

Historic Preservation

**An Element of *Sustainable Berkshires*,
Long-Range Plan for Berkshire County**

Adopted 3.20.14



SUSTAINABLE BERKSHIRES
Community Strategies For A Sustainable Future

Sustainable Berkshires is a project of the
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission.



**Berkshire
Regional
Planning
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INTRODUCTION

The Berkshire region is renowned for its rich history and cultural offerings. With history dating back to the very beginnings of this nation and each major milestone it has encountered since then, the landscape, sites, and artifacts of the Berkshires help define the region. Successful historic preservation helps retain sites and landscapes that reflect the and honor the past while also helping to advance a myriad of contemporary community and regional objectives – including community identity, economic development, neighborhood improvement, local agriculture, and energy efficiency. This plan illustrates the important role historic preservation has to play in the future success of the region and sets forth new priorities and directions for historic preservation activity in the Berkshires.

HISTORY OF BERKSHIRE COUNTY

Historic assets of the Berkshires reflect its past in the present day. This includes everything from Native American history of the Mohicans to the more recent past. A useful framework for understanding different eras of this history is set forth in the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area Environmental Assessment: Proposed Management Action Plan.¹

- **The Mountains and Woodlands (Pre-History to 1725):** This era includes all of the First Nations' history prior to colonization.
- **Settling the Woodlands and Leveraging Their Resources (1725-1770):** This era includes early colonization, missionary work, iron, timber and other extractive industries, and the French and Indian War.
- **The American Revolution and Early Federal Period (1770-1800):** This era includes people and places within the county that played a role in the Declaration of Independence and American Revolution as well as some early African American and civil rights history.
- **Achievement and Advancement (1800-1840):** This era includes the beginning hydro-powered industrial activities such as paper mills that began to pepper the Housatonic River and some tributaries as well as the literary and artistic works that began to emerge from the region.
- **A United Region in a Divided Nation (1840-1870):** This era includes the Civil War and related Underground Railroad activities and writings across the region.
- **The Gilded Age (1870-1905):** The era includes the time when successful writers began to build retreat cottages in the Berkshires. This was also a time when noted industrialists constructed early mansions across the region.
- **Nature, Culture, and Harmony (1900-Present):** This era covers the past century, which is itself arguably several eras combined. Because of the long history of the region, preservation focus has tended to be placed on resources over one hundred years of age. Fifty years of age is often when consideration as an historic resource begins. The more recent past (1900-present) is

¹ The Proposed Management Action Plan can be found at http://www.upperhousatonicheritage.org/uploaded_files/upper%20housatonic%20national%20heritage%20area%20draft%20final%20map%20and%20ea%20march%20with%20appendices.pdf.

a growth area for preservation practice moving forward. Portions of time such as the Great Depression, First and Second World Wars, and Post-War Era modernism each have their own stories and sites reflecting the architecture, technological advances, and history of the time.

THE PROCESS AND PRACTICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Historic preservation is the practice of retaining and maintaining significant historic (50+ years of age) properties with the belief that these unique structures add to the character and reflect the history of a community in ways that enrich the built environment and sense of place. This is not to say that any and all properties of a certain age are notable historic properties that warrant special consideration. Rather, preservation gears itself toward “significant” sites or areas such as those associated with a specific person or event (e.g. the Mount, Chesterwood, and W.E.B DuBois home), or because the structure is a notable example of a specific architectural style (e.g., Second Empire, Gothic Revival, Queen Anne), or because an entire area has retained its historic fabric well (e.g., Main Street Stockbridge). The focus of preservation practice is twofold:

- **Retain:** Retaining properties rather than seeing them demolished. This includes promoting ongoing maintenance of structures to avoid “demolition by neglect” as well as making sure that older structures continue to be used in ways suitable to modern needs or preferences through appropriate zoning and building codes. When projects are large in scale and shift the primary use of the site (e.g., from a manufacturing mill to residential condos), it is referred to as “adaptive reuse.” However, smaller changes such as additions, renovations, or accessory dwelling units also help keep older structures relevant to modern needs and lifestyles.
- **Maintain:** Keeping the architectural features and materials of structures such as detailed trims and railings that make them distinct. This is often referred to as retaining the “historic integrity” of the structure. In the case of local historic districts, focus is explicitly on exterior elements. Various landscape features often contribute to historic sites such as a historic agricultural landscape with old stone walls, the grounds and gardens of a Great Estate, or the stone sidewalks and hitching posts still present in some neighborhoods. These landscapes and features can also be a focus of preservation as either stand-alone sites or as contributing elements to a historic district.

In addition to historic preservation activities in the built environment, there are also historical societies that focus on preserving artifacts such as photos, housewares, or equipment from a bygone era. Historical societies and preservationists are often overlapping partners in that they each have a role in retaining elements of a community’s past and conveying that story to current and future residents. Efforts like historic walking tours are strengthened by the involvement of historical societies who are experts on the people and sites of local history.



Bargeboard (the decorative trim) on this Gothic Revival home is the type of distinguishing architectural feature that preservationists work to retain.



Inappropriate modifications, such as this example of aluminum siding and window removal can cover these details and negate, sometimes irrevocably, the historic significance of a structure.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION THROUGH THE SUSTAINABILITY LENSES

Historic preservation efforts help advance many contemporary activities and further long-term regional sustainability. A few key contributions are discussed below as they relate to the three sustainability lenses.

Economic Development

- Historic Preservation Creates Jobs:** Historic preservation has sometimes been viewed negatively by the construction sector as slowing development (particularly when a protection such as demolition delay is used). Research, however, shows that each dollar invested in historic projects yields more jobs than it would if invested in new construction. A 2002 study of preservation impacts in Massachusetts conducted by the Center for Urban Policy Research at Rutgers estimates that historic rehabilitation contributes \$2.3 billion of direct investment into the state economy each year and generating a total of 33,361 jobs in Massachusetts (from direct and multiplier activities). ²
- The Economic Multiplier Effect:** Historic preservation spurs additional economic activity and investment in the community. Some measureable economic benefits include: new businesses formed, private investment stimulated, tourism stimulated; increased property values; enhanced quality of life, sense of neighborhoods and community pride, new jobs created, compatible land-use patterns, increased property and sales taxes, and diluted pockets of deterioration and poverty. ³

² Lahr, Mike and Listokin, David. *The Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation in Massachusetts*. Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers University, 2002.

³ Rypkema, Donovan D. *The Economic of Historic Preservation: A Community Leader's Guide*. Washington D.C: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1994

- **Historic Tourism:** Seventy-eight percent (78%) of U.S. leisure travelers participate in historic and cultural tourism, spending on average \$994 per trip compared to \$611 for all US travelers. In a study of the economic benefits of preservation in Massachusetts it was estimated that heritage tourism contributes \$2.5 billion in direct expenditures, resulting in 53,217 jobs in Massachusetts (from direct and multiplier activities).⁴
- **Property Values and Tax Revenues:** Numerous studies across the country document the positive relationship between historic preservation and increased property values in local historic districts. Higher property values mean higher tax revenues for municipalities.

Social Equity and Capital

- **Community Character, History, and Identity:** In the Berkshires, 40% of all homes were constructed before 1940 and 60% before 1960. This means that most neighborhoods in the region contain historic properties. In addition, cities and towns within the region have retained a Main Street focus, many still occupying their original town halls and other municipal buildings while historic commercial structures survive in many traditional town and village centers. The architecture of these buildings defines the character of each community and establishes each as a unique, identifiable place within the region. Collectively, this character gives the Berkshires its internationally-known iconic identity.
- **Historic Preservation Combats Urban Blight:** Investment in historic preservation activities in areas struggling with blight and depressed property values can help spur additional private investment in the community and reduce the number of vacancies.
- **A Teachable Landscape:** Historic preservation retains and highlights the history of the area, creating opportunities for historic tourism, school tours, and casual enjoyment for residents and visitors of all ages. This is particularly pronounced in the Berkshires where many historic properties are maintained as museums dedicated to the history of the site.

Minimizing Environmental Impact

- **Historic Buildings are Green:** Historic buildings offer a number of environmental benefits including conserving energy and materials and reducing waste. Some highlights, include:
 - Approximately 25% of the material that goes into landfills each year is construction debris. Reusing existing buildings helps reduce that waste flow.
 - Historic buildings contain significant “embodied energy”, the cumulative amount of energy associated with extracting, processing, manufacturing, transporting and assembling building materials.
 - Historic structures often are sited and designed to maximize passive energy efficiency gains such as solar orientation, air circulation, and shutters or mature landscaping for cooling shade in summer heat.

⁴ Lahr, Mike and Listokin, David. *The Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation in Massachusetts*. Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers University, 2002.

- **Historic Preservation is Smart Growth:** Historic preservation supports and facilitates the (re)use and maintenance of existing structures, thereby reducing the demand or need for new construction further away from historic community centers. This places more homes and businesses closer to goods and services, reducing transportation costs, emissions, and vehicle miles travelled.
- **Historic Preservation and Land Conservation:** In some cases, the historic asset is the landscape. This practice dates back to the earliest historic preservation objectives, which focused on conserving important sites of American history (e.g., battlefields) as well as archeological artifacts (e.g., cave drawings). Today, that idea has expanded to include agricultural landscapes, important parks and green spaces within historic districts (e.g., village greens) and other sites or areas where history is evident.



Monument Mountain is a 503-acre open space reserve rich in history of Native Americans (rock cairns, above, which may indicate Native American settlement), settlement (old stage coach route) and early American literature (where Melville forged his friendship with Hawthorne and began brainstorming Moby Dick).

