. Also working in Winchester from the late 1930s was Royal Barry Wills who designed a number of houses on Myopia Hill.

In the ten or fifteen years after World War I, the growth and development of Winchester’s residential stock led to necessary improvements in public facilities and the beginnings of the framework that would guide future growth. In addition to the many public services that were upgraded and buildings that were constructed, it was the period in which a master zoning map was drawn and the first zoning bylaw was written dividing the town into five districts. The 1924 map and bylaw articulated the historical development in terms of the allowed uses in each district in town. The south and west sections were single residence districts and the northern areas were “general” residence districts in which were allowed multiple family housing and boarding houses. A semi-residence district near the center permitted residences over first-story shops and the business and industrial districts were located in areas that had been built with factories and businesses such as the Town Center. It was an important time to establish such growth patterns as the population of Winchester increased by 2000 persons and nearly 1000 housing units were added between the 1920s and the 1930s.

The Wyman School on Church Street was erected in the 1920s on the former Shattuck estate. It was converted to apartments in the 1970s. Three other masonry schools were built by 1925 and before 1930. Two, the Wyman School and the Noonan School near Horn Pond Brook up in the northwest section of Winchester, were expanded with additions. Also in the late 1920s the High School went to two sessions and in 1931 the McCall Junior High School, designed by Ralph Clipston Sturgis, was constructed on Main Street near the center. All of these brick buildings displayed the popular Classical and Colonial Revival styles for institutional structures. In 1927 the Classical Revival Post Office was added to the Town Center. Land for the Winchester Library was purchased from the Joy family and from Christian Science Church in 1927-28. The spot was chosen for its proximity to the Town Hall and the institutional center of Winchester. Designed in 1930 by Robert Coit, and completed in 1931 in the Collegiate Gothic Revival style, the building had an art gallery and small lecture hall and eventually a room for the Historical Society which was formed in 1933.

With the suburban development from the late nineteenth century to the mid twentieth century came the interest in recreational activities, particularly sports. The Winchester Country Club hired Warren and Smith to refurbish an old farmhouse on the Swan Farm for its first clubhouse, in 1916. The club had a curling team and soon built a golf course along Arlington Street. But prior to this in 1879, Frederick Prince had organized a baseball club which was named the Myopia Team for the nearsightedness of most of the players. In 1882 this club began fox

hunting on Myopia Hill; however, this was soon abandoned due to lack of space and the objection of local farmers, so the Hunt moved to Hamilton and today is the well-known Myopia Hunt among horsemen. The Winchester Boat Club was built in 1901 on Cambridge Street, designed by Robert Coit. It specialized in canoe sailing on the Aberjona.

After World War II, Winchester's landscape again was marked by another housing boom, in part in response to the need for veterans' housing. In the decade after WWII an additional 591 new houses were built along the eastern slopes of the Fells and west of Cambridge Street on the slopes of the western hills, most as single-family housing. The zoning bylaw had been revised in the early 1940s in response to the row of Tudor Revival apartment housing, called Winchester Arms, built along Washington Street in 1941. Throughout the third quarter of the twentieth century, enormous growth continued, particularly the large subdivisions that were laid out on the hills west of Cambridge Street and smaller ones on the eastern side along Pierrepont Road.

Churches were expanded often with consultation from well-known architects. In 1926 the Second Congregational Church built an edifice designed by Frank A. Bourne and then a new parsonage in 1950 using plans by Royal Barry Wills. St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church built a parish hall in 1954. Another Catholic parish, Immaculate Conception, built a contemporary brick and limestone church in 1955. The Christian Scientists moved from the center of town and constructed the brick neo-colonial revival church in 1958 on Church Street, designed by Royal Barry Wills.

In the same period, the long-discussed issue of the railroad grade crossing at the Center again captured the attention of Winchester residents. A raised crossing had been a feature of the Kellaway plan of 1909. It finally was executed in 1956 according to a plan of Colonel Lewis Moore, Jr., who was a local engineer. The permanent overpass was a major event that divided the town both physically at the Center and emotionally, as was evidenced by the Town referendum of 2,982 for and 2,102 against. The project led to the loss of many features of the cultural landscape, including eleven houses.

Several schools were added to the inventory to accommodate the suburban growth. Just after the Second World War in 1949, the Parkhurst School, designed by Hutchins and French, was built on Emerson Road at Samoset Road and within only six short years an addition was required. A six-room addition was made to the ca. 1925 Mystic School out on Main Street fairly near the Grove Street intersection. The Vinson-Owen Elementary School on Johnson Road opened in 1961, and in 1967 the east side of town needed a new school, which was the Muraco School near the railroad west of Washington Street in 1967. In 1969 the Town purchased the Marycliff Academy property, which was the old Sanborn estate. The Catholic girls' school had constructed a school building, designed by Maginnis and Walsh, on the property in 1947-48 which became one of Winchester's elementary schools, the Ambrose School (demolished 2003). Eventually the Classical Revival Sanborn mansion became the offices of the School Department. The Library also was expanded in 1966 with an addition designed by the Boston architectural firm of Kilham, Hopkins, Greeley and Brodie, which has been replaced.

Many land use issues of the last quarter of the twentieth century have changed the face of Winchester. The Town has only been marginally affected by the construction of major

transportation routes, all of which have occurred just outside the town borders. However, housing demands have increased and shifted. In 1965 the large multi-story crescent shaped Parkview Apartment building was constructed. The Housing Authority, created in 1970, built apartment buildings for affordable and senior housing overlooking Wedge Pond, and the Town adopted planned developments allowing condominium development along Route 3. The 1970s was a time of school changes. In 1972 a new High School opened on Skillings Road. The McCall was retrofitted to be the McCall Junior High School and the old McCall (Main Street) was rehabilitated to be the new Lincoln Elementary School (Mystic Valley Parkway). Maintenance of the Aberjona River and of the Parkway system remains a challenge, and to address some issues, the Aberjona Watershed Committee and River Commission have been working to preserve some of the major landscape features that to this day make Winchester one of the most desirable suburbs north of Boston.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF PRESERVATION IN WINCHESTER



1854 Walling Map Inserts

HISTORY OF PRESERVATION IN WINCHESTER

By Ellen Knight

Winchester Historical and Genealogical Society

The beginning of organized preservation efforts in Winchester may be traced back to the Winchester Historical and Genealogical Society (WHGS), formed in 1884. Abijah Thompson initiated the WHGS that summer when he approached George Cooke to prepare papers for the organization and regulations of such a society. Cooke produced a prospectus and draft constitution and bylaws. In November 1884, the WHGS was formed.

"The objects of this society," states the constitution, "shall be to collect, preserve, and supply to inquirers the facts of the local history of Winchester, and such family genealogies as may be offered to its archives; and to prepare, or cause to be prepared, from time to time, such papers relative to these subjects as may be of public interest to our citizens." In addition to seven officers, 38 men and women signed the constitution and became members of the WHGS. Monthly meetings were held from September to May. Two customary pieces of business at all meetings were the announcement of donations and the reading of papers.

With each meeting, the list of donations, kept by the librarian, lengthened as books, photographs, maps, pamphlets, and other items were added to the collection. Among the first donors was the Board of Selectmen who voted in January 1885 that the society "have the privilege of selecting such printed or other matter as they may find among the documents left at the room formerly occupied as Selectmen's Room, the same to be kept by the society in such manner they may deem for its preservation as the property of the town."

In 1884, town offices were scattered about different buildings in the downtown area, but after the construction of Town Hall in 1887 the historical collection had a new, more stable home. The trustees of the Public Library, located in one wing of the Town Hall, offered the WHGS the room above their reading room. In 1889, the library trustees, reporting on the furniture in the room, wrote, "Many other gifts of general historic interest have been given to this society in trust for the town. They are very valuable now and will be more so as time goes on."

Though not all of the donations have been preserved, that collection was the genesis of the current Archival Center and Historical Society collections. In addition to its legacy of records and artifacts, members of the WHGS also gave future generations historical studies or papers. Many of these were published in *The Winchester Record*, the first printed collection of historical papers and records of Winchester, published between 1885 and 1887.

"Out of the monuments, names, words, proverbs, traditions, records, fragments of stone, passages of books, and the like, we do save and recover somewhat from the deluge of time," states *The Winchester Record's* title page. WHGS members also recorded history as they remembered it, recording recollections of early nineteenth century Winchester residents, organizations, businesses, and the built environment.

As time went on, most of the original active members of the WHGS died. In 1898 the WHGS itself quietly expired after voting to turn over its property to the trustees of the public library for safe-keeping.

Winchester Historical Society

In 1931, a new Winchester Public Library (WPL) was built next to Town Hall. On the second floor, the trustees reported, "A large room [has been] set apart for the collections of the one-time Winchester Historical Society, ... which might perhaps now be induced to come to life again and use the quarters provided for it." A year later, a new Winchester Historical Society (WHS) was formed. It used the library room "to preserve the relics and records of earlier Winchester days" and the art gallery for lectures and historical expositions. In 1934 there were about 75 members, "and all citizens of the Town who are solicitous that Winchester shall have a future of fine accomplishment, are urged to join." The library trustees also wrote, "We believe that the historical societies in the various towns throughout the nation do much toward upholding the best American traditions." (Library Trustees 1934 Annual Report)

The WHS did not stay in its library room. In the late 1950s the library was feeling the need for space for its own collections. The Society was forced to move its belongings from room to room and from building to building. The collection might have been lost but for the efforts of some volunteers, as described in 1989 by Fran VerPlanck: "Upon removal of this collection from the old Cutting house the collection was moved to the attic of the public library [1960] where years of roof dust settled over the old deeds, papers, and artifacts, penetrating every crevice and every precious paper. As historical society president, my first task was to recruit volunteers. One crew would go one night to vacuum and gently dust or sponge the books and papers. The next night's crew would sort and collate. Fortunately, after a whole year and a half of this, we attracted the services of Ed Galvin, who volunteered hours and hours to put sense into what we had found and establish a workable cataloguing system."

Winchester Historical Commission & the Archival Center

In 1967, the Historical Commission (WHC) was formed, with a state-defined goal of the "preservation, protection and development of the historical or archeological assets" of the town. The work of historic preservation has since been shared by the Commission and the Society (whose members have often belonged to both groups).

In 1973 there was an idea that the library attic might be converted into a new historical room, but plans got bogged down. Then, during the summer of 1974, the School Department offered the Society two rooms in the basement of the Sanborn House (see below) for an Archival Center. The Society put all of its belongings on permanent loan to the Archives, and, in November 1974, the collection was moved. A part-time archivist's position having been voted by Town Meeting, the Winchester Archival Center opened to the public in January 1975 with Galvin as the first Town Archivist. At that time, the budget was managed by the Board of Library Trustees. In 1982 Town Manager Thomas Groux informed the Commission that a budget had been established for the maintenance of the Archival Center that would be under the auspices of the WHC.

