

In reviewing the 2001 Historic Resources Master Plan of Concord( HRMP) and Concord's 2005 Comprehensive Long Range Plan(CLRP) I am pleased to note that several goals have been attained because of the hard work of Town Committees, particularly the Historical Commission and Planning Board. Additionally, the Town, private institutions and citizens have utilized Community Preservation Act monies to fund numerous historic preservation projects. However, many of Concord's historic resources remain vulnerable. Several of the important goals which remain require Planning Board initiative and Town Meeting vote. The Historical Commission will be the lead player in others. At least two projects will require the Historical Commission to work in conjunction with the Historic Districts Commission. All of the Boards will need to be proactive and work cooperatively if important preservation goals are to be realized.

**Cultural and Historic (CH)-1 CLRP**

“Protect and maintain Concord's existing historic resources, as well as Native American archeological sites and artifacts.”

**Recommendation for Action #3 HRMP**

“Promote the integration of historic resources information and preservation strategies into Town Policy and procedures.”

\*\*All Boards and Departments should be required to refer to the Historic Resources Master Plan, the 2005 Long Range Plan and the West Concord Historic Resources Plan before making decisions which affect historic resources. These resources should include historic structures, cultural and historic landscapes and archeological sites This should be instituted as an official Town policy. Discussion regarding this topic have been initiated by the Historical Commission.

\*\*In addition to referring to these Plans, dialogue and cooperation between Committees and Town departments such as the CPW needs to be strengthened to ensure a holistic and proactive approach to Historic Preservation. There is at present no forum for this cross pollination of historically oriented issues. For almost twenty years such an opportunity existed in the form of monthly Historic issues Coffees. I strongly recommend that the Historical Commission, Planning Board and or Town staff reinstate these meetings or some other equivalent historically oriented sharing opportunity. Silo thinking won't accomplish enough.

**Goal CH 4 2005 CLRP** “Protect historic and cultural resources through regulatory mechanisms and historic designations.”

**Recommendation 1 HRMP** “Secure optimum protection for most significant historic resources”

\*\*Recommended in both Plans is the expansion of the Main Street Historic District to include Sudbury Rd from the Library to Thoreau Street. The HDC should take the lead in this and will need HC assistance to study the affected properties. Previous attempts have failed but this is an important goal and should be pursued anew.

\*\*Neighborhood Conservancy Districts are also recommended in both Plans for Conantum and some historically intact West Concord neighborhoods. and should be pursued ASAP. The Historical Commission and Planning Department should work together on this.

**Goal CH-2 CLRP**” Protect and maintain historic and cultural scenic vistas , including farm land, scenic roadways, stone walls, road widths, sidewalks, major trees and village centers”

\*\*While this is a somewhat daunting and amorphous Goal it is crucial that some aspects be explored and enacted as soon as possible. Specific Action items which were listed such as “more historically and scenically sensitive roads and subdivision policy” have a huge impact and have yet to be fully enacted.

\*\* A more clearly defined historically sensitive roads policy which reflects historic values is particularly important. The CPW has the power to negatively impact Concord’s landscape. Curbing, signs, stop light designs, treatment of road verges, road and intersection configurations, tree cutting etc are all defining features. The present CPW Director is quite sensitive to historic values but they need to be quantified to prevent future negative impacts.

\*\*The subdivision policy was amended in 2007 and references the protection of historic character, however the words have little or no impact since these developments are by right.

\*\*One of the most important goals is the protection of Concord’s historic farmlands. These include Agricultural Overlay Districts and Zoning Bylaws. The 2005 CLRP put a strong emphasis on protecting farm land.

\*\*Unfortunately the protection of Concord’s countryside may result in the degradation of the built areas of town. Infill housing, more accessory dwellings or other changes to the zoning code would negatively impact historic context for the built areas of town particularly Zone C.

\*\*The most important and character defining feature of Concord is the landscape and almost all the other goals including affordable housing can be in direct conflict with the preservation of the landscape. Green neighborhood zoning or cluster zoning can help mitigate the impacts on the landscape in farming areas and is an action item in the CLRP.

\*\*While Concord Center’s appearance is protected by the Historic Districts Commission it is vulnerable to losing its vibrancy and commercial relevance. The Planning Board should initiate legislation to protect the Center from being overrun with banks and real estate offices. Great strides have been made in the protection and beautification of West Concord.

**Goal CH -3 CLRP** “Increase the level of citizen knowledge and responsibility for the Town’s unique history and historic and cultural resources”.

\*\*The present Historical Commission has increased the amount of outreach and the Concord Museum and Library play important roles. However, there isn’t as strong a constituency dedicated to historic preservation as there is for conservation. Since there is no Historical Society there is no central clearing house for historical interests.

Joanne Gibson, Clerk 2005 Comprehensive Long Range Plan

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\*\* denotes unrealized goals