- Chris Skelly, Director of Local Government Programs, Massachusetts Historic Commission (MHC);
- Betsy Sherman, Executive Director, and Will Garrison, Curator, both from the Berkshire Historical Society; and
- Dan Bolognani, Executive Director, and Education Program Consultant, Judith Monachina, both from Housatonic Heritage (Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area).

Public Forums

Open historic preservation forums were held on October 4, 2011 in the town of Adams and October 5, 2011 in the town of Lenox. Forums included a presentation and small group exercise and discussion about the current state of historic preservation. Input was solicited on future directions for historic preservation in Berkshire County. Thirteen communities were represented by members of their local historical commissions, historical societies, and residents. Representatives from the regional groups Housatonic Heritage and the Berkshire Historical Society also participated at both forums. A summary of the forums is contained in Appendix A: Historic Preservation Forums.



The historic preservation forums received strong attendance from local Historical Commissions, with 13 of the county's 22 commissions participating in one of the two forums.

Historic Commission Direct Input

Historic Commissions at each forum were provided a set of maps and worksheets that detailed the current inventory of resources in their respective community and asked a number of questions on future directions and opportunities. Groups began working through the worksheets at the meeting and were then encouraged to take them back to their full commissions to discuss, complete, and return. Those Historic Commissions that did not attend a forum were contacted directly afterwards and worksheets mailed for them to complete and return. The results of these worksheets are contained in Appendix B.

Consortium

Once key issues and challenges had been identified through the stakeholder interviews, forums, and community worksheets, they were summarized and presented to the regional Consortium guiding the overall planning process for initial discussion. BRPC then provided draft goals and policies for consideration and discussion at a second meeting. Goals, policies, and strategies were then further refined for public review and comment.

Public Workshop

A set of public open house events were held in early December 2012 to prioritize and discuss the policy recommendations for the first three completed elements of the Sustainable Berkshires regional plan. A total of 65 people worked their way through the draft language, posting comments and identifying the action steps they wanted to see the region pursue first. The following goals and policies were identified as Historic Preservation priorities:

- **Policy HP5.2.1:** Support local food production through historic property use or reuse. (20 votes)
- **Policy HP5.1.1:** Work to promote historic tourism in the region. (19 votes)
- **Policy HP2.2.1:** Work to expand local resident use of cultural historic sites. (16 votes)

HISTORIC PRESERVATION VISION

Vision: Berkshire County residents, businesses, municipalities, and preservationists enjoy and actively work to protect the rich history of the region – its iconic landmarks, historic buildings, and heritage landscapes. Vibrant Main Street districts with active village greens are bordered by walkable historic neighborhoods with mature street trees. Rural landscapes uphold the heritage of the region, its agriculture, westward expansion links, and Native American beginnings. New balances with old in compelling ways as historic buildings take on different uses and existing neighborhoods add green features and new buildings while upholding the integrity, character, and aesthetics of the built environment. History is embedded in the pride, recreation, education, economy, and daily activities of the region and its people in tangible ways that are ever-evolving.

ACHIEVING THE VISION

This vision will be achieved through the collaborative efforts of communities, preservation partners, local businesses, and residents to pursue and implement strategic actions in five main areas as relates to historic preservation:

1. **Preserving Historic Assets:** The Berkshires will inventory, highlight, and protect historic resources that tell the rich story of the region's past while remaining active, enriching aspects of the present and future. Preservation will expand its reach to address different ages and roles of sites, structures, and landscapes that are part of that history as well as notable resources of more current times that will further enrich the historic asset collection in the future.
2. **Fostering Community Support for Historic Preservation:** Education and outreach activities will foster a thorough understanding and appreciation of the different historic assets in the region and the many ways they help enrich the community.
3. **Building Historic Preservation Organizational Capacity:** Historic preservation groups active in the region will have the resources, expertise, and support needed to conduct the historic preservation activities to achieve this vision.
4. **Increasing Use of Historic Preservation Tools and Techniques:** A wide range of historic preservation tools and techniques will protect historic assets from destructive modifications – whether inappropriate alterations, development, or demolition. This includes different combinations of incentives and regulations which can best suit the needs and preferences of each community in the region.
5. **Integrating Historic Preservation into Larger Community and Region:** Historic preservation will support a number of contemporary and ongoing efforts and priorities for the region. These include downtown and neighborhood revitalization, green living, tourism expansion, and local food and agriculture.

The following sections present current conditions, opportunities and challenges, and the regional goals, policies, and strategies for historic preservation in these five areas.

1. PRESERVING HISTORIC ASSETS

Identifying and listing historic assets is the most fundamental step in any historic preservation practice. The following sections detail the resources currently inventoried throughout the region, recent trends in practice, and key issues or challenges facing practitioners. Goals, policies, and strategies for historic asset survey and listing activity in the future follow.

OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED HISTORIC ASSETS

The Berkshire region has a wide variety of historic assets within its borders. These resources have been identified and listed over time through the historic survey and National Register nomination process. Berkshire County communities first became active in historic preservation efforts in the late 1970s. The majority of survey work in the region was completed during the period from the late 1970s through mid-1980s. Surveys were prepared using standard forms available through the State Historic Preservation Office, the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Once comprehensive, surveys provide the basis for preparing National Register nomination forms for properties or districts.

Overview of Currently Listed Historic Resources

To date, historic practitioners have worked to identify and list a variety of historic sites and districts in 24 of the 32 communities in the Berkshire. An overview of these resources is provided below. Community-by-community inventories are contained in Appendix B: Municipal Historic Inventory and Priorities.

National Historic Landmarks

Designation as a National Historic Landmark is a rare recognition (185 in Massachusetts and fewer than 2,500 nationwide) reserved for sites that possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. These landmarks may be owned by private individuals, local and state governments, tribal entities, non-profit organizations, or corporations. There are grant programs which prioritize funding for these sites (i.e. the former Save America's Treasures program); federally-funded development projects affecting them are subject to review; and each year there are a small number of landmarks which may participate in an inspection and condition analysis process. National Landmarks also have additional educational and outreach opportunities available to them through the National Park Service.

There are nine National Historic Landmarks in the Berkshires:

- Arrowhead, Herman Melville House, Pittsfield
- Crane and Company Old Stone Mill Rag Room, Dalton
- W.E.B. DuBois, Boyhood Homesite, Great Barrington
- Daniel Chester French, Home and Studio, Stockbridge
- Hancock Shaker Village, Pittsfield
- Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Becket
- Mission House, Stockbridge
- The Mount, Edith Wharton Estate, Lenox
- Naumkeag, Stockbridge



Mission House (c. 1742) in Stockbridge, MA, was home to Reverend John Sergeant, the first missionary to live among the Mohican Indians. The property is now owned and operated as a museum by the Trustees of Reservations and serves as their regional headquarters.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is a listing of historic properties and districts across the United States that exhibit historic significance. This list is maintained by the National Park Service, which has final approval of nomination forms submitted through the State Historic Preservation Office.

The National Register contains 173 historic resources (buildings, sites, districts, structures and objects) from the Berkshires. This includes 36 national historic districts within the Berkshire's 32 municipalities. Listing on the National Register is important because it affirms the historic significance and integrity of the site, structure, or district and because it entitles commercial property owners to certain federal and state tax credits to assist with appropriate renovations. This designation offers minimal review, including Section 106 and MEPA, for projects that involve state or federal funding, permits, or licenses.

National Trust for Historic Preservation Sites

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, a private, non-profit organization, provides leadership, education, advocacy, and resources to save America's diverse historic places. Chesterwood, the home and studio of sculptor Daniel Chester French, is a National Trust Historic Site, owned and operated by the organization. The National Trust also has a partner site program, of which The Mount is a member, entitling National Trust members to special discounts. These affiliations with the paramount private historic preservation organization in the nation bring opportunities and additional tourism potential to these sites and other historic sites in Berkshire County. There are only 29 National Trust Historic Sites in the nation, and three are in Massachusetts.

Municipal Districts

Historic districts can be established within individual municipal zoning codes, with a zone district (typically an overlay) that applies to a defined neighborhood. Development, alterations, and demolitions within the district can all be regulated by the language of the zoning district depending on how the bylaw is structured, which can vary from community to community. Districts can be defined in two basic ways: by common geography where a set neighborhood or commercial area shares a common history within a single set area or by common identity (thematic) where resources in different locations are linked by a common history and identity.

The Berkshires has examples of both the area- and theme-based districts:

- **Local Historic Districts (LHD):** There are three communities with local historic districts in the Berkshires: Lenox (Lenox Historical District (Downtown)), Great Barrington (Downtown Historic District), and Sheffield (Ashley Falls Historic District). Local communities are enabled by state legislation⁵ to create Local Historic Districts.
- **Great Estates District:** A “Great Estates” thematic district of certain Gilded Age (1875-1917) cottages is protected through local bylaws in Stockbridge (Cottage Era Estate Adaptive Re-use or Rehabilitation) and Lenox (Estate Preservation Area).



The drive along the Mount Greylock Scenic Byway over the top of the state's highest peak is a popular route. At the top visitors are able to visit historic Bascom Lodge and the Veterans War Memorial Tower

Heritage Landscapes

Heritage or historic landscapes - areas that contain both natural and cultural resources that help to define a community and reflect its past⁶ - are another key historic resource present in the region. There are several types of heritage landscapes recognized by the state in the context of its own land holdings:

⁵ Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40 §C, Historic Districts Act.