In January 1977, the School Department notified the Archival Center that it would need the two rooms and offered, instead, a first-floor room in the Carriage House. The archives moved in August 1977 and reopened in 1978. Because the space was small, some items were put into storage in private homes. Galvin resigned that May. Between then and 1989, three other part-time archivists have served, appointed in 1978, 1982, and 1987. The Carriage-House Archival Center did not last, either. After the renovation of Town Hall, a room was made available for the archives in the basement. Assured the collection would have a permanent, secure, environmentally-controlled home, the Society gave the Town the bulk of its collection in 1990. The records of the WHC were also moved into the Town Hall archives.

Since the room was not large enough for everything, the collection was divided into two – the collection of papers, books, photographs, maps, and other documentary items at Town Hall and the Society's collection of artifacts (plus miscellaneous other items) which it kept at the Carriage House for about a decade. An effort (perhaps not entirely successful) was made to recover the items that had been stored around town. Then, in 1994, following another School Department eviction, the Society had to move again. The collection was boxed up and is now locked away in storage in the Sanborn House. The Society has a display case at Town Hall, but, unlike nearly every other town in the greater Boston area, has had no home for its historical collection to be housed, displayed, and used for educational programs.

Ironically, at the same time the Archival Center moved into Town Hall, the position of archivist was eliminated from the town budget. Ever since, the Archival Center has been staffed part-time by volunteers, mostly Society members. In 1983 VerPlanck wrote to the Finance Committee, "Without an archivist to set up teaching programs with outside help and without an archivist to show off with expertise the contents of the ever increasing fine collections, you will, in fact, be putting the collection back into the closet and a uselessness and possible demise." While the collection has been saved, it has been endangered. Some items from the collection have disappeared. Conservation efforts have been employed, but both physical and intellectual access have been difficult. The room does not have space for exhibits, classes, or group visits. While the Center has accepted occasional donations, there have been no organized collecting or public awareness programs.

The future of the Archival Center was put under study in 2002 when a meeting of representatives of WHC, WHS, and WPL (which has a local history room), plus the Town Clerk and archives volunteers was organized to discuss issues common to the several historical collections in the town. Subsequently, Town Manager Brian Sullivan appointed this group as a Study Committee with a charge "to study the current state of the historical collections of the Town of Winchester, located in the Town Hall, Public Library, and other municipal departments, and the collections of the Winchester Historical Society, including the distribution of the collections, storage, security, access, funding and staffing to maintain the collections, and to make recommendations thereon, to the Board of Selectmen, the governing boards of the Winchester Public Library and the Winchester Historical Society, the Winchester Historical Commission, and to the Town Manager." The committee completed a report, which was essentially a needs assessment, in July 2003.

While working on its study, the committee formed a Collaborative for Documenting

Winchester's History (including the WHS, WHC, WPL, and Town Clerk) when the opportunity arose to apply for funding from the Massachusetts Historic Records Advisory Board through its grant program to strengthen the documentation of towns in the Commonwealth. The Collaborative received a grant to fund a consultant to advise on linking the several historic collections into a linked Town collection and for developing a shared database. The development of the database began in 2004. The consultant's recommendations (due by the summer of 2004), combined with those of the Study Committee, are intended to form the basis for the final study goal, the development of a strategic plan for the documentation of Winchester's history and the preservation of its historical collections.

As a temporary measure, while the future direction of the Archival Center is being studied, a Town Manager's Archives Advisory Committee was appointed in February 2004 to manage the Archival Center while the Commission focuses on other preservation activities.

Winchester Historical Commission & Other Preservation Efforts

When formed in 1967, the WHC wrote up its goals as:

- the extension to the local level the national program of historical and cultural preservation,
- assistance to the state Historical Commission, through a survey of historical and architectural assets, and
- assist and augment the efforts of other groups in conservation/improvement of the physical and natural environment.

Preservation of Winchester's architectural heritage has always been a WHC priority. It was immediately interested in saving the Cutting House, a town-owned building next to the library whose sale was authorized by the same Town Meeting that authorized the WHC's formation. WHC supported a group interested in leasing the house as a cultural center for children. Despite all preservation efforts, including recording by the state as a local historic landmark, the Cutting House was demolished in 1969.

While still campaigning for the Cutting House, the WHC also recommended the erection of historical markers, house markers, future development of a portion of the Middlesex Canal, development of open space areas, and "restoration of the historic and aesthetic character of Winchester within the framework of a program aimed at strengthening the economy of the town as a whole – as a pleasant, interesting environment in which to live, shop, and work – and which would attract visitors who are potential customers."

The demolition of the Cutting House, however, left the members of the WHC disheartened. It discontinued its activities until 1972 when the Board of Selectmen appointed a new commission. It was then viewed as "an active extension of the well-established historical society." Cooperation between the two groups resulted in a survey of about 120 buildings, "a mandatory survey of town historical resources completed and submitted to the state Historical Commission in order to retain town eligibility for future state and federal funding of preservation-related projects."

During the 1970s, members of both the society and Commission were involved with two

important historical events: (1) assisting the History Book Committee with the creation of the second volume of town history and its publication, along with the first book, as a two-volume set and (2) the celebration of the national bicentennial and the 125th anniversary of Winchester's incorporation.

Survey History

The Commission's major project from 1975 to 1979 was the survey of buildings pre-dating 1917. This was an enormous effort, which enlisted many volunteers and for which Town Meeting voted \$9,000 of which \$5,000 was to be reimbursed by the state historical commission. It was accompanied by a certificate program to encourage and recognize historical research by local property owners. After the survey was completed in 1979, two copies were bound in 1982 for the Archival Center and public library. The survey included over 2,000 buildings built through 1916, although research was concentrated on houses built before 1874. More complete research was compiled on 570 building forms, 12 area forms, and 5 streetscape forms and submitted to the Massachusetts Historical Commission for its Inventory.

National Register Nominations

While conducting the survey, the WHC saw the losses of the Knights of Columbus Hall (originally the Episcopal Church), the old railroad station which predated Winchester's incorporation, and the 1937 movie theater. In 1978, the commission began nominating properties to the National Register of Historic Places (NR), beginning with the Winchester Savings Bank building on Mount Vernon Street and the Josiah Locke (a.k.a. Vinson-Owen) House on High Street. In 1981, it successfully nominated the Sanborn House and in 1983 the Town Hall. Also in 1983, the Board of Selectmen supported the nomination of the first NR district, the downtown business district.

In 1988, the NR accepted the WHC application of a multiple resource area, including five historical districts and 59 individual properties.

In 1990, the WHC took preliminary steps toward a study for a local historic district. It held a panel discussion on design review with the Beautification and Design Review Committee and opened a dialogue about local historic districts and overlay districts. It presented the idea of doing a study for a local historic district to the Board of Selectmen, which denied permission.

Demolition Delay Bylaw

In 1995, the commission received a new responsibility, overseeing the new demolition delay bylaw, the first and only town bylaw offering any protection to historic properties. Originally the bylaw applied only to National Register properties. In 2001, the commission successfully sponsored a Town Meeting article that extended the option of delaying demolition to properties on the Massachusetts Historical Commission's (MHC) Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth. As property owners were given a one-time opportunity to opt-out, not all inventoried properties are covered by the bylaw.

Other WHC Preservation Efforts

Over the years the WHC has engaged in various preservation and awareness efforts, independently and in conjunction with other groups, including

- the commemorative ceremony honoring Philomen Wright and the placement of a plaque on Ginn Field in 1980
- Middlesex Canal plaque at Wildwood and Fletcher streets, in 1987
- member participation on the Center Design Review Committee, beginning in 1983
- member participation with the Town Hall renovation
- a map of the town center keyed to photos of past and present scenes and buildings
- observation of Preservation Week in May, including lectures, forums, walking tours, photo exhibits, newspaper articles
- participation in Town Day
- annual restoration awards in conjunction with the American Landmarks real estate agency for several years during the 1990s.

Winchester Historical Society - Other Preservation Efforts

The purpose of the WHS, according to its 1979 constitution is “to stimulate an interest in local history, to promote scholarly effort, to foster the continued collection and preservation of historical data and material, and to cooperate with individuals and other organizations having similar interests.”

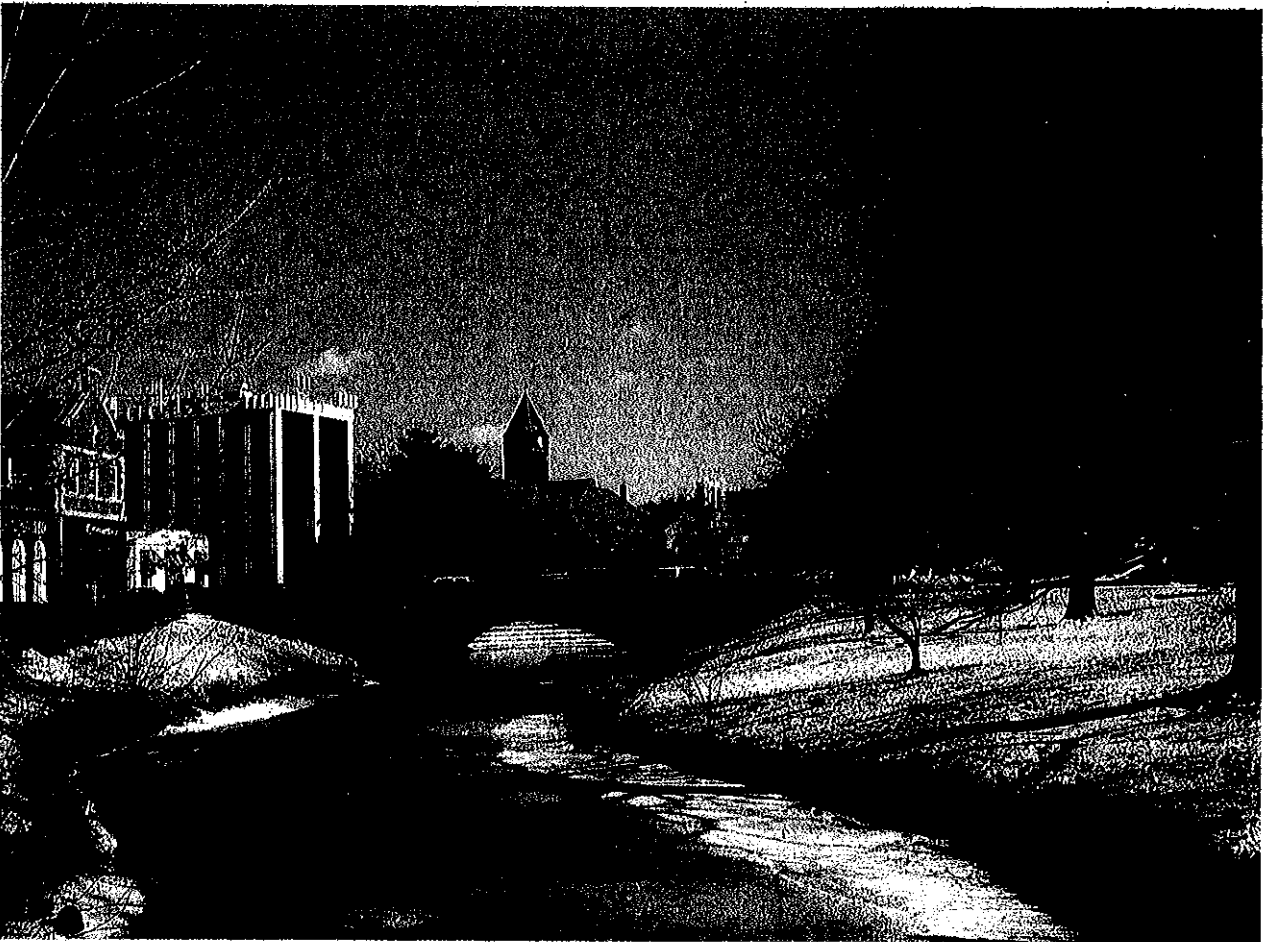
Like the WHC, the WHS has offered educational programs, including lectures, walking tours, and trolley tours over the years. In 1988 it published *Winchester, Massachusetts: The Architectural Heritage of a Victorian Town*, chronicling the development of the town and including illustrated walking tours. It has also been publishing a series on Architects of Winchester. In 2000, for the Town’s sesquicentennial, it presented the Town with a sign showing the downtown historic district and town-wide historic sites. The sign was installed next to Town Hall.