⁶ Terra Firma # 7: Taking Action: A Toolkit for Protecting Community Character,

scenic landscapes, designated landscapes/former estates, agricultural landscapes, former industrial landscapes, Civilian Conservation Corps projects, and rail trails.

There are two basic categories of heritage landscapes currently designated within the region:

- **Historic Landscapes in State Lands:** The state Department of Conservation and Recreation notes a short list of important heritage landscapes across the state. Those within the Berkshires, listed by type, include:
 - Bash Bish Falls State Park (Scenic Landscape)
 - Mount Greylock State Reservation (Scenic Landscape)
 - Natural Bridge State Park (Former Industrial Landscape)
 - Pittsfield State Forest (Civilian Conservation Corps Project)
 - Ashuwillticook Rail Trail (Rail Trails)
 - Appalachian Trail (Uncategorized)
- **Historic Landscapes of Great Estates:** A number of the great estates in the Berkshires have contributing lands that are also protected by preservation restrictions or zoning as part of the site or district. Examples of this type of resource include the lands of Shadowbrook (currently Kriplau Center for Yoga and Health), the land and gardens of Naumkeag, and the grounds of Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival.

While these reflect currently recognized or protected heritage landscapes in the region, there is not at present a thorough inventory of current or potential heritage landscapes for the region that ultimately may capture more of the state's categories.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

While the majority of historic preservation activity occurs at the municipal level, there are two significant types of geographic designations in the region that transcend municipal, county, and state lines. These designations offer important vehicles for how historic resources are identified, protected, promoted, and experienced.

Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area

National Heritage Areas are designated by Congress as places where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive landscape of national significance. The Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area (Housatonic Heritage) was established in 2006 and is managed by Housatonic Heritage, a not-for-profit entity established for that purpose. Designation carries with it a certain amount of federal funding to support projects that are in line with historic preservation priorities established in the management plan for the National Heritage Area.

The establishment of this area and the work of Housatonic Heritage have served to provide a framework for historic preservation that can guide and unify preservation activities across municipal and state boundaries. Policies and priorities of this plan are intended to be consistent with and supportive of the National Heritage Areas management actions.

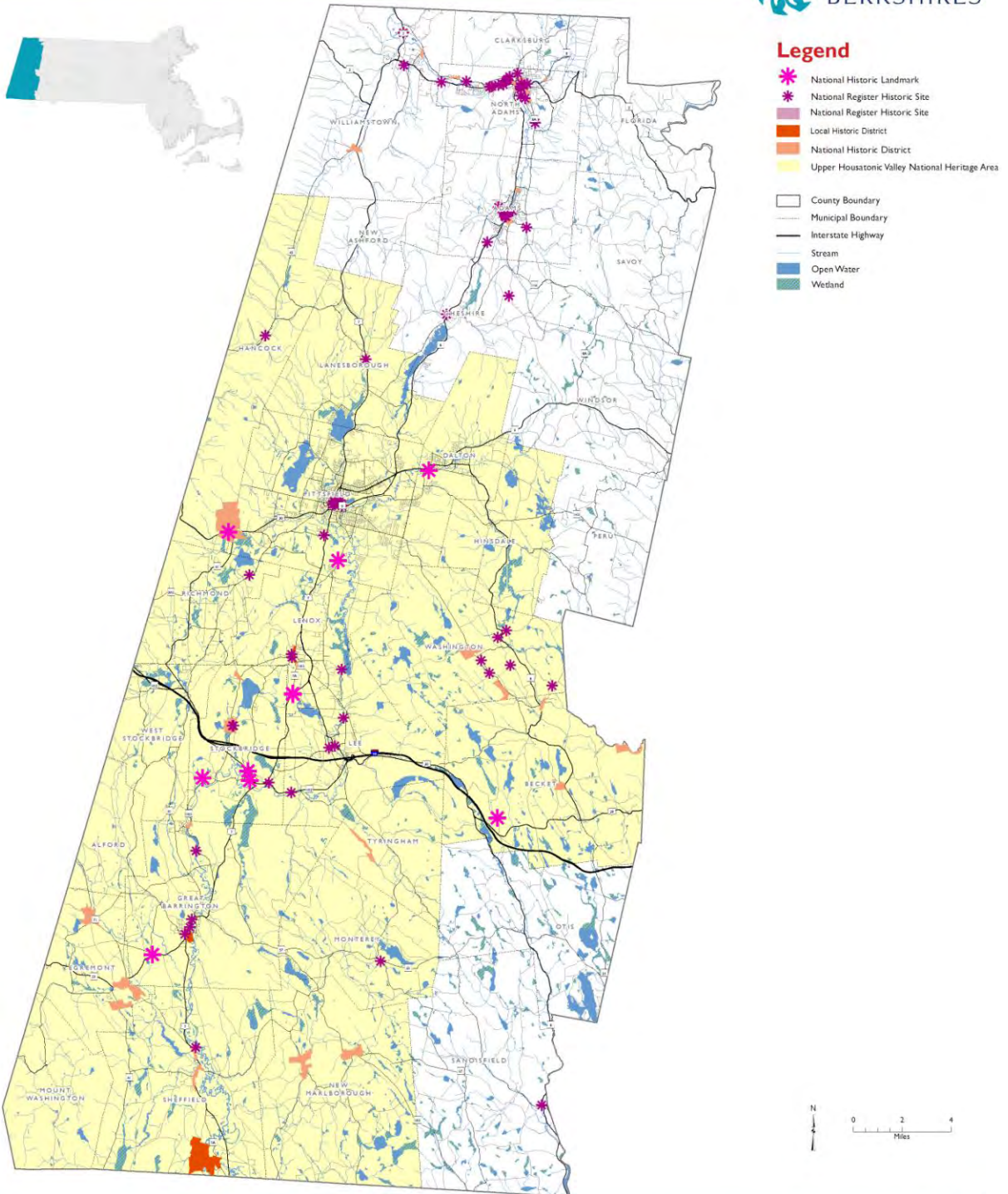


The Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area, established in 2006, covers 29 communities in northwest Connecticut and southwestern Massachusetts.

Scenic Byways

The National Scenic Byways Program was established by Congress in 1991 to recognize and preserve scenic roads, often in rural areas. Routes must demonstrate significant archeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, or scenic characteristics in order to achieve designation and then must also develop a management plan for the roadway corridor. The County includes all or part of five state-designated Scenic Byways—Jacob's Ladder Trail Scenic Byway (Route 20), Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway (Route 2), Mount Greylock Scenic Byway (route over mountain), Route 112 Scenic Byway, and the Route 116 Scenic Byway. Allowable projects include historic survey, land acquisition, and interpretive signage, among others.

HISTORIC RESOURCES



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This map was created by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and is intended for general planning purposes only. This map shall not be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, MassDOT, BRPC or the communities may have supplied portions of this data.

4/24/2012

EMERGING PRESERVATION TRENDS

Historic preservation in the region has experienced a resurgence of activity and focus since 2000. While many of these developments are still taking shape, their impact is evident in initiatives seeking new ways to identify historic resources within the context of the landscape. Some key trends are highlighted below.

Linking Resource Together by Theme

A number of recent plans and studies for the region have focused on highlighting resources related by a common history rather than common location within a single municipality. Notable efforts and themes include:

- **Great Estates:** A study completed in 2000 by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission researched and inventoried 55 Great Estates from the Gilded Age in four Berkshire municipalities: Pittsfield, Lee, Lenox, and Stockbridge. This inventory created a strong basis for preservation activity and educational tours related to these notable sites, which typically include the original residential structure and surrounding grounds and gardens.
- **Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area Initiatives:** A number of theme-based trails and tours have emerged through the work of Housatonic Heritage, promoting the collections and visibility of historic tours and trails, highlighting the historic and culture of the Berkshires. For more information, visit <http://www.upperhousatonicheritage.org>.
 - **54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment Trail:** This trail honors the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment. It was one of the first official African American units in the United States during the Civil War which included men from Berkshire County, Mass. and Litchfield County, Conn.
 - **African American Heritage Trail:** This trail celebrates African Americans in the region who played pivotal roles in key national and international events, as well as ordinary people of achievement.
 - **The Performing Arts Heritage Trail:** The Performing Arts Heritage Trail was created to enable residents and visitors to the region to explore the cultural offerings and performing arts of the Upper Housatonic Valley, many of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
 - **Iron Heritage Trail:** This trail seeks to preserve selected archaeological sites, provide informational materials and conduct educational programs concerning the heritage of iron production in the Tri-State section of Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York including Litchfield, Berkshire, Dutchess and Columbia counties.
 - **Paper Trail:** This trail highlights the mills and history of papermaking in the region.
<http://www.paperheritage.org/>

Diversifying Resources

Historical commissions and other preservation partners in the region have expressed interest in broadening the range of resources surveyed and listed in their communities. This includes a greater focus on agricultural heritage, such as through the preservation of historic barns, a focus on the more modern history, such as Post-WWII veteran housing developments, and a growing interest in the preservation and adaptive reuse of commercial, public, and industrial buildings.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Maintaining and Expanding Historic Survey Work

Nearly all municipalities need to update their local surveys. Because surveys document resources at a point in time, their contents can become incomplete and inaccurate as new properties become eligible for survey while others may be demolished or inappropriately modified, thus reducing their historic significance. Constraints of time, resources, and expertise make it challenging for smaller communities to maintain and expand their historic inventory work. Historic survey forms can be difficult to complete without contracted experts, which most communities in the county do not have the financial resources to hire. The Massachusetts Historical Commission offers grants to support survey activity, but they require a 1:1 match which is often prohibitive. The new (2011) graduate program for Design and Historic Preservation at UMass Amherst is largely housed at historic Hancock Shaker Village. The location of this program in the region could create a number of opportunities for increased access to expertise and collaboration.

Statewide surveys were conducted in the 1980's and 1990's, primarily targeting historic and cultural landscapes. In 1980 the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) conducted a statewide inventory of scenic landscapes which is available as a viewable layer from Mass GIS (the Office of Massachusetts Geographic Information). A number of issues have been noted related to the data for Berkshire County and the survey would benefit from being updated. In 1982 there was a state-wide survey of public landscapes designed by the Olmsted Firm, and in 1995 DCR surveyed historic resources built by the Civilian Conservation Corps. These efforts eventually led to the establishment of DCR's Heritage Landscape Inventory Program which has inventoried about one-quarter of Massachusetts communities, primarily in the eastern part of the state. The program has been unfunded in recent years, though its methodology could be applied in Berkshire County through an independent effort, as has happened on Cape Cod.



MAINTAINING CURRENT SURVEYS

Local historic surveys do not have an exact shelf life. Those older than 40 years should almost certainly be updated, and those at their 30 year mark (which is when most of Berkshire County's were produced) likely need updating. Surveys from the 1990's and more recent times should be reviewed case-by-case. Contributing factors include development pressures in the area, how well the original form was prepared, and other preservation priorities of the community.

For questions about updating a survey, contact the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Listing Surveyed Resources

While there are considerable historic resources listed on the National Register, much work remains in this area. Eight (8) of 32 communities have no listings on the National Register. As with survey work, much of the listing activity took place in the early 1980's and some communities have had no new documentation or listing activity in years. Listing is an important step for communities to take as it creates a public, searchable record of notable historic sites, is a gateway step to accessing financial incentives and assistance directed towards historic properties, and provides the basis for a myriad of historic preservation activities at the local level.

Documenting Thematic Resources

A number of thematic resource collections have yet to be identified by municipal-level preservation partners. The dispersed nature of those resources requires a more regional approach to survey and link resources into a cohesive theme. But this has not been a primary orientation of local municipal preservation practices. There was a study of thematic resources in conjunction with the development of the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway Corridor Management Study (2002). Consultants reviewed historic mills for existing conditions and reuse potential, and other historic resources along the Byway were surveyed for historical associations with the twentieth century auto-tourism era. In more recent years, Housatonic Heritage has made great strides by identifying and prioritizing different themes within the historic fabric of the county. However, while Housatonic Heritage includes all Berkshire municipalities in its events, not all are eligible to receive grant supports to help pursue listings.

Housatonic Heritage has noted that there is limited information about or advocacy for archaeological and Native American resources.



Healing Winds is a not-for-profit entity focused on highlighting Native American culture and heritage in the region, particularly that of the Mohican Tribe. Notable events include an annual Pow Wow which has enjoyed growth in attendance each year since the first event was held in 2005.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND STRATEGIES

The following goals, policies, and strategies will be pursued to achieve the vision for historic preservation in the region:

GOAL HP 1.1: Identify and protect priority assets in the region with a focus on quality and diversity.

Policy HP1.1.1: Coordinate historic preservation priorities within and across municipal lines.

Strategy A: Grassroots History Campaign

Work with local Historical Commissions and Historical Societies to conduct outreach and awareness campaigns to solicit local priority projects or sites from residents. This could include developing a single guide and materials pack that each municipality can use in their outreach to streamline the administrative burden and assist with comparison of sites across community lines. Outreach should be sure to include input from municipal officials, boards, committees and staff as well as residents and businesses.

Strategy B: Prioritize Local Resources / Identify Regional Opportunities

Once resident input has been received, municipal preservation groups can synthesize their findings, listing and prioritizing sites. Individual communities can do this independently but can also work with neighboring communities to share findings and discuss potential common directions.

Policy HP1.1.2: Develop and use a single regional framework for historic asset preservation in the Berkshires.

Strategy A: Develop Draft Preservation Framework

A regional framework for historic preservation would be an organizing tool that pre-defines the categories of resources by historic era, theme and jurisdiction. Organizing historic assets in the region into a common framework countywide will help the many preservation entities inventory and communicate about the resources they have identified within their boundaries and see eras or types of resources that may be underrepresented.

Strategy B: Populate Framework with Existing Resources

Each municipal preservation partner can populate the framework with the current surveys and national register listings within their boundaries. Once complete, this can be shared with other preservation partners to help establish local, multi-jurisdiction, or regional priorities.

Strategy C: Annual Preservation Summit

Convene an annual event that draws together local Historical Commissions and Historical Societies to share their initiatives, survey and listing work of the past year and highlight objectives for the coming year. This event can also help keep the framework current on an annual basis as more surveys and listings are added over time.

GOAL HP 1.2: Maintain and expand historic resource inventories.

Policy HP1.2.1: Strive to employ a 30-year age maximum for surveys.

Strategy A: Map Current Surveyed Areas and Prioritize Survey Needs

Develop and maintain a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) map layer of all surveyed areas and thematic collections of sites to enable a better understanding and analysis of the geography and diversity of surveyed resources. This will also help illustrate areas where survey gaps exist. Including dates of surveys can help plan for necessary survey updates.

Strategy B: Collaborate to Pursue New Surveys on a Regular Basis

Massachusetts Historical Commission has indicated that collaborative applications from several Berkshire communities could help reduce survey costs for each municipality by allowing for some economy of scale in terms of work volume. A more integrated way of identifying and prioritizing survey work across municipal boundaries will help communities bundle survey activities to achieve cost savings and sharing and better access Massachusetts Historical Commission survey matching grants.

Policy HP1.2.2: Work to identify gaps in surveyed resources and develop strategies to address them.**Strategy A: Develop Regional Priorities for Survey and Listing**

The preservation framework, once complete, can ultimately facilitate a number of historic preservation activities, including compiling tours or trails, identifying gaps in identified or listed resources, and it can help keep the historic inventory up to date.

Strategy B: Work to Inventory Resource Types Identified as Under-represented Resources

A number of resource types were identified as underrepresented through the planning process. This list includes heritage landscapes, archeological resources, Native American artifacts, and resources from the recent past (post 1900). Moving forward, regional-scale partners should conduct inventory work to begin to quantify and locate significant resources in these categories. This list should change over time as progress is made and new or refined priorities emerge.

Policy HP1.2.3: Pursue National Register listing for eligible surveyed sites and districts.**Strategy A: Pursue National Register Listing for Current Surveyed Properties**

A number of surveys have been completed that have not had any follow-up action in terms of listing properties or districts that are historically significant. If those surveys are still deemed current, local preservation groups should work with local property owners and prepare nominations to the National Register.

Strategy B: Work to Keep Nominations Current with Survey Work

As new surveys are completed, preservation partners should work with property owners to share the results and encourage listing on the National Register.

2. FOSTERING COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

An understanding of historic preservation, its value to the community, and access to accurate information on project costs and benefits is essential to fostering a preservation culture in the Berkshires. The following sections describe the ways in which preservationists and preservation projects are currently supported by the communities within which they operate and identify key opportunities and challenges to communicating about historic preservation to other parties or interests. Goals, policies, and strategies for historic regulations, programming, and incentives in the future then follow.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND THE COMMUNITY

Successful historic preservation depends on the work and communication of a diverse set of players in the community – including public, private, and non-profit organizations as well as individuals. Some “key players” are noted below.

Municipal Officials and Departments

A Historical Commission is enabled by MA General Law to provide guidance and recommendations to the governing bodies on matters related to historical assets of the community. Most Berkshire communities have a local historical commission in place, but those commissions do not have regulatory authority, unless the municipality has a demolition delay bylaw. Their ability to fulfill their mission then largely depends on the degree to which they are able successfully to inform and garner the support of other groups in the municipal government. Some of the key players with which open and informed communication are essential to preservation success include:

- **City Councils and Select Boards:** City Councils and Select Boards are the political leaders of their municipalities and have a deep impact on the way a community orients itself to preservation, particularly in the bylaw adoption public hearing process.
- **Planning and Zoning Boards:** Planning Boards and Zoning Boards of Appeal each have a role to play in preservation in the drafting, adoption, and administration of local zoning. In addition, Planning Boards are able to ensure historic preservation is reflected in community master plans which they are empowered to draft and adopt for the community. Implementation of site plan review and design guidelines strengthen the potential for the Planning Board to protect historic resources of a community.
- **Building Inspectors and Building Departments:** The building departments of municipalities serve as a primary point of contact to property owners on rehabilitation and reuse proposals as well as for demolition proposals. It is essential that accurate information is consistently given to property owners as they consider their objectives and options with their properties.
- **Mayors, Town Managers/Administrators and Community Development Departments:** As key principal staff working on new bylaws, development and economic revitalization projects, these groups have a major impact. Historic preservation either can be

supported or undermined when municipal property is acquired or sold, during major grant funded redevelopment projects, or park and corridor improvement projects. Building a strong preservation ethic among these professionals helps preservation locally and can supportively influence other municipal boards and staff.

- **Departments of Public Works:** Many communities own and operate properties with historic value. The municipality's Department of Public Works (DPW) may be required to maintain such facilities. DPW employees can serve a vital role in providing appropriate maintenance. Important features of historic buildings and landscapes need to be considered when planning care and maintenance.

Business Community and Economic Development Interests

Downtown associations, local or regional chambers of commerce, visitors' bureaus, regional economic development organizations, and other groups are each potential partners and advocates for historic preservation. The economic development-preservation link is currently made in the form of community events and festivals that work to draw visitors. This is a good first step; economic development discussions which more frequently include an emphasis on downtown revitalization and adaptive reuse projects are all positive trends that show promise for expanding this relationship.