The Society’s current major effort is to lease the Sanborn House from the Town for a cultural center and historic museum. The house, along with a carriage house, was built by Oren Sanborn in 1907, on a nine-acre parcel of land. In 1947, the Marycliff Academy, a girls’ school was built on the meadow adjacent to the house. The Town purchased the entire parcel in 1969 and renovated the school into the Ambrose Elementary School. The Sanborn House and Carriage House have been put to varied uses. The complex was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1981.

In recent years, the Society opened discussions with the Board of Selectmen about leasing the Sanborn House for an historical/cultural center. The Recreation Department was then using the building but had its own sights set on moving to the Mystic School. A Sanborn House Reuse Committee was formed, which recommended the Society’s proposal. In the fall of 2003, the Recreation Department moved to the old Mystic school building, and Town Meeting approved the selectmen’s acceptance of the Sanborn House from the School Committee. A revised Sanborn Reuse Committee was appointed in 2004.

CHAPTER III

INVENTORY OF HISTORIC ASSETS



INVENTORY OF WINCHESTER'S HISTORIC ASSETS

The Inventory of Historic Assets is the basic documentation of Winchester's historical and cultural resources. It is the "*identification*" phase of preservation planning. In the early 1970s each municipality in the Commonwealth was encouraged to form a local historical commission that would document the resources using the methodology set forth in the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) publication called *Historic Properties Survey Manual: Guidelines for the Identification of Historic and Archaeological Resources in Massachusetts*. The inventory establishes a base line used in planning for the preservation of local historic and cultural resources.

In 1977 and 1978, the Winchester Historical Commission began the documentation of Winchester's historic and cultural resources that had been built by 1916. A detailed Sanborn map of 1916, demonstrating the build-out at that time, was the reason for setting this cut-off date. Guidelines for this extensive project included looking at:

- all properties constructed before 1874 and,
- a sampling of properties constructed between 1874 and 1916.

At the time Allen Hill, local architect, architectural historian and chairman of the Winchester Historical Commission, completed much of the historical research and added commercial, industrial and public buildings to the list.

Some information on about 1900 properties was recorded and those forms are contained in twelve bound volumes that are available in the Reference Room of the Winchester Library and in the Winchester Town Archives located in the Town Hall. The chart below accounts for the number of buildings constructed within each time frame. Of the buildings documented in the broader survey effort only four extant buildings were constructed prior to 1795. This amplifies the importance of developing a plan to preserve such resources.

Historical Period	Buildings Surveyed
17 th Century	0
1700 - 1795	4
1796 - 1835	26
1836 - 1854	117
1855 - 1875	171
1876 - 1889	337
1890 - 1898	474
1899 - 1916	770

Additional research using the methodology established by the MHC was completed for about one-third of the resources. Properties that were further documented included those that:

- were built prior to 1865,
- demonstrated outstanding architectural value and,
- were significant to the town and its residents.

In 1979 the Winchester Historical Commission submitted completed forms to the MHC including 570 Building Forms, 12 Area Forms, and 5 Streetscape Forms. In addition, a five-page summary of the Development of Winchester was written.

Although the MHC documentation format has changed and the methodology has been modified, generally the Winchester forms have adequate information with regard to the physical description and the historical statement. The most obvious missing piece is the National Register eligibility statements; however, many properties have been listed and in all likelihood the evaluations made in the 1970s would not be the same made today. Over the last twenty years, documentation for additional properties has been made sporadically. Bridges and landscapes are among the types of resources that have been added to the inventory more recently.

The National Register program, described below, accounts for additional listings in the late 1980s. Most buildings in areas that were listed as districts were given survey numbers so that the number of individual properties that now are included in the inventory has grown substantially. Presently Winchester listings in the MHC index, known as MACRIS – Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System- include 833 buildings, one cemetery, twenty-four structures, objects and sites, and twenty-four area listings of which seven are related to National Register listings described below. Many of the 833 individual building forms describe buildings that also are included in an Area Form.

As stated above, the inventory is the basis for all preservation programs. For this reason any updating and additions to the Inventory of Historic Assets provides a better tool with which to substantiate and develop preservation strategies. It is essential to know what should be preserved in order to select the most appropriate tool for the resource type. Basic survey form content includes a black and white photograph, a map locating the nearest cross streets and other nearby buildings, standard information such as the address, historic name, date of construction, style, setting, and a list of any other buildings on the site. In addition each form has an architectural description of the resource and an historical statement accounting for the construction, use of the property, and persons associated with its past. The present day methodology also includes National Register evaluation with a Criteria Statement attached for properties that are deemed eligible for listing in the National Register. Most properties included in Winchester's Inventory of Historic Assets do not have this evaluation due to the use of an old

Data Sheet

Include the following columns on an area or district data sheet:

- MHC number
- Address
- Assessor's number
- Historic name
- Date of construction
- Style

format. Area Forms describing neighborhoods or districts generally should have a Data Sheet which lists all resources in a given area and includes basic information about each resource.

Recommendations for updating and improving the Inventory will require time and funding to complete. While an inventory is never finished, there are a number of tasks that will improve the ability to use the inventory to preserve Winchester's resources.

INVENTORY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Complete survey of properties built after 1916 to the early 1960s.
2. Update and complete new forms in North Main Street Area.
3. Update survey of properties in NR districts
4. Update survey of properties in Area Forms
5. Conduct a Municipal Property Survey
6. Conduct Heritage Landscape Inventory

1. Survey properties constructed after 1916 to the early 1960s. Areas in which there has been insufficient documentation include Myopia Hill, Ledgewood, Jefferson and Lawson roads, Pierpont and Sargent roads. Myopia Hill and the Jefferson Road neighborhood are pre-World War II planned subdivisions with many architect-designed houses. Peirpont and Sargent roads have slightly more modest housing that are arranged as cohesive planned and tightly knit residential neighborhoods. For the most part these areas have not been documented because these areas were developed after the 1916 cut-off date used for past survey efforts. While these areas have been identified for additional inventory, there are other neighborhoods that also should be documented. West of Cambridge Street, there are a number of neighborhoods that were developed in the 1950s and 1960s. The plans and housing types articulate the patterns of growth known to Winchester in the mid twentieth century and should be recorded in the inventory of historic assets. A more thorough windshield survey of this area will help to determine how much documentation will be appropriate. The 1960s standard for survey helps to provide a cushion for documentation efforts so that some information has been gathered on properties that are not yet 50 years old, the general date for consideration of historical value.

Only a few properties on Myopia Hill are included in the inventory. This is an area developed in the early to mid twentieth century with large architect-designed estates, which are an important part of Winchester's development and should be included in the inventory. The Olmsted Firm worked on the laying out of streets. Changes to the area have taken place, particularly the subdivision of estates such as the Schrafft House, which retains the large Tudor Revival mansion but has two twenty-first-century dwellings built in the frontage along Arlington Street. Those properties constructed after 1916 that were included in the 1970s inventory are not listed on the National Register of Historic Places and likely are eligible. Thus in addition to new survey work, the few existing forms for this area and other similar under-documented neighborhoods should be updated.

The Ledgewood Road area includes Prospect Street Extension, Lorena Road, Lawson Road and Jefferson Road area as well. There is no survey work accounting for the development of this area with the exception of the Frederick S. Snyder House which was a large estate before the subdivision for the surrounding pre- and post-war neighborhoods developed in the 1920s and the 1930s, and then in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The residential development is diverse in terms of size and style, and much of the Felsdale development is architect-designed.

The neighborhood tucked into the lower southeast corner of Winchester is a result of later development of housing along Pierrepont, Franklin, and Sargent roads, which may be considered vulnerable due to the size and scale of many of the dwellings. Adding the neighborhood to the inventory will be an important step in preserving the rhythm and pattern of development.

2. Update the inventory and complete new forms in the North Main Street Area. This area is singled out in the recommended survey work due to the intense vulnerability caused by development pressures in an area that is less well-documented and recognized than other areas of Winchester. Commercially zoned North Main Street and the adjacent residential neighborhoods, east and west of North Main Street, consist of many nineteenth and early to mid twentieth-century properties that are worthy of recognition and possibly preservation. The past survey work in this area was at a minimum and must be bolstered in order to address growing pressures.

3. Update the inventory of properties in the National Register districts. At least half of the properties in the three residential National Register districts have not been individually documented and are only recorded on an Area Form. Those properties that were constructed after 1916 are undocumented and not mentioned in the National Register information. Documentation of these properties and updating of others to include good architectural descriptions will enhance the effectiveness of the National Register listing and will be necessary preparation to adopt additional forms of protection such as local historic district or neighborhood conservation district designation. Survey forms for the first National Register district, known as Winchester Center Historic District, listed in 1986 before the Multiple Resource Area nomination, also should be updated, particularly the architectural descriptions, which would be used for any type of guidelines that may be recommended in the future. In this area, the 1916 cut-off did not apply and properties that were constructed after 1916 were documented and listed as contributing within that nomination.

4. Update the inventory of properties in Area Forms. There are eleven Area Forms describing neighborhoods that have not been listed on the National Register and in which there are many resources for which there is little to no documentation, particularly those properties constructed after 1916. The most efficient way to update these forms is to clarify the boundaries, identify each property within the boundaries, and prepare a data sheet which includes the basic information described above. Furthermore, any additional information gleaned through the research process should be added to a continuation sheet to be attached to the respective area form.

5. Conduct inventory of Municipal Property. Although many of the municipal buildings are included in the inventory, there are a number that are not. In addition, there are a number of public spaces, such as parks and athletic fields, for which there is no data regarding the history of

acquisition and use of such spaces. The benefit of looking at all municipal properties together is to evaluate them in the overall context of Winchester's resources. The data can be used in a variety of ways – to develop a municipal National Register program and to develop a Preservation Plan for municipally owned properties.

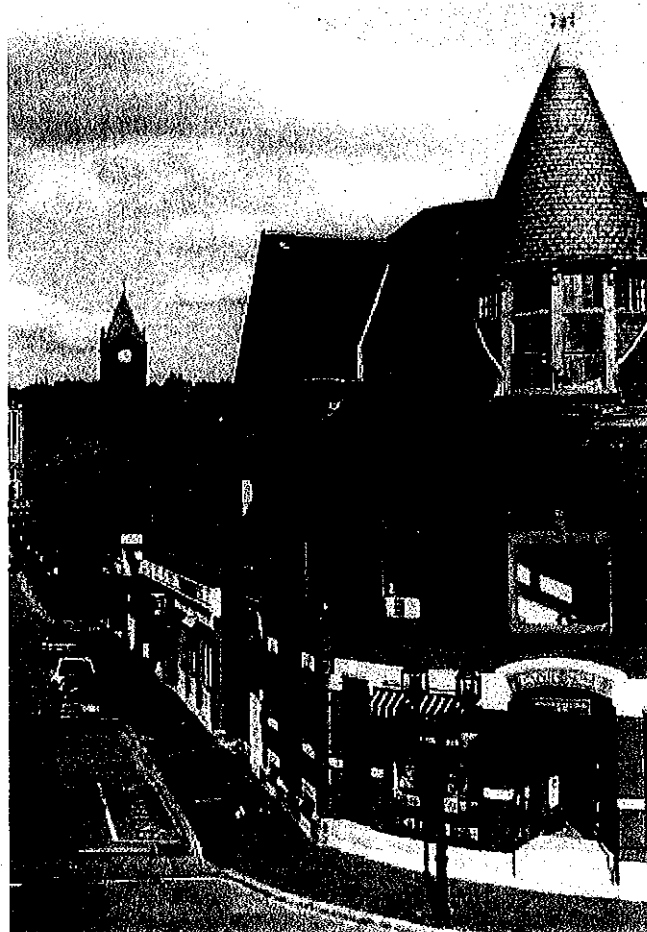
6. Conduct Heritage Landscape Inventory. The methodology for conducting an Heritage Landscape Inventory Program is described in a recent publication of the Department of Conservation and Recreation called *Reading the Land*. The public process recommended in this program is beneficial in many ways, most particularly in developing widespread support for identifying and protecting the heritage landscape of the community. A list of potential heritage landscapes may include properties noted in the Open Space Plan or recommended by the Conservation Commission, among many ways in which to identify such resources. In any event a Heritage Landscape Inventory should be pursued in partnership with the Conservation Commission. Parts of or entire heritage landscapes may already be documented in the traditional Inventory of Historic Assets. A list is included in the appendix which may be used to generate discussion about this concept.

Benefits of Up-to-Date Inventory

- Used daily to determine preservation plan
- Used to inform community of history
- Used to tailor interesting programs for all
- Used to develop educational programs for schools

CHAPTER IV

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES AND STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROGRAMS



©MarkFlannery.com 2003

NATIONAL REGISTER AND STATE REGISTER PROGRAMS IN WINCHESTER

The National Register of Historic Places is a list of the historic resources – buildings, sites, structures, objects, landscapes and archaeology – that convey a sense of the history of local, regional and national culture, figures and architecture. It generally is a first step in the recognizing the “*evaluation*” phase in preservation planning by listing properties that have been identified in the inventory as National Register eligible. Properties can be listed individually or as part of districts – a collection of historic resources. The list is maintained by the National Park Service (NPS). The nomination process in Massachusetts is administered by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC).

Potential listings must meet at least one of four criteria of historical significance. The process is well defined in the National Register publications.

National Register Criteria

- A. Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. Association with the lives of persons significant to our past; or
- C. Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; or
- D. Potential to yield information important in prehistory or history.

In addition each nomination must be evaluated and discussed in terms of seven elements of integrity.

Elements of Integrity

- Location
- Setting
- Design
- Materials
- Workmanship
- Feeling
- Association

Over the past thirty years, there has been a series of formats that have been used in listing properties in the National Register of Historic Places. Each is a variation of the individual and district nomination. The Multiple Resource Area Nomination, referred to as an MRA, was used in the 1980s and is the format for most of the Winchester listings. It consists of a lengthy context statement describing generally the cultural landscape of Winchester and the developmental history of the Town. Each property that is listed is accounted for in an MHC individual survey form or as part of an

Area Form which is the way in which districts are described. Other variations of this main general statement format appended by individual property or district survey forms are the Thematic Resource Area (TRA) nominations and the Multiple Properties Submission (MPS) nominations. Winchester properties are included in one TRA nomination: Water Supply System of Metropolitan Boston of which the Mystic Gatehouse is an individual listing; and one MPS: the Metropolitan Park System of Greater Boston of which the Middlesex Fells Reservation Parkways is a district listing.

Listing in the National Register of Historic Places has no regulatory effect on privately funded projects involving privately owned properties. In fact the listing generally is seen as a benefit engendering pride in local history with no negative impact to the property owner. Those properties that are publicly owned or in the ownership of a private non-profit agency may require owners to participate in an advisory review process for the use of funds – loans or grants - and the granting of permits by a state or federal agency. It is Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 that explains the federal review process and Chapter 254 of MGL that lays out the state process. In some instances a National Register listing can make a property eligible for public funding for historic preservation projects.

Winchester initiated its National Register program in 1979 with two individual nominations that listed the Winchester Savings Bank and the Captain Josiah Locke House (195 High Street). In 1981 Sanborn House (15 High Street), later known as Aigremont-Marycliff Academy, was listed. In 1983 two properties were added to the National Register: the Winchester Town Hall and the Philemon Wright-Asa Locke Farm (78 Ridge Street). The first district was nominated in 1986. The Winchester Center Historic District accounts for over 80 properties at the village center and includes many commercial and institutional resources. Two of the early nominations, the Town Hall and the Savings Bank, also were included in the area of this district nomination.

The MRA which accounts for three districts and 55 individual properties was listed in 1989. In 1986 the Town had contracted with a team of preservation professionals to review the existing inventory and recommend a National Register program including individual properties and districts to include in a Multiple Resource Area nomination format. Attention was given to each

period of development and representative examples were selected to represent five themes of development. Following additional research where necessary, the MRA nomination was prepared comprising an overall description of the town, a statement of significance recounting the development

Themes and Periods of Development

- Early Settlement-Agricultural Period (1638-1774)
- Industrial Development Period (1775-1830)
- Growth and Incorporation (1831-1850)
- Establishment of the New Community (1851-1886)
- Suburban Period (1887-1916)

history, a lengthy section discussing the remaining architecture that articulates the six themes of development, and a brief description of preservation activities in Winchester and of the methodology used to prepare the inclusive National Register nomination. The individual and area survey forms were appended to the MRA Statement to account for each property and district listed in the MRA Nomination.

The Thematic Nomination for the Water Supply System of Metropolitan Boston was completed in the late 1980s and listed in 1990. It includes resources in twenty-one towns surrounding Boston. The Mystic Gatehouse at Edgewater Place is the only resource in Winchester that is part of the larger network of historic resources related to the water supply system.

The Multiple Property Submission recognizing the Metropolitan Park System of Greater Boston is a work in progress, with the first submission occurring in 2003. The Middlesex Fells Reservation Parkways Nomination was included in the first round and comprises resources in a number of towns, including Winchester.

National Register of Historic Places listing is an important first step in recognizing the value of historic resources and in informing residents and visitors of the history of Winchester. The listing also may be used in implementing other preservation strategies; therefore, it is important to have an accurate listing of Winchester's cultural and historic resources. To this end, recommendations include amending the Multiple Resource Area Nomination.

National Register Nominations Recommendations

1. Update MRA Nomination Period of Significance from 1916 to 1954.
2. Review Contributing and Non-Contributing status in district nominations.
3. Reassess existing inventory for NR eligibility.
4. List eligible properties identified in on-going survey work.

1. Update the period of significance from 1916 to 1954. As described above, the Winchester inventory accounted for properties constructed by 1916, hence the National Register MRA Nomination only described the development of the town up to 1916. Thus properties built after that date were not documented and were not described as contributing to the historical and architectural significance of the districts and the town. In order to extend the Period of Significance of the MRA, information must be added to the MRA statements – architectural description and historical significance – that describes the periods of development from 1916 up to and including 1954. Generally National Register listings are fifty years old or more, thus the 1954 cut off. If this project is not completed until 2005, then the cut-off date should be moved accordingly.

2. Review Contributing and Non-Contributing status in district nominations. Each district nomination is accompanied by a “district data sheet” that lists the properties in the district and assigns a National Register status of Contributing (C) or Non-Contributing (NC) for each resource. Properties built after 1916 could not be designated as contributing in the MRA districts nominations because those periods of development had not been accounted for in the general MRA statement. Thus once the period of significance is extended, the properties in each district can be reassessed to determine whether they contribute to the architectural or historical significance of the district. The 1916 period of significance date was not used in the Winchester Center Historic District, so that some buildings constructed after that date have been designated as contributing to the significance of the district; however, there are other properties in this district that may be determined contributing upon re-evaluation.

3. Reassess existing inventory for National Register eligibility. When the major part of the inventory was completed in the late 1970s, the format did not require a National Register Criteria Statement. There also was no place on the form to insert National Register evaluation. Unless

there was a thorough “completion report” at the end of each phase of an inventory project, National Register eligibility may have been overlooked. For this reason as well as a changing understanding of how many resources do contribute to our understanding of the past, there is value in reviewing the inventory to determine whether there are properties that in fact do warrant National Register attention.

4. List eligible properties identified in on-going survey work. As each inventory recommendation is completed there will be related National Register work. Current survey methodology requires National Register evaluation and the submission of a Criteria Statement for each property that is determined eligible for NR listing. There is no doubt that the survey of properties constructed after 1916 will yield many properties eligible for National Register listing. Some are already documented or at least mentioned in existing NR districts. There is no documentation for others. As the first step in the Inventory Recommendations is accomplished, there will be ample information available to add to Winchester’s National Register program.