Community and Neighborhood-Based Organizations

Community- and neighborhood-based organizations operate a number of programs and services which can impact historic properties, such as weatherization programs. In addition to offering programs, these non-profit and faith-based groups often occupy historic structures themselves for office and program space. These groups frequently have difficulty accessing the necessary capital to properly maintain those structures some of which, like churches, are large and complex. Therefore these groups have the opportunity to conduct their own preservation activities and to help spread the word to those with whom they work or interact about historic preservation options and benefits.

Building and Property-Based Industries

Building and property-based industries such as construction companies, REALTORS®, and property management firms can have a broad reach as a voice for (or against) preservation. Communicating about the benefits of historic preservation to those industries can help foster a more supportive orientation to preservation. Like building inspectors, these groups can also help distribute information to property owners that can help shape decisions on how projects in historic properties move forward.



Hancock Shaker Village has been gradually, and successfully, reframing its mission to make the site a living classroom for sustainability by integrating modern projects such as solar panels and a CSA. Tours of the site focus on the history while drawing the connection of sustainable living practices to the lifestyle and values of the Shakers.

General Education and Outreach

Education and outreach activities are important to building awareness of historic preservation in the community and making preservation more accessible to residents. These measures and such activities help raise the profile of historic assets in the communities, which can translate into community support for active protection through bylaws or other means. Because of the nature of annual town meetings, broad community support for preservation needs to be cultivated and maintained.

- **Community Events and Festivals:** Many local communities highlight significant historical sites and events through heritage-related festival celebrations. North Adams' long-running Fall Foliage weekend includes events highlighting the history of the city with displays and events at Western Gateway Heritage State Park. The town of Lee holds a Founder's Day Festival each fall featuring its historic Main Street through walking tours, events, and a parade. A number of municipalities have celebrated milestone anniversaries of their incorporations, which has been an opportunity to call attention to the significant aspects of their history. The city of Pittsfield celebrated its 250th anniversary with year-long programming and activities celebrating events, places and people in their history.
- **Historic Tours:** Historic tours, whether docent-guided or self-guided, are an interactive way to expose individuals to the history of communities and the region. Most local historical commissions have been active in preparing tours including cemetery walks, neighborhood tours, and historic mill walks. Many distribute handouts with maps and site descriptions.
- **Historic Plaque Programs:** Historic plaque programs are another way to make history present in the built environment. These are typically discreet plaques which can be posted at the front of a historic property, generally identifying the original purpose or owner and date of

construction. These allow passers-by to casually understand the historic context of a site or area and can serve as a visual link and identifier for properties within a single historic district.

- **Preservation Awards Program:** Awards programs are an effective way to both highlight historic preservation projects and acknowledge those working (often volunteers) to preserve and rehabilitate historic structures to remain vibrant contributors to the built environment. Since 1978 the Secretary of the Commonwealth has hosted the Massachusetts Historical Commission's Annual Preservation Awards Program that recognizes projects in the following categories: archaeology, adaptive reuse, education & outreach, landscape preservation, restoration & rehabilitation, local preservationist, individual lifetime achievement, and stewardship. Preservation Massachusetts and the National Trust for Historic Preservation also have award programs which may serve as positive models.
- **School Programs and Field Trips:** A number of sites in the region enjoy regular visits from school groups. However, such opportunities are increasingly becoming a challenge as school curriculum is strongly regulated, funding is scarce and resources to organize such events are spread thin.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Limited Community Support For and Understanding of Historic Preservation

Many communities grapple with the perception that historic preservation equates to stopping progress or impeding personal property rights. There is frequently public opposition to specific preservation initiatives such as local historic districts, demolition delay, etc., while the broader concept of valuing the historic nature of the community/location seems to get more support. In some cases there are misconceptions at play about what historic designation means to the property owner.

Region Lacks Information and Expertise on Historic Renovations

There are concerns about the relative cost of demolition and new construction compared to rehabilitation of an historic property. The replacement of historic windows, for example, is purported to be a significant energy saver. However, it actually takes decades to recoup the savings from replacement windows. Numerous experts agree that repairing older windows can help achieve desired energy savings, cost less money, and maintain historic integrity of a house or building. Lead paint is also a concern. New, more stringent, requirements from the Environmental Protection Agency require that the same protective methods be followed for any building constructed before 1978. This often results in contractors removing old wood windows and trim rather than abate existing materials.

Making Historic Preservation More Accessible and Relevant

While the Berkshires are lauded as a region steeped in history and culture, those attributes are not always accessible to Berkshire residents; cultural organizations describe challenges in cultivating a local audience. In order to keep material fresh some sites develop programming that will interest local families and residents, with topics ancillary to their main mission, in order to get people through the door and onto the historic site. For example, the springtime Baby Animal exhibition at Hancock Shaker Village is a big draw for families to the historic site.

Many historic sites which charge fees also offer free passes for residents through local libraries (the Berkshire Athenaeum has an extensive program) and/or free community days. These programs can help to reduce the barrier of cost and access but could be enhanced or expanded to reach a wider audience.

Local History Minimally Integrated in the School Curriculum

During this plan's public outreach sessions dedicated to Historic Preservation some attendees noted the importance of integrating local history into elementary and secondary school curriculum. A number of residents noted that there are far fewer school group visits to local museums and exhibits. While desirable, schools face significant obstacles which keep them from taking advantage of our historical assets. Visits must be justified by the curriculum frameworks promulgated by Mass. Department of Education. In addition, reductions in funding mean schools don't have the resources to spend on field trips away from the building. Fundraising for any school trips and extra-curricular activities has steadily increased. Programs to educate teachers directly need to be expanded in order to help them integrate local history into their classroom curriculum

Non-Profit Organizations and Public Entities in Historic Structures

Many non-profit organizations and public entities occupy historic buildings. Churches and other houses of worship are a case in point. Often these buildings contribute to the town's iconic character. Yet, these organizations do not have enough revenue to maintain their buildings properly without compromising their mission. Furthermore, many organizations face particular challenges to historic preservation. Some may not be able to sell their buildings to get enough to purchase and build a new facility. Some organizations, especially houses of worship, face limited choices for funding sources. Historic tax credits, which are often used for funding major reuse projects involving historic buildings, are very complicated and can only be used on income-producing properties.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND STRATEGIES

The following goals, policies, and strategies will be pursued to achieve the vision for historic preservation in the region:

GOAL HP 2"% Collaborate to improve visibility of preservation in the region.

Policy 2.1.1: Foster and sustain media presence on historic assets and their multiple benefits to the region.

Strategy A: Keep Local History and Historic Preservation in the News

Historic assets and local history have received good coverage through the Pittsfield 250th celebration series. This highlights how the media can help highlight projects and assets to call out sites within the community. Approaches may vary by media outlet given the frequency and primary geography of distribution but could include a running monthly feature on local history and historic sites or events as well as historic preservation practice and benefits. The focus of the series should intentionally work to diversify the role of preservation in the region from the maintenance of static sites to an active component of life in the Berkshires.

Policy HP 2.1.2: Improve participation and representation in state preservation plans and events.

Strategy A: Actively Engage in the Five-Year Update of the State Historic Preservation Plan

The county has been absent from the state historic preservation plan due to a lack of participation from local preservation entities. The state updates this plan every five years. The county will look forward to participating in the next and subsequent plan updates to ensure the needs, opportunities, and challenges of the region are reflected and addressed in this state policy document.

Strategy B: Nominate Preservation Projects for Annual Awards

Preservation partners should collaborate to identify and nominate notable historic preservation projects in the region for the state or other awards programs to call attention to the great work being done in the region.

Strategy C: Participate in DCR's Cultural Landscape Program

While limited funding has suspended DCR's Cultural Landscape Inventory Program from reaching westward into Berkshire County, this opportunity may come about again in the future. This program presents a method to inventory community resources at the grassroots level, while providing education and developing local stewards of historic and cultural assets. If the program is permanently eliminated, the model developed can be applied in Berkshire County independent of DCR's program.

GOAL HP 2.2: Foster local awareness, pride, and year-round use of cultural historic assets.

Policy HP 2.2.1: Work to expand local resident use of cultural historic sites.

Strategy A: Gear Outreach and Marketing to Year-Round Residents

Tailor a set of outreach and marketing materials to residents that highlight the many resources in the Berkshires as benefits for those lucky enough to live here to enjoy them year-round.

Strategy B: Design Community Events with a Cultural Focus

Some venues and events have become synonymous with life in the Berkshires, such as a picnic and concert at Tanglewood or the holiday tree lighting and caroling along historic Main Streets, while others remain virtually unknown. Additionally, some popular events such as the Mount Greylock Ramble, which occurs on a signature heritage landscape, are an opportunity to call attention to the region's wealth of assets. Strengthening the connections between people and place through fun and active events will help knit historic preservation into the community fabric.

Strategy C: Parents as Teachers – Family Friendly Guides, Tours and Activities

Develop packages and materials for families to empower parents to take their children to different destinations around the county with family-friendly activities that are both fun and educational.

Strategy D: Promote and Expand Existing Programs Offering Free and Reduced Admission for Local Residents

A number of venues offer free and discounted admission for local residents. Wider advertising of these programs or a simple one-stop-shop flyer can help call attention to these opportunities and improve attendance. Additionally, an expanded list of participants may draw interest from a more varied audience.