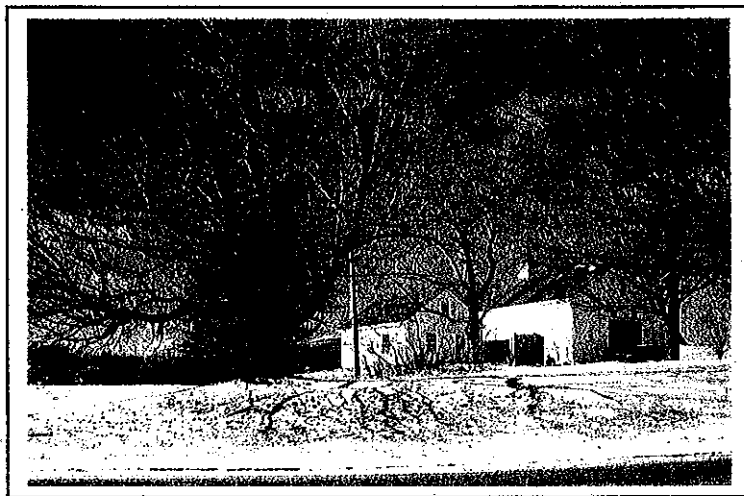
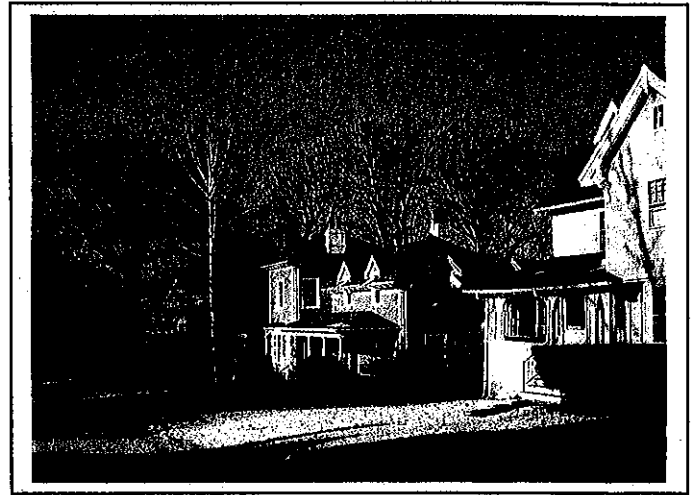
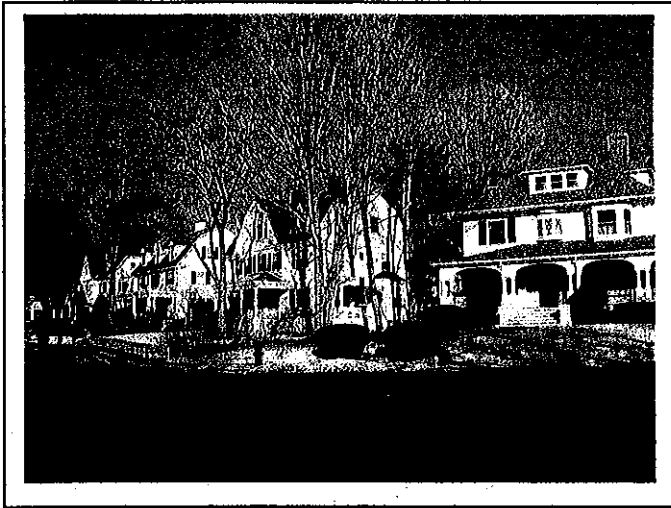
In Massachusetts, the State Register of Historic Places is similar to the National Register in some ways. It is a comprehensive list of significant buildings, structures, objects and sites in the Commonwealth that have been recognized for their historical or archaeological significance. All properties that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places also are listed in the State Register of Historic Places. In addition, all properties that are within a Local Historic District (See Chapter VII) and all properties for which a Preservation Restriction has been applied to the deed (See Chapter VII) are listed in the State Register. The State Register is an official planning tool that informs developers, planners, and property owners about significant historical and archaeological resources. Members of Winchester's Conservation Commission and Historical Commission should know that the state Department of Environmental Protection is required to ask for a recommendation from the state Historical Commission when a permit is requested from the DEP for a project that will adversely affect a property that is listed on the State Register or is eligible for listing on the State Register.

Benefits of National Register and State Register Programs

- Provide positive status for properties worthy of preservation
- Provide material for educational programs
- Provide additional basis for other preservation planning strategies
- Extend the effects of the demolition delay bylaw
- Benefit of federal Investment Tax Credit and state Local Options Tax Assessment
- State and federal funded or permitted projects are reviewed for adverse impact to National Register and State Register properties.

CHAPTER V

PRESERVATION STRATEGIES



PRESERVATION STRATEGIES

This chapter provides a discussion about traditional preservation strategies both regulatory and non-regulatory. Other growth management strategies that are related to land use regulations are discussed in a separate chapter. The implementation of preservation strategies is the “*protection*” phase of preservation planning. In most instances it is the identification and evaluation provided by the inventory and the National Register program that establishes the basis for many preservation strategies. An important premise to keep in mind when considering regulatory preservation strategies is the basis upon which a municipality may adopt regulations: to protect the public’s interest which is to be able to know and understand one’s local historical development – the roots of the community in which one lives. The purpose statement for local historic districts can be applied to all preservation regulations: “to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation and protection of the distinctive characteristics” An important part of this statement that often is lost in everyday actions is the promotion of educational welfare of the public. Each action responsive to any preservation strategy is an opportunity to educate the public about the history and architecture of the neighborhood, the town, the region, the Commonwealth. Perhaps that function should be better integrated into the administration of preservation strategies.

It is important to note that all regulatory agencies, such as local municipal boards and commissions, must observe the Open Meeting Law and due process procedures. One of the goals of these regulations, which require notification and an open and fair process for all proceedings, can be a partial solution to enhancing the educational welfare of the residents of the community. Thus as boards and commissions implement bylaws and regulations affecting historic resources, they should seize the opportunity to provide the public with information about the historic resources and the variety of ways in which to preserve them.

Demolition Delay Bylaw

Demolition delay bylaws or ordinances have been adopted in nearly 100 municipalities throughout the Commonwealth. A demolition delay law is a preservation tool that can lead to preservation of significant local historic properties. Implementation of the demolition delay process provides an opportunity to alert the public of a pending demolition of a significant property and to attempt to find an alternate use of or location for the property. In addition it gives the Town an opportunity to fully document the property prior to loss of that segment of the community’s historical record. Demolition is the loss of a non-renewable resource – a segment of local history is gone forever.

In 1995 the Winchester Town Meeting adopted a demolition delay bylaw which requires that the Historical Commission review applications for demolition of structures that are included in the Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets on file at the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). This bylaw requires the building commissioner to forward all applications for demolition of a building to the Winchester Historical Commission for consideration of significance. If a building is determined to be significant and “preferably preserved” following a public hearing, the Commission can apply a six-month delay of demolition. This is not a permanent prohibition of demolition, only a stay of demolition for a maximum period of six

months. The wording of the Winchester bylaw limits application of the bylaw to a property that is listed in the National Register or contributes to a district that is listed in the National or State Register or to properties included in the inventory. This means that properties that have been determined to be "non-contributing" to a district are not subject to the delay unless it is included in the inventory. In addition there is another limitation to this bylaw. Section 6, titled "Opportunity for Removal," describes a one-time opportunity for property owners to have had their properties removed from the list. Amended in 2001, the opportunity described in this section also must be extended to owners of properties that are added to the National Register and inventory at the time of such inclusions. The list of properties and a map showing the location of the properties affected by the Bylaw applies are included in the Appendix. Since 1995 when the Demolition Delay Bylaw was enacted, Winchester has lost sixteen of its non-renewable resources. Of those, four were constructed between 1836 and 1855 and twelve between 1856 and 1916. Since the number of resources in the earlier time periods is significantly smaller than those in later periods of development, it is essential that the bylaw be upheld particularly when dealing with earlier properties.



The Winchester Demolition Delay Bylaw can be amended to be substantially more effective.

Recommendation to Amend Demolition Delay Bylaw

1. Extend delay to one year.
2. Delete Opportunity for Removal clause.
3. Complete Inventory and National Register recommendations.

1. Extend delay to one year. Several communities have extended their delay periods to one year while others have started with a one-year

done

delay. In nearly all instances a one-year delay is more successful in protecting properties because property owners are encouraged by the length of the delay to reuse the property rather than demolishing it.

2. Delete Opportunity for Removal clause. Not only does this provide opportunity for those who are not preservation-minded to opt out of the preservation plan for the community, but it also creates unnecessary bookkeeping and does not treat all significant properties equally. If one relies on willing owners, there is no need for preservation strategies. Also there is no mechanism for adding the property back into the affected list when there is a new property owner.

3. Complete the Inventory and the National Register recommendations. Expansion of the inventory to include additional properties and amendments to the National Register MRA nomination will mean more properties are potentially protected by the Demolition Delay Bylaw.

need to do

Benefits of Amending Demolition Delay Bylaw

- Provide temporary protection for additional historic resources.
- Increase public awareness of the significance of local historic resources.

Local Historic District Program

One of the most effective preservation strategies is adoption of a local historic district bylaw that creates a local historic district. Since 1963 the Commonwealth has had Massachusetts General Law (MGL) Chapter 40C - the Local Historic District Act guiding communities in adopting this fine tool. The purpose of a local historic district is to preserve the integrity of a discrete neighborhood – an area that displays good architectural and historical significance and that contributes to the local community character. The MHC will assist the Town in proceeding with a local historic district. The first step is to request from the MHC copies of *Establishing Local Historic Districts*.

There are a number of important facts about local historic districts. There also are many myths that must be dispelled.

Local historic districts are local options. Only the community can decide to adopt a local historic district and it requires a two-thirds vote of Town Meeting to adopt a bylaw and designate a district.

Local historic districts are regulated by a local commission appointed by the Selectmen and having specific qualifications – such as an architect, a realtor, a resident of a district, an historical society member.

Local historic district commissions regulate only those architectural features that are visible from a public street, way, park, or body of water. The operative word is *public* because the whole purpose is to preserve the public interest in the designated architectural features of an area.

Local historic district commissions do not regulate interiors, landscape plantings, and ordinary repair and maintenance.

Local historic district commissions must adhere to due process practices as stated in the Open Meeting Law and in MGL Chapter 40C which would be reiterated in a local bylaw.

There are a number of areas in Winchester that would benefit from local historic districts designation. In order to begin the process the Winchester Historical Commission is advised to select a relatively small neighborhood where there is a high level of integrity and where there are known interested residents. A successful process requires substantial grass-roots initiative in

- Potential Local Historic Districts**
- Bacon-Church-Central Streets
 - Everett Avenue-Sheffield Road
 - Firth-Glengarry
 - St. Mary's Neighborhood
 - Wedgemere

which Winchester residents are convinced by what they learn about the history of an area and the benefits of local historic districting. Part of one of the National Register districts may be a good starting point.