Strategy E: Evaluate and Address Issues of Transportation Access

Many seniors and others without ready access to a vehicle are limited in their participation and enjoyment of events and destinations because of transportation. Shuttles or other arrangements to targeted events, particularly any specifically directed towards local residents, could help more residents participate in sites and events.

Policy HP2.2.2: Strive to make sites relevant to the larger community in more than one way.**Strategy A: Promote Applied History Approaches to Cultural Historic Sites**

Several sites have worked to diversify their role within the community such as providing a location for a wedding, using excess land as a Community Supported Agriculture farm, or creating residency space for artists or writers. These strategies help enrich the culture and community of today and make the sites a part of daily life rather than a static location.

Policy HP2.2.3: Encourage increased school use for learners of all ages.**Strategy A: Coordinate with School Districts on Local History Curricula**

Work with school districts to identify opportunities by grade for links to local history and develop strategies for facilitating field trips. These have reduced over time due to concerns over liability as well as the access to and cost of bussing. Joint grants and fundraisers could help address some of these concerns, and grant research should highlight programs to underwrite the cost or partial cost of transportation.

Strategy B: Empower Teachers to Bring Local History to the Classroom

Develop or provide access to new and expanded programs for teachers. These can be in the form of field trips or curriculum units that can be designed to show teachers how to bring the sites into their classrooms, rather than having to bring students to the sites. Research grants to fund teacher externships.

Strategy C: Work With Local Colleges to Integrate Local Sites into Curricula

Faculty who teach certain subjects, particularly art, literature, theater, history, and environmental sciences, should be encouraged to use the region as a living classroom. Connections could also be made in the form of internships and fellowships which can benefit both the sites and the students.

Berkshire Community College and MCLA each have life-long learning programs which could incorporate or enhance their options related to historic and cultural resources and resource education.

GOAL HP 2.3: Build municipal awareness of preservation benefits, practices, and challenges.**Policy HP2.3.1: Provide opportunities for local municipal officials, boards and departments to stay updated on historic preservation materials and practices.****Strategy A: Cultivate an Ongoing Relationship with Municipal Staff, Boards and Departments on Maintaining Historic Assets**

Educate municipal officials and department staff about the recognized and potential historic assets in the community and discuss specific ways in which daily practices could support or diminish these resources. This could include embedding historic improvements within larger community renovation projects, tree and planting selections and maintenance, neighborhood revitalization programs, or highlighting local heritage in community events. Solicit input from staff and officials about areas or topics on which it would be helpful to have additional information or updates.

3. BUILDING HISTORIC PRESERVATION INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

Historic preservation is championed in the region by not-for-profit and volunteer historic commissions and historical societies. These groups have been wonderfully successful through the hard work of those volunteers over time. However, limited resources and a systematic lack of support or understanding of the value of historic assets across municipal and other leaders in the region creates an uphill struggle for preservationists. This section reviews the partners working to promote preservation within the region and describes some of their current challenges. Goals, policies, and strategies for enhancing institutional capacity moving forward follow.

PRESERVATION PARTNERS IN BERKSHIRE COUNTY

Historic preservation efforts involve the work of preservation partners at the federal, state, county and local levels:

National

The Department of the Interior's National Park Service maintains the National Register of Historic Places, a program which coordinates and supports public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources. They receive and approve nominations from all states. The Secretary of the Interior also oversees the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit program.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a national non-profit devoted to promoting historic preservation practice in the country through education, research, awareness-raising, and capacity-building activities. They also operate a related for-profit branch, the National Trust Community investment Corporation (NTCIC) to facilitate use of historic rehabilitation tax credit programs.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The State Historic Preservation Office is the Massachusetts Historical Commission. They maintain a list of the state's historic and cultural resources, a compilation of eight different types of local, state, and federal designations. The MHC also reviews and provides guidance and comments on development which may impact historic resources, offers grant programs for research, planning, and implementation, as well as providing technical assistance directly to communities. The MHC no longer holds state-wide conferences about issues and trends in historic preservation.

Preservation Massachusetts is a statewide non-profit historic preservation organization dedicated to preserving the Commonwealth's historic and cultural heritage. Preservation Massachusetts engages in advocacy and education state-wide. Most significantly, the organization also provides the services of a circuit rider, particularly to address the needs of communities in the western regions of the state. The Circuit Rider is available for minor technical assistance and troubleshooting with project development.

Berkshire Region

There is no single regional organization which represents the historical interests of the individual municipalities in the county. However, there are several organizations whose work cumulatively achieves much of what a specialized regional entity would accomplish.

Berkshire Historical Society

The Berkshire Historical Society is a regional non-profit dedicated to collecting, preserving, and disseminating the history of Berkshire County in western Massachusetts. In addition, the Berkshire Historical Society is committed to the preservation and interpretation of Arrowhead, home of author Herman Melville, the first National Historic Landmark to be so designated in Berkshire County. Much of their effort relates to the preservation of Arrowhead and collection of Berkshire County's material culture (material objects reflecting history, such as Berkshire Historical Society's recent exhibition of wedding dresses and accoutrements, late 18th to the mid 20th century).

Local History Collections, Berkshire Athenaeum

The primary focus of the Local History Department collections is the creation and preservation of a permanent record of important events, groups and personalities of the City of Pittsfield, which may be recorded in materials of a regional focus. The value of this collection lies in its depth, breadth and scope as a comprehensive survey of Berkshire County history with Pittsfield at its hub.

Housatonic Heritage

Housatonic Heritage is the not-for-profit entity established to undertake and help catalyze historic preservation activities to highlight and preserve the history of the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area which spans 29 communities in northwestern Connecticut and southern and central parts of Berkshire County, MA. They provide small grants, technical support and general education for organizations and individuals.

Trustees of Reservations

The Trustees of Reservations is a private, not-for-profit, statewide organization aimed at preserving properties of exceptional scenic, historic, and ecological value in Massachusetts for public use and enjoyment. They steward almost 100 properties in the state, encompassing 25,000 acres, with numerous sites in Berkshire County. Four of the ten historic homes owned and operated by the Trustees are located in the Berkshires:

- Ashley House, Sheffield, MA
- The Folly at Field Farm, Williamstown
- The Mission House, Stockbridge
- Naumkeag, Stockbridge

Other notable Trustees sites with historic, cultural and/or natural value in Berkshire County include:

- Bartholomew's Cobble, Sheffield
- Dry Hill, New Marlborough
- Field Farm, Williamstown
- Monument Mountain, Great Barrington
- Mountain Meadow Preserve, Williamstown
- Notchview, Windsor
- Questing, New Marlborough
- Tyringham Cobble, Tyringham

In addition, The Highland Communities Initiative, a program of the Trustees of Reservations, was formed in response to the changing rural landscape facing development pressure. HCI supports a network of residents engaged in preserving important community resources and steering development in an appropriate manner. Berkshire highland communities are: Becket, Florida, Hinsdale, Monterey, New Marlborough, Otis, Peru, Sandisfield, Savoy, Tyringham, Washington, and Windsor. Highland Communities Initiative operated a small grant program which has run out of funds. The overall program is currently in transition and its future isn't clear at present.

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) lends support to historic planning initiatives in a number of ways: writing and administering Scenic Byways grants to advance corridor enhancements which often include historic components, grant writing and technical support to historical commissions and societies, and drafting land use plans and bylaws. The BRPC also serves as an appeal body for local historic commission decisions related to the local historic districts in Lenox and Sheffield.

Municipalities

In Massachusetts every municipality is enabled to establish a local historical commission “for the preservation, protection and development of historical or archaeological assets of such city or town” in order to conduct historic research, coordinate similar activities with other organizations, disseminate informational materials, and nominate historic properties for state and national listing.⁷ In some communities, the local historical commission makes recommendations about development impacts on historic resources. There are numerous historical societies and history organizations throughout the county, some representing a town or city, and others which are based at a particular site. Many of the local historical commissions and societies having overlapping geographic interests coordinate their efforts and some have members in common. In Berkshire County all but two communities have established a local historical commission; however, only eighteen (18) are fully active.

In addition to local historical commissions, some communities have their own local historical society, often engaged in public outreach and educational activities. It is not unusual to have some overlap in membership between local historical commissions and historical societies. Some local libraries also have history collections specific to the individual towns and their development. These vary widely in nature.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Region Lacks a Single Entity to Spearhead Historic Preservation Countywide

There is a capacity gap at the county level to help advance some of the nuts-and-bolts functions of historic preservation. This includes systematically working to advance tools and regulations in individual communities, accessing additional capital to support small partnerships within the region, and promoting preservation assets, challenges, and successes in the region to the range of preservation partners in the municipal and private sectors. Housatonic Heritage has been an important addition to the historic preservation arena in the region. However, its defined geography and mission is not scaled to meet the range of preservation needs in the region.

⁷ MGL Chapter 40 §8d

Local Historical Commissions Operating with Limited Capacity

Local historical commissions and local history organizations (which may represent a community, specific site/location, or be a regional organization), are the county's primary advocates for preservation. These groups perpetually struggle to achieve their missions in the face of limited or no financial resources, memberships that turn over frequently, making it difficult to build and retain experienced personnel, and a general lack of support or respect for their efforts within the broader community.

Limited Political Support from Municipal Leaders

Some members of local historical commissions feel they lack prominence in municipal affairs. There is a sense that many selectmen do not understand the issues related to historic preservation. In many municipalities, there has never been an official local historical commission appointed or it has become inactive. The commission is advisory in nature; thus it is up to governing bodies to make decisions regarding particular sites or areas of concern.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND STRATEGIES

The following goals, policies, and strategies will be pursued to achieve the vision for historic preservation in the region:

GOAL HP3.1: Build regional capacity to offer complete spectrum of historic preservation services and functions.