Each of the areas has substantial inventory. Three have good historical statements already prepared as part of the National Register nominations. Each needs additional work particularly in developing

solid and up-to-date architectural descriptions.

The process of establishing a local historic district takes approximately one year. All the steps are outlined in the MHC booklet mentioned above. To begin, the Historical Commission should select an area to be studied and request that the Selectmen appoint a Local Historic District Study Committee. In some instances, historical commissions serve as the study committee; however, they must be appointed and must include the representation that is stated in MGL Chapter 40C. In any event, it is most helpful to have some Historical Commission members serve on the Study Committee.

The task of the Study Committee is to study an area, determine whether it is a potential local historic district, determine the boundaries of that district and write a bylaw to designate and govern local historic districts in Winchester. An important task will be to review the inventory for the recommended area and update forms so that a Commission has a good base line from which to work. Included in the updating should be new photographs of each and every property as well as good maps locating the property in relation to other properties as well as a district map which can be produced by the Geographic Information System available through the Engineering Department.

The Study Committee must prepare a Preliminary Study Report (See appendix for Checklist) which is forwarded to the MHC and to the Winchester Planning Board. After at least sixty days have passed the Study Committee will hold a posted public hearing for which all property owners in the potential district must receive notification. Following the public hearing the Study Committee prepares a Final Study Report and a warrant article which it submits to Town Meeting asking for adoption of the bylaw and the map describing the district. Upon adoption at Town Meeting, the new bylaw must be approved by the Attorney General and the map must be filed at the Middlesex Registry of Deeds. Then, the District is in effect and it is time for the Selectmen to appoint a Local Historic District Commission, often the same persons as those who served on the Study Committee. From this time forward, all property owners must receive a Certificate of Appropriateness, Non-Applicability, or Hardship before proceeding with a project to alter architectural features. Thus, it is essential that the Commission meet immediately to adopt Rules and Regulations which address the administration of the commission and Design Review Guidelines which assist applicants and commission members in developing a responsive preservation program.

Once the Town adopts a local historic district bylaw and the Selectmen appoint a Commission, the appointed Commission should serve as the Study Committee for any future districts or amendments to existing districts. Adoption of the first local historic district and the bylaw tends to be the highest hurdle. Additional districts are less controversial especially if the historic district commission is operating in a reasonable and responsible fashion using best preservation practices. The new Commission should immediately draft Rules and Regulations and Design Review Guidelines, which should be aired at a public hearing to let residents of the neighborhood and the community know about the important issues conveyed in these documents.

Although Massachusetts has yet to undertake a study of the economic value of local historic district designation, there are a number of other states which have produced reports

demonstrating the positive effect of such designations on property values. Studies show stability and rising property values in both commercial and residential regulated historic districts.

All properties that are part of a local historic district are automatically listed in the State Register of Historic Places, whether part of a National Register district or not. This is an added benefit of local historic district designation for municipally owned and private non-profit owned properties that then may be eligible for certain grant programs requiring listing in the State Register for eligibility.

Once a local historic district bylaw has been established regulating properties, the Town would be eligible to apply for Certified Local Government (CLG) status. The commitment on the part of the Town is to keep good records and report to the MHC annually about cases reviewed, minutes kept and certificates issued. The benefit is the access to funding that is passed from the Federal government through the State to the local government. At least 10% of the money received annually from the Federal government must be passed through to the local CLGS.

Benefits of Local Historic District Designation

- Preserves a discrete neighborhood with a high level of architectural integrity.
- Mechanism for adopting design standards that preserve and enhance the characteristic features of the neighborhood.
- Stabilizes and enhances property values.
- Eligible to become a Certified Local Government (CLG).

Local Landmarks Program

A local landmarks program is not unlike a local historic district program. Even though the definition of a local historic district in MGL Chapter 40C refers to "one or more parcels or lots of land or one or more buildings or structures" Winchester may prefer to develop a separate bylaw to protect individual landmarks. There is no state law that guides the crafting of a local landmarks regulation; therefore, such a by would be adopted under Home Rule, which provides opportunity to enact a bylaw that benefits the Town.

Nearby cities that have a local landmarks ordinance are Cambridge, Boston and Newton. Some municipalities use Local Landmarks designation to recognize and protect outstanding individual buildings such as the Town Hall. Others have used it to protect an individual building that either is not in an area that has an appropriate local historic district or is in an area where local historic districting has not been successful or is not thought to be possible. Generally the protection is similar to local historic district protection – changes to features that are visible from the public way. Winchester may adopt a Local Landmarks Program in order to bring recognition and a certain level of importance to significant properties such as all that were constructed before 1795 or to recognize significant and unique resources such as the Sanborn House on High Street. It is known that there are only four extant pre-1795 properties; a fact that elevates the significance of these four resources and presents a case for their distinct preservation.

Neighborhood Conservation Districts

The purpose of a neighborhood conservation district is to preserve neighborhood character particularly the overall size, scale and massing of a specific geographic area. Neighborhood conservation districts are less restrictive than local historic districts in that the jurisdiction generally is limited to demolition, new construction, and additions that exceed a certain percentage of the original structure. Neighborhood conservation districts, like demolition delay and local landmarks programs, are adopted through Home Rule. The best local example of such a law is Cambridge's Neighborhood Conservation District Ordinance. Presently the MHC is preparing a document to assist communities in developing such a bylaw or ordinance.

Areas that tend to benefit from a less restrictive historic district such as a neighborhood conservation district may be large neighborhoods in which there already has been change of materials and minor architectural details but in which the overall neighborhood context is retained due to the size, scale and spatial relationships of the buildings. Other smaller neighborhoods could also be designated conservation districts.

The local historic district process and administration can serve as a model for a neighborhood conservation district. Most important is that the same limitations apply: that the jurisdiction is limited to the public view of the exterior features, that interiors, landscaping and ordinary maintenance are not regulated, and that due process is followed in all proceedings.

Potential Neighborhood Conservation Districts

- North Main Area residential neighborhoods
- Washington Street-Highland Avenue Area

Prior to consideration of neighborhood conservation districts in any area of Winchester, the Historical Commission should examine the inventory completed for that area, visit the area with maps in hand, and consider the

vulnerability of the area to determine whether the ill effects of pressures would be addressed by the protection afforded by a neighborhood conservation district. In addition the Commission will want to contact the MHC requesting information on developing a Neighborhood Conservation District Program.

Clearly the North Main area residential neighborhoods are experiencing the pressure of commercial development along North Main as well as the increase in property values associated with location more than the actual buildings. Hence there has been a fair amount of demolition of older structures for subdivision of lots and new construction of a larger size and scale than surrounding properties.

Many of the cross streets between Washington Street and Highland Avenue and north of Mount Vernon Street up to the area of the Winchester Hospital are older neighborhoods that retain a certain character related to the overall size and scale of dwellings as well as siting on the sides of the hill. While architectural elaboration is simpler in these areas than other neighborhoods such as the Flats, the relationship of houses to one another is a key defining feature and worthy of preservation.

Benefits of Neighborhood Conservation District

- Neighborhood stabilization
- Neighborhood pride
- Preserves the range of sizes and shapes of houses in the neighborhood.

Community Preservation Act

The Community Preservation Act establishes a mechanism by which towns and cities can develop a fund dedicated to historic preservation, open space and affordable housing. Funds are collected through a .5% to 3% surcharge on each annual real estate tax bill. The CPA is adopted by a majority vote on a ballot question at the polls and the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) is established by Town Meeting after the ballot question is passed. The percentage of the surcharge is determined by the town vote. Adoption of the Community Preservation Act fosters partnerships among historic preservationists, conservationists, and affordable housing advocates. Adoption also assures funding of preservation projects for at least five years and for as long as Winchester Town Meeting determines that it is a benefit to the community. At least 10% of the funds must be used to preserve historic resources. At least 10% must be used to protect Open Space. And at least 10% must be used to advance affordable housing. The remaining 70% must be used for one of these three uses as well as recreational needs and can be distributed in varying proportions depending upon the projects that the Town believes are appropriate and beneficial to the Town.

The CPC is charged with developing a Plan, considering projects and recommending expenditure of the CPA funds to Town Meeting. The Commonwealth has established a dedicated fund which is used to match the municipality's collections under the CPA. To date 61 communities have adopted the CPA and each has received a 100% match of the funds collected locally. This substantial benefit will continue until more towns and cities adopt the CPA, which would mean that the dedicated State fund would have to be spread more thinly or until the dedicated fund is redirected by the State Legislature.

The Community Preservation Committee can be encouraged to look for projects that are multi-disciplinary, meaning that more than one concern is addressed. For instance a large track of land such as the Asa Locke Farm or the Pansy Patch could be purchased. The farmhouse, farm buildings and some of the agricultural setting could be resold privately after preservation restrictions are applied to the historic structures. A certain amount of farm land could be preserved as open space. Another part of the land could be used for affordable housing that would have to be built according to certain performance standards. Either the purchase of the land or the construction of units or both could be financed by the CPA funds under the affordable housing discipline.

Historic preservation projects that could be advanced using CPA funding include any of the preparation work necessary to implement the various preservation strategies discussed in this

report such as an historic resource survey, National Register nominations, study reports for local historic or neighborhood conservation districts, and other preservation planning documents. In addition, the funds can be used for “bricks and mortar” projects such as cemetery restoration, preservation of the town’s many historic buildings, and the preservation of parks or monuments. Funds could be used to purchase preservation easements on private or non-municipal property, which would in turn preserve important historic resources.

Benefits of the Community Preservation Act

- Funding for historic preservation.
- Preservation of open space.
- Development of affordable housing.
- Coalitions among preservationists, conservationists, and housing advocates.
- Opportunity for creative multi-disciplinary projects that enhance the community.

Scenic Roads Act

The character of roads including tree canopies and stone walls is a distinct feature that contributes to the ambience of a neighborhood historically and aesthetically. In 1973 the State Legislature passed Chapter 40-15C, The Scenic Roads Act, providing municipalities with a way in which to designate certain local roads and regulate changes affecting the character related to the cutting of trees and the removal of stone walls. Through a Heritage Landscape Program, Winchester’s scenic roads will be identified. Following this process the Historical Commission and the Planning Board are encouraged to write a Scenic Roads Bylaw and designate eligible roads. The regulation under such a bylaw is limited to the cutting of trees and the removal (including relocation) of stone walls within the right-of-way. The hearing process is the responsibility of the Planning Board. Numbered routes may not be designated under this statute.

Examples of some of Winchester’s roads that may be designated are South Border Road, Mystic Valley Parkway, Church Street, High Street, Highland Avenue. To develop a comprehensive list, one must do a proper inventory that identifies, among other features, tree canopies and stone walls which define the character of a particular neighborhood.