Policy HP3.1.1: Explore new or expanded organizations to fulfill all aspects of preservation work.

Strategy A: Investigate Potential Models for a Regional Non-Profit to Focus on Historic Preservation

Research the role, structure, and potential funding streams to support regional preservation activities. Ideally, this entity would be able to coordinate across municipalities to identify and pursue regional historic priorities. It would also be able to coordinate and conduct more advanced or administratively complex functions for LHC's, history organizations, private companies and individuals, while acting on behalf of the region as a whole. Activities could include hosting a revolving loan fund, maintaining a "most endangered" list, highlighting local best practices, convening an annual preservation summit, holding preservation restrictions, and assisting with tax credits, nominations, grant applications, and providing architectural and construction technical expertise (i.e. meeting ADA accessibility requirements and building codes).

Strategy B: Support Housatonic Heritage as They Develop and Implement Their Management Plan

Housatonic Heritage is currently the largest regional preservation entity operating in the Berkshires and will be an important source of leadership and funding for historic preservation activities moving forward. Preservation partners should participate in the development of the management plan and assist with implementation of that strategy through complementary actions at the local level, where appropriate.

Strategy C: Support Creation or Reinvigoration of Local Historical Commissions Countywide

Currently only 18 of the Berkshires 32 communities have fully active local historical commissions. Those communities without a local historical commission lack an important voice in local

government to advocate for historic preservation and conduct activities within that jurisdiction. Support and education should be developed for community members interested in starting a commission in one of these jurisdictions. Activities would include discussing commission function, levels of commitment, types of roles or project, funding sources, etc. to help them assess the scope and function of the commission.

Policy HP3.1.2: Build capacity of local historical commissions and local history organizations to effectively fulfill their missions.

Strategy A: Facilitate Local Preservationists' Access to Trainings and Seminars

Because of the geography of the region and limited budgets of local Historical Commissions, access to preservation-related trainings and events of the state, typically held in Boston, is challenging. This helps create a feeling of isolation and makes it more of an individual effort to keep up on events, trends, and opportunities in the field. An annual rotating fund to send different commission members to specific events could help to gradually address this need. Grant writing instruction in particular has been noted as a need by these organizations.

Strategy B: Advocate for Community Preservation Act Adoption

A significant potential source of funding for historic preservation activities at the local level is through Community Preservation Act funds. To date, only five Berkshire communities have adopted the Community Preservation Act. Local Historical Commissions and Historical societies should work with regional and state partners to learn about the act and begin conversations at the local level to gain momentum for adoption.

Strategy C: Investigate Certified Local Government Designation at the Local Level

Becoming a Certified Local Government (CLG) is an option for those communities with some sort of local historic preservation bylaw. This status commits a community to completing a number of administrative, programmatic, and outreach activities but provides access to a number of state and federal grant programs to which only CLGs can apply.

Strategy D: Develop Targeted Action Plans to Present during Annual Budgeting Process

Local Historical Commissions should develop annual action plans with draft budgets to submit to their finance committees and elected officials in the annual municipal budgeting process. While recent years have been difficult for municipal budgets, working with local leaders to define specific projects with quantifiable matching dollars or local benefits can help historical commissions gradually gain more access to local funding to help projects move forward.

Strategy E: Develop a Funding Guide to Facilitate Access to a Wider Array of Funding Sources to Support Historic Projects

There are a number of alternate funding sources and incentives to the traditional historic preservation options. These include public funds for large projects that may have an historic preservation component or link as well as dedicated funds through local and other foundations geared towards historic preservation projects. Examples of potential "alternate" funding sources include Community Development Block Grants, Transportation Enhancement funds for historic transportation facilities, or economic development or Main Street-type improvement programs. At the municipal level, jurisdictions could also look for tax-based funding streams such as allocation of local room and meals taxes towards historic preservation, particularly since historic resources act as a tourism draw.

4. INCREASING USE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

Listing of historic assets on the National or State Register of Historic Places is an important first step for historic preservation but does not ensure that modifications are sensitive to the property's historically important stylistic features, nor does it protect from neglect or demolition. The following sections describe historic preservation tools and techniques currently used to renovate and protect historic resources, the range of tools available, and opportunities and challenges facing practitioners desiring to employ some of these tools or techniques. Goals, policies, and strategies for historic regulations and incentives in the future are then described.

CURRENT TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

Area communities use a range of tools and techniques to preserve historic landscapes and buildings. These generally can be classified as conservation protections, zoning regulations, and financial incentives.

Conservation Protections

- **Preservation Restrictions/Conservation Restrictions** are legal agreements used to protect historic buildings (e.g., façade easement) and surrounding lands from change. Restrictions are drawn up by the property owner and a nonprofit preservation group or a government entity who is then in charge of their enforcement. Restrictions can be placed on buildings or on land, and may also be used to protect archaeological resources hidden beneath the surface of the land. Preservation Restrictions are required by many historic preservation grant programs for funded activities related to properties. There are over one hundred (100) Preservation Restrictions in Berkshire County held by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, and other local and regional entities.

Zoning Regulations

- **Local Historic District Bylaws:** Vastly different from a National Register historic district, a Local Historic District can be one of the strongest protective regulatory tools, regulating what is visible from the public right-of-way for groups of buildings or sites in that district. In a local historic district a locally appointed historic district commission reviews any proposed changes to exterior architectural features visible from a public way. It is decided locally which elements are exempt from review. In Berkshire County there are local historic districts in only three towns – Lenox, Great Barrington and Sheffield – while there are over 200 in Massachusetts.
- **Demolition Delay Bylaw:** Demolition delay bylaws are locally-adopted bylaws that delay the demolition of historically significant buildings (for example, listed on the National Register, eligible for listing, or of a certain age) in the hopes of finding an alternative to demolition. Property owners requesting a demolition permit through the building department must first receive approval from the Historical Commission. If the Historical Commission determines that the building is "preferably preserved," a delay period is imposed, usually 6 to 12 months to allow time to explore alternatives to demolition. However, at the end of the delay period, demolition can still occur. Six Berkshire communities currently have demolition delay bylaws with varying

delay periods: Becket (6 mos.), North Adams (12 mos.), Pittsfield (6 mos.), Stockbridge (12 mos.), Tyringham (12 mos.) and Williamstown (90 days).

- **Preservation Supportive Bylaws:** There are a number of other local bylaws which can help achieve preservation objectives. A few notable examples include: scenic road bylaws, form-based bylaws, village center zoning, and adaptive reuse overlay districts. These help retain historic landscapes and development patterns and promote reuse of existing structures.



The Mount is an example of how historic preservation tools can be used in tandem to preserve a property. The Mount is one of the properties covered by the Estate Preservation Area bylaw in Lenox and has conservation and preservation restrictions in place on the building and grounds.

Funding Mechanisms

Financial resources and incentives are essential components for any successful historic preservation effort. See Table HPI, which describes some available grant and tax incentive programs for historic preservation.

Table HPI: Federal and State Financial Incentive Programs for Historic Preservation Projects

Financial Tool or Incentive	What is offered?	Who is eligible to apply?	Allowable projects or activities.
Federal			
Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit	A federal income tax credit equal to 10-20% of the cost of rehabilitating a historic building	Owner of commercial (income-producing) property individually listed on the National Register or a contributing property in a National Register Historic District.	Substantial building rehabilitation that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Due to the application and certification process involved, projects utilizing the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits are usually large-scale.
State			
Massachusetts Rehabilitation Tax Credit	A state income tax credit up to 20% of the cost of rehabilitating a historic building	Owner of commercial (income-producing) property on the State Register or a contributing property in a state historic district.	Substantial building rehabilitation that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Due to the application and certification process involved, projects utilizing the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Tax Credits are usually large-scale.
Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund	A state-funded 50% reimbursable matching grant to support the preservation of properties, landscapes, and sites (cultural resources) listed in the State Register of Historic Places	Applicants must be a municipality or nonprofit organization*	Certain pre-development, acquisition and development costs are allowed. Preservation restrictions are required on properties funded through this program.
MHC Survey and Planning Grant Program	A federally-funded reimbursable 50/50 matching grant program to support historic preservation planning activities in communities throughout the state	Local historical commissions, local historic district commissions, planning offices, and other eligible public and non-profit historic preservation organizations	Eligible activities include the completion of cultural resource inventories, nomination of significant properties to the National Register of Historic Places, completion of community-wide preservation plans, and other activities which relate to the identification and preservation of significant historic properties and sites.