Preservation Easement Program

One of the most effective preservation strategies in the long term is a preservation easement or restriction program. State statute governing the process is MGL Chapter 184, Sections 31-33. The process requires a partnership between a willing owner and a public or non-profit entity. The Massachusetts Preservation Easement program is administered by the MHC and requires the agency’s approval and signature in order for the property owner to claim the benefits and in order for the municipality to be assured of the permanence of the preservation strategy. Information about easement programs including the language for model easements may be requested from the MHC. In simple terms a preservation easement or restriction is a contract

that the property must be protected in part or in whole from actions that would compromise the historical and architectural integrity of the property. An easement is donated by a property owner to a non-profit or municipal agency, which must administer the easement. Generally an easement is donated in perpetuity and is filed at the Registry of Deeds so that all future property owners are on notice about the restriction. The terms of the easement can be crafted to meet the most effective preservation terms for the property. Hence one easement may apply to only the façade of a building while another may apply to the whole building or building including their spatial relationship to one another.

If the municipality holds the easement, the administering entity should be spelled out. It is logical to have a local historical or historic district commission review applications for change as each commission generally is familiar with design review issues. In some communities the local historical society may hold the easement in which case the society should be encouraged to institute a standing "design review" committee that may adopt design review guidelines for each property that is the subject of a preservation easement. Some easements are held by a state entity, most commonly the MHC. Owners of properties (including towns and non-profits) that benefit from a Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund grant must enter into a preservation easement agreement in order to receive the funding. These easements are held by and administered by the MHC. All properties for which there is a recorded preservation easement are listed in the State Register of Historic Places.

A single Winchester property is protected by a preservation easement: the Johnson-Thompson House at 201 Ridge Street. Although the context has changed substantially, the house is reported to be one of Winchester's oldest. There are examples of communities that have used preservation easements to protect the historic and architectural character of a property for which a special permit is being sought.

A key property for which a preservation easement may become an effective strategy is the Asa Locke Farm – the only remaining farmstead, noted for its arrangement of farm buildings behind the farm house on Ridge Street. While there are other ways in which to preserve the farm, a preservation easement can preserve not only the building facades but also the arrangement of buildings and the way in which they are placed in the landscape. Community Preservation Funds could be used to purchase such easements or property owners can donate easements and thereby receive tax advantages.

Benefits of Preservation Easement Program

- Preserves important features of properties and arrangement of resources
- Preserves properties beyond the willing generation presently in ownership
- Financially beneficial to property owner donating the easement, or
- Financially beneficial to public or non-profit owner gaining funds

Design Review Standards

Design standards for commercial properties and for multi-unit residential properties help to preserve an area's heritage by establishing guidelines for size, scale, massing, materials and treatment of details. Design standards should be different for business districts than for residential districts; however, each may inform the other particularly when mixed uses are contemplated in a business district. Design standards can be useful for infill, for additions, and for alterations to character-defining features on historic buildings.

The Planning Board, in concert with the Historical Commission and the Design Review Committee, would take the initiative to augment the present design standards for cluster and planned residential developments and to craft standards to be applied in business districts. The intent would be to develop design standards that recognize the characteristics of the historic buildings and that require new design to be compatible with existing resources. If the design standards are advisory, only a public hearing to adopt such standards would be necessary. If the design standards found in Cluster Residential Development and Planned Residential Development sections of the Zoning Bylaw are amended and design standards are added to the Zoning Bylaw affecting commercial properties, a two-thirds vote of Town Meeting would be necessary.

Rehabilitation Guidelines

The distinction between design review guidelines and rehabilitation guidelines can be explained as reactive and proactive. Design review guidelines or standards are used by the applicant to guide design and by a commission to review appropriateness of design. Rehabilitation guidelines are the "how to" or a set of instructions which can help one to choose a method of preservation. Development of rehab guidelines can be a good joint project between the Historical Commission and the Historical Society and may be produced in a booklet that can be sold through the Historical Society. To determine which topics to address in rehab guidelines, consult neighborhood groups, and review other communities' guidelines as well as Winchester's inventory.

New Taxation Options

Within the last two years the State Legislature has adopted two laws that can assist owners of historic properties in offsetting the costs of substantially rehabilitating a State Register property or a property that is certified as historic by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC).

Local Options Tax Assessment: The Local Options Tax Assessment can be used to phase the increase in property tax over five years for a property whose value has increased due to a substantial rehabilitation or restoration. In order for an owner of property that is listed in the State Register to take advantage of this option, the Town first must adopt the Local Options Tax Assessment law, which is found in Section 5J of Chapter 59 of the General Laws.

This option would be available to about 400 privately owned Winchester properties that are listed in the State Register. However, the majority are not in need of substantial rehabilitation. If additional areas are added to the State Register there is the possibility that there would be more properties that would take advantage of this option. Additional survey work in the North Main

Street area – commercial and residential – is likely to yield properties that are eligible for listing in the National Register, hence the State Register.

State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit: Recently adopted by the State Legislature is a State Historic Preservation Tax Credit. An owner of a property that is listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register can receive a tax credit of 20% of the cost of a substantial rehabilitation of an income-producing building. The rehabilitation must be certified by the MHC. This program, which is part of the \$50 million Economic Stimulus Package of 2003, is modeled after the federal Investment Tax Credit (ITC) program. The law adopting the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit can be found in Section 22 of Chapter 141 of the Acts of 2003 (amending Chapter 62 of MGL by adding Section 6J).

Again, additional survey work along North Main Street may provide sufficient information to determine that many of the properties are historic and would be eligible for this tax credit provided that they are income-producing, which includes commercial property and residential property that is rental housing.

Benefits of Using Taxation Options

- Preservation of properties that otherwise may be demolished
- Financial gain through historic preservation

Municipal Property Preservation Plan

A number of the town-owned buildings, parks, and monuments are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is likely that more are eligible for listing. These historic resources are part of Winchester's rich heritage. Preservation of these resources should be part of the Town's long-range planning. A preservation plan of municipal property would begin with an inventory of all town-owned property. During the survey process, the condition of each property also should be recorded. Each property then should be evaluated for historical and architectural significance. A ranking may assist planning for the future, meaning that each property may be assessed in terms of its historical significance: Highly Significant, Significant, Moderately Significant, Not Significant. Such ranking will assist in planning for the future. Based on the information gathered through the identification and evaluation process, a plan should be developed articulating ways in which to preserve the properties, particularly those rank highest on the significance chart.

Preservation strategies for Town-Owned Property

1. National Register Listing
2. Local Landmarks Designation
3. Preservation Bylaw for Town-Owned Property
4. Design Review Guidelines for Town-Owned Property

The benefit of National Register listing of town-owned property is two-fold. State grants for properties that are listed in the National Register, hence the State Register, include the

Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF). Administered by the MHC, only municipal property and non-profit property are eligible for this matching fund program. In the past, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (the former Department of Environmental Management) has had a matching grant program also for municipal and non-profit property. Known as the Historic Landscape Preservation Grant Program, it has assisted communities and non-profit organizations in restoring historic landscapes such as cemeteries and parks. Another benefit of National Register listing is that there is a federal and state review process for the use of federal and state funds, loans or permits that may affect a publicly-owned National Register property. The Federal process is defined in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the state process is defined in Chapter 254 of the General Laws. Each process determines whether there will be an adverse affect caused by the public project and attempts to mediate that impact through the advisory review process.

Local landmark designation would establish a binding review process for any project that would alter the landmarked property. This designation provides opportunity for a dialogue between the Historical Commission and the town agency responsible for the property. A preservation bylaw for town-owned property would operate in a similar fashion; however, it would institute a procedure for all town-owned property that had been evaluated at a specified level of significance. Design review guidelines would assist town agencies in planning projects to alter properties under their jurisdiction. All of these processes that are related to the evaluation of design in terms of the historic fabric also are opportunities to educate the community on the value of the resources.

Benefits of a Municipal Property Preservation Plan

- Preservation of character that attracts people to Winchester.
- Recognition of importance of planning for maintenance of property.
- Partnerships of responsible agencies to preserve important resources
- Long-term savings.

Educational Programs

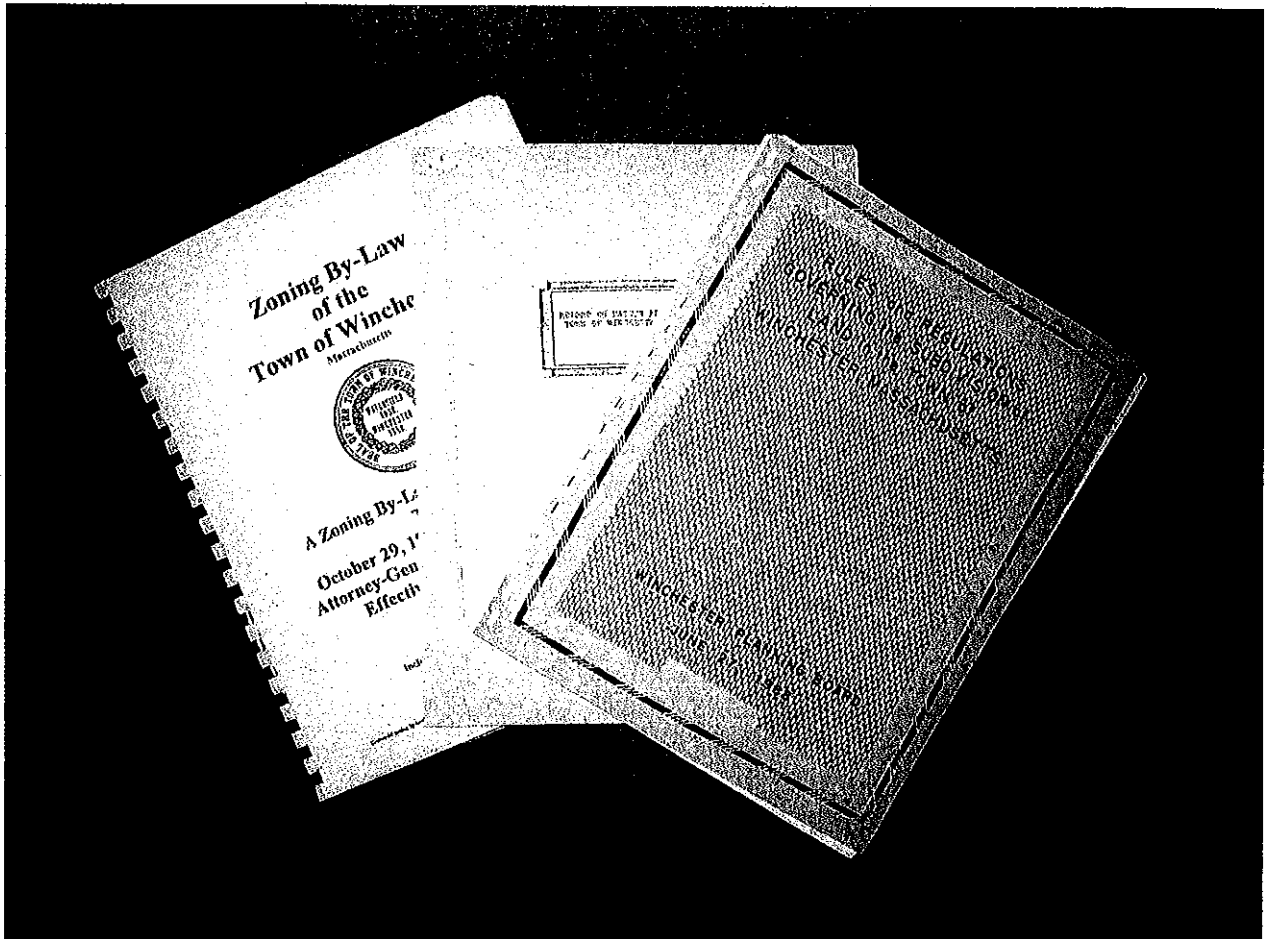
There are a variety of educational programs that stimulate community pride in historic resources and that can inform residents on useful procedures of caring for the local historic resources. Partnerships between and among the Historical Commission, the Planning Board, the Conservation Commission, the School Committee, the Historical Society and other private organizations such as Winchester Tomorrow can be formed to implement many of the traditional educational programs. A significant part of preserving the community's resources is to build the constituency of "preservationists" by convincing the public of the significance of resources, the role that they play in the community's desirability as a place to live.

Historic Markers Program: Plaques on buildings, particularly residences, inform viewers of dates of construction, early names associated with a building, and indirectly of building types and styles constructed in certain periods of development. A program can be used to raise funds or plaques can be sold at cost.

Historic Paint Program: Regionally the best known paint program is administered by the Cambridge Historical Commission. Choice of paint colors is described in the Cambridge publication *Painting Historic Exteriors*. Winchester has a significant number of late nineteenth century wood frame buildings whose owners may find paint color information helpful.

CHAPTER VI

MUNICIPAL POLICIES AND REGULATIONS AFFECTING HISTORIC RESOURCES



MUNICIPAL POLICIES AND REGULATIONS AFFECTING HISTORIC RESOURCES

Careful review of the Town's land use regulations may reveal areas in which historic preservation may become more solidified.

Strategic Plan - Master Plan

Through the Strategic Planning and Master Planning processes, land use policies and regulations will be examined to determine how they may impact historic property. Upon close examination, some communities have found that zoning and subdivision regulations can be counter to the preservation of historic resources. Thus it is important to analyze each land use regulation in terms of its impact on historic resources.

The first part of the present Strategic Plan process has been to establish goals relative to the Town's architectural heritage. The stated goals are to:

- Maintain, control and improve the town's physical character, historic neighborhoods, and town architectural heritage
- Increase housing diversity

The objectives in accomplishing these goals are to:

- Restructure zoning to protect neighborhood character
- Adopt a sensible and flexible mechanism to discourage teardowns and redevelopment with very large houses ("mansionization") where needed to preserve the character of existing neighborhoods
- Evaluate the role of the Design Review Committee in guiding the character and design of commercial and multi-family development.
- Redefine lot sizes and land use to prevent further subdivision of lots with existing single family homes.

Zoning

A thorough analysis of the Zoning Bylaw is likely to show a number of areas that could be modified to accomplish the goals and objectives that already have been established in the Strategic Plan. Below are some ideas that should be more thoroughly investigated by reviewing the existing bylaw and determining the parameters of a new bylaw that would accomplish the goals and objectives.

Cluster Residential Housing Bylaw: An amendment to the Cluster Residential Housing Bylaw may produce greater flexibility that could lead to the preservation of historic resources as well as protect open space. Presently the thresholds for Cluster Residential Housing are a minimum parcel size of 20 acres in outlying single-family residential areas and a minimum parcel size of 10 acres in more densely populated single-family residential districts. If the threshold is lowered, smaller properties that are slated for subdivision may in fact preserve open space by clustering the housing.

In addition, a cluster housing bylaw may add incentives to preserve historic structures or heritage landscape features on the site. There may be a single unit density bonus; however, a requirement of requesting bonuses must specify that a preliminary plan be filed demonstrating that a conventional subdivision could be built and what that allowed density would be.

Flexible Zoning Bylaw: A flexible zoning bylaw aids in preserving natural and significant historic features in development of a property. Generally development under a flexible zoning bylaw requires a Special Permit from the Planning Board. Dimensional requirements can be relaxed in certain ways to preserve specific natural or cultural features as long as the density is not increased. The purpose would be to allow greater flexibility and creativity in design and layout of a residential development in order to preserve the features that have been identified as significant and in order to minimize impact on the surrounding neighborhood. The Planning Board would rely on the survey including the heritage landscape component to guide the Board in preserving important features.

Site Plan Approval: Site plan approval if required under certain circumstances may help to guide development that is consistent with neighborhood character. Changes would require an amendment to Sections 4.11 and 8.7 of the Zoning Bylaw. Site Plan Review could be required for all new construction of single-family residences that are in excess of 6,000 square feet. In the case of voluntary demolition of any dwelling if the replacement construction exceeds the original structure by 150%, site plan review would provide an opportunity to guide the design to be more consistent with the fabric of the neighborhood. Whether a neighborhood is considered historic or not, these strategies could assist in preserving the overall size and scale of a neighborhood. In historic neighborhoods, there are occasions when lots are subdivided either through the Subdivision process or through an Approval Not Required (ANR) Plan which then lead to the relocation of an historic structure on the lot. Site plan review would help preserve the general character of the historic structure and its relationship to new development.

Subdivision

The Subdivision Rules and Regulations govern the division of land and the construction of roadways and other necessary infrastructure such as sidewalks and streetlights. Preservation of historic and cultural resources should be added to the purpose statement. In certain cases once the allowed density has been established, it may be possible to preserve certain features through the waiver of some subdivision requirements such as the placement of sidewalks, or the location of the roadway which may be governed by certain slope requirements, or the width of the subdivision road or the cul-de-sac. Each of these general standards can only be waived to a certain extent so that safety issues remain as a primary concern. A flexible zoning bylaw would be necessary to waive dimension requirements of lots and buildings on lots. Those issues would not be addressed in the subdivision rules and regulations.

Environment Impact Review - Section 106/Chapter 254

When an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) or an Environmental Impact Review (EIR) is required by the DEP or any agency or of a project proponent, the Massachusetts Historical Commission has an opportunity to comment on any potential adverse effect on National Register properties or properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. If an ENF

or an EIR is required either of a lender, or permitting agency, or by the DEP under an appeal, the MHC becomes involved to determine whether there will be an adverse effect and if there is such a determination, there are discussions to develop mitigation to preserve the National Register or State Register property. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 governs federal undertakings and Chapter 254 of the General Laws of Massachusetts regulates state undertakings that trigger these review processes.

Any change to land use regulations should be substantiated by a thorough study to determine necessity and applicability of the recommended changes. Such thoroughness would be important in order to inform the public of the "threats" to Winchester's historic resources, including heritage landscapes, and to encourage residents to support protective mechanisms.

CHAPTER VII

ACTION PLAN



1854 Walling Map Section

Action Plan

The Action Plan is a road map that can be used to implement the recommendations comprising this Plan. It lays out the recommendations referring to the chapter in which each is amplified, the responsible boards, commissions and committees, and the time frame in which the recommendation may be accomplished.

Chapter/Item Number	Recommendations	Responsibility	Timing
III.1	Survey properties built after 1916	HC	1-2 yrs.
III.2	Survey North Main Street Area	HC	Immediate
III.3	Survey properties in NR districts	HC	1-2 yrs.
III.4	Update area forms	HC	2-3 yrs
III.5	Conduct municipal property survey	HC, PB	2-3 yrs
III.6	Conduct Heritage Landscape Inventory	HC, CC	1-2 yrs.
IV.1	Update Period of Significance in NR	HC	Immediate
IV.2	Review each property's status in district nomination	HC	Immediate
IV.3	Evaluate existing inventory for NR	HC	1-2 yrs.
IV.4	List eligible properties in new survey work	HC	2-3 yrs
V.1 (DDB)	Extend delay to one year	HC, TM	Fall '04TM
V.2 (DDB)	Delete "Opportunity for Removal" clause	HC, TM	Fall '04TM
V.3 (DDB)	Expand demo list as Inventory and NR recommendations are completed	HC	2-3 years
V.LHD	Adopt LHD bylaw and designate districts	HC, Selectmen, LHD Study Committee, TM	Now to Spring 05 TM
V.LL	Adopt Local Landmarks Bylaw and designate LL	HC, TM	2-3 years
V.NCD	Adopt NCD bylaw and designate districts	HC, TM	2-3 years
V.CPA	Adopt CPA	HC, PB, CC, HA, P&R, BOS	Now -- '04 or '05 TM
V.PR	Institute PR Program	HC, HS	ongoing
V.DR	Adopt design review guidelines and rehabilitation guidelines	PB, HC	3-5 years
V.Tax	Adopt Local Options Tax Assessment Bylaw	BOS, HC, Assessors	'05 TM
V. MA ITC	Promote state ITC/ State Register properties	HC	Ongoing
V. MPP	Develop a Municipal Preservation Plan	HC, PB	2-3 years
VI. MP	Insert preservation policy in Master Plan	HC, PB	Now
VI.CRHB	Amend Cluster Housing Bylaw	PB	2-3 years
VI. FZB	Adopt a Flexible Zoning Bylaw	PB	1-3 years
VI. SPA	Amend Site Plan Approval Bylaw	PB	1-2 years

Abbreviations in Action Plan Chart

BOS	=	Board of Selectmen
CC	=	Conservation Commission
CPA	=	Community Preservation Act
CRHB	=	Cluster Residential Housing Bylaw
DDB	=	Demolition Delay Bylaw
DR	=	Design Review
FZB	=	Flexible Zoning Bylaw
ITC (MA)	=	State Investment Tax Credit
HA	=	Housing Authority
HC	=	Historical Commission
LHD	=	Local Historic District
LL	=	Local Landmarks
MP	=	Master Plan
MPP	=	Municipal Preservation Plan
NCD	=	Neighborhood Conservation District
PB	=	Planning Board
PR	=	Preservation Restriction
SPA	=	Site Plan Approval
TM	=	Town Meeting

APPENDIX

MAPS

- A. Showing Properties included in Winchester Inventory
- B. Showing Properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places
- C. Showing Properties Subject to the Demolition Delay By-Law

DATA SHEETS

- A. Winchester Inventory Index
- B. Winchester National Register Index
- C. Winchester Properties Subject to Demolition Delay By-Law

HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

- A. List of potential heritage landscapes

PRELIMINARY STUDY REPORT CHECK LIST

ANNOTATED REFERENCES