Financial Tool or Incentive	What is offered?	Who is eligible to apply?	Allowable projects or activities.
Local			
Community Preservation Act (CPA)	<p>Signed into law in 2000, the CPA allows communities to create a local Community Preservation Fund through a tax levy against real property.</p> <p>The 2000 CPA statute also creates a statewide Community Preservation Trust Fund, which provides distributions each October to communities that have adopted CPA. These annual disbursements serve as an incentive for communities to pass CPA.</p>	<p>While 42% of the Commonwealth's municipalities have passed the CPA, only five Berkshire communities have passed it - Becket (2008), Great Barrington (2012) Lenox (2006), Stockbridge (2002), and Williamstown (2002).</p> <p>Becket and Lenox exempt their low income residents and the first \$100,000 of real estate value, while Stockbridge and Williamstown exempt just the first \$100,000 of real estate value.</p>	<p>Not less than 10% of a community's annual CPA revenues must go to each of the following categories: open space protection, historic preservation, affordable housing and outdoor recreation.</p>
Heritage Partnership Grants	<p>A federally funded grant program, Housatonic Heritage offers small grants (in 2011 the maximum grant was \$5,000) to further the heritage area's mission to heighten appreciation of the region, preserve its natural and historical resources, and to improve the quality of life and economy of the area.</p>	<p>Non-profit organizations and public entities located in or providing programs in the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area (UHVNHA) – see section I, Geography of Preservation for more information.</p>	<p>Heritage programs and projects are eligible, particularly ones that closely relate to the mission of Housatonic Heritage. The focus of the grant program varies year to year. In fall 2011 grant distributions were targeted at trail (physical or interpretive) projects.</p>



The successful restoration of the Colonial Theatre in Pittsfield, MA employed a range of financing tools, including state and federal rehabilitation tax credits and preservation restrictions in addition to municipal economic development tools.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Implementing and Strengthening Protections for Historic Assets

Few Berkshire County communities have zoning bylaws and ordinances specifically protecting historic resources. Six (6) have Scenic Road bylaws (Becket, Dalton, Lee, Richmond, Stockbridge and Williamstown); five have some level of demolition delay (Becket, Pittsfield, Stockbridge, Tyringham and Williamstown); and even fewer have Local Historic Districts (Lenox, Great Barrington, and Sheffield), which is the strongest protective measure. At a minimum, the Massachusetts Historical Commission recommends a demolition delay bylaw for every community.

Supporting Reuse through Land Use and Development Patterns

Zoning standards can passively encourage the degradation of historic resources by perpetuating sprawl patterns and having limited active protections. The unchecked spread of residential housing from village centers into the rural landscape can contribute negatively to the historic character of a place. Sprawl development can alter the intrinsic rural/village pattern, creating a place with fewer distinguishing features and compromising community character. There are many instances in Berkshire County where the existing village pattern and uses cannot be perpetuated due to current zoning requirements. This lack of coherence between zoning code and underlying pattern can cause inappropriate infill to take

place and often makes many parcels and buildings non-conforming. This non-conforming status causes challenges for owners to make modifications which are desirable in a village (such as the conversion of a commercial or residential structure to mixed use). Once they become indistinguishable, there are limited methods for reclaiming the historic pattern.

Financial Incentives for Residential Property Owners

Financial tools and incentives are a very powerful mechanism to encourage or enable property owners to conduct a renovation in a historically-appropriate manner. However, most historic properties in the region are residential properties for which no incentives are available. Local or regional programs for low or no-interest loans or grants could help address this gap.



SAVE AMERICA'S TREASURES

The Save America's Treasures Federal Grants program administered through National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) began in 1999 to mark the beginning of the new millennium. Grants preserve and protect nationally significant intellectual and cultural artifacts and historic structures and sites that convey our nation's rich heritage to future generations of Americans. Some of the county's most significant sites received funding between 1999 and 2009, ranging in amounts from \$19,000 to \$2.8M:

- *Jacob's Pillow*
- *Samuel Harrison Society (Homestead)*
- *Norman Rockwell*
- *Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center*
- *The Colonial Theatre*
- *Chesterwood*
- *The Mount*

Unfortunately, funding for the Save America's Treasures program was eliminated from the federal budget in 2011.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND STRATEGIES

The following goals, policies, and strategies will be pursued to achieve the vision for historic preservation in the region:

GOAL HP 4.1: Increase the level of protection for historic assets in the region.

Policy HP4.1.1: Build support for local preservation regulations.

Strategy A: Demolition Delay Bylaws

The demolition delay bylaw is a last line of defense and is advisable for all communities wishing to support historic preservation in their localities. Local Historic Commissions will coordinate with their respective planning boards to attend a meeting to discuss demolition delay bylaws as a first step to moving forward with drafting and adopting new bylaws.

Strategy B: Preservation Tools and Techniques Educational Materials

Conduct phased educational outreach about municipal tools for preservation geared towards different audiences within the community such as property owners, planning boards, downtown business groups, and elected officials. Tools to highlight include:

- **Local Historic Districts** – There is often some confusion about the difference between a local and national historic district in terms of the regulations and incentives entailed in each. These should be highlighted, comparing and contrasting the differences, to help property owners and communities (e.g., at Annual Town Meeting) have thorough and accurate information when they make decisions about National Register nominations or local historic district bylaws.
- **Architectural Preservation Districts, aka Neighborhood Conservation Districts:** These are less rigorous than a local historic district but still allow for project review on additions, major alterations, demolition and new construction. The ultimate goal of such a district is to ensure that defining characteristics of the neighborhood remain while allowing for sensitive change and development. For towns, these can also be easier to pass as their less regulatory nature can be more palatable to a wider audience and because they are typically enacted through a general bylaw, which requires a simple majority of town meeting compared to the 2/3 majority vote required for Local Historic Districts as zoning bylaws.

Strategy C: Outreach to Municipal Officials, Boards and Staff

Local Historical Commissions and Historical Societies will work to develop materials and attend meetings to discuss ways in which historic preservation can contribute to other municipal goals or objectives (e.g., economic development, housing, community pride, etc.), providing real examples from nearby communities where preservation tools have been used successfully. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to which tools will ultimately be appropriate in each community. Selection of the best preservation tools is a discussion that should be had and evaluated at a local level.

Strategy D: Build Historic Preservation into Development Review Process

Incorporate a consideration for historic preservation implications when reviewing proposed development projects. This can include national register properties and landscapes as well as an evaluation of cultural, historic, architectural and archeological resources in the permitting process for municipally- and privately-owned property, objects, sites and structures.

GOAL HP 4.2: Ensure historic preservation objectives are well supported by financial tools and incentives

Policy HP4.2.1: Improve access to historic rehabilitation tax credits for commercial projects.

Strategy A: Improve Awareness of and Access to Sources of Technical Assistance

Create a central listing of the different tools and resources available within the region through outreach offices of state or federal entities and non-profits and make available to all historical commissions and municipalities as well as regional partners.

Strategy B: Facilitate Use of Tax Credits by Municipalities and Non-profits

The process of claiming Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits for projects can be time consuming and complex. This can be particularly daunting for first-time users and smaller projects. The National Trust for Historic Preservation has developed a for-profit arm to help preservation projects make better use of the tax credits; the National Trust Community Investment Corporation (NTCIC). This agency as well as state experts can assist with better utilization of this important tool in the region. A third party for-profit entity is particularly important for public and non-profits who do not pay taxes and so would be otherwise ineligible for the tax credits, as was the case in the restoration of The Colonial Theatre in Pittsfield.

Policy HP4.2.2: Develop incentives and technical assistance for homeowners.

Strategy A: Explore the Potential for Revolving Loan Fund for Historic Residential Properties

A current project focused on historic properties is underway through the Scenic Byways program assessing the potential of a revolving loan fund. Once this study is complete it can be reviewed and revised as needed to allow for the region to assess the potential for a revolving loan fund approach to serve the entire county.

Strategy B: Help Homeowners Maintain their Historic Structure once Designated

The financial tools to assist private homeowners maintain their historic resources are generally limited. However, helping individuals become stewards of their important properties can go a long way in protecting such resources. Access to technical assistance, listings of appropriate contractors, available tools, and education about appropriate maintenance and modifications have all been described as needs for many private landowners.

5. INTEGRATING HISTORIC PRESERVATION INTO LARGER COMMUNITY AND REGION

Significant opportunities exist to integrate historic preservation into other regional initiatives. The following section highlights current efforts where there are some essential links to be made, some current challenges or opportunities to improve practice. The chapter also establishes the goals, policies and objectives for integrating preservation into contemporary initiatives.

CONTEMPORARY EFFORTS WITH A PRESERVATION LINK

Strengthening the Draw of Historic Tourism

Berkshire County capitalizes on its historic assets as a draw for tourism. Most cultural sites are also ones with significant historic value, which have engaged in significant preservation and reuse projects. The Berkshire Visitors' Bureau describes historic lodging options, picturesque towns, and cultural attractions to entice visitors to the Berkshires. Much of the existing tourism industry is rooted in the history and culture of this region.

Redevelopment of Historic Buildings and Main Streets

Historic buildings throughout the county have been a draw for developers in the last decade. Downtown Pittsfield bears numerous examples of reinvestment in historic architecture bringing renewed activity and Historic redevelopment (i.e. interest in reuse of historic buildings) such as in the Greystone Block and the A.H. Rice Silk Mill. In North Adams, Mass MoCA, the redevelopment of the former Sprague Electric Campus, has brought private investment, new residents and new options for economic development. A contemporary effort in Great Barrington is paving the way for redevelopment of the plethora of industrial mill buildings in the village of Housatonic.

Neighborhood Preservation and Redevelopment

Preservation works hand in hand with neighborhood redevelopment when the existing historic resources are recognized as making contributions to the positive physical and social characteristics of the area. Rather than wholesale clearance of blighted areas (as was the case in North Adams and Pittsfield during the 1950's and 1960's), rehabilitation of appropriate buildings, context-sensitive infill, and strategic, limited demolition can support neighborhood redevelopment.

Affordable Housing

In many cases, Berkshire County residents find affordable housing in older and historic residences. This is not an unusual trend – nationally, about 1/3 of households below the poverty line live in older and historic homes.⁸ In Berkshire County, we can see a direct correlation between our concentrations of persons in poverty and older neighborhoods.

⁸ Rypkema, Donovan D. Historic Preservation and Affordable Housing: The Missed Connection, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2002.

Local Food and Agriculture

A strong movement is underway in support of locally grown food. With regional partners such as Berkshire Grown, one of the original CSAs in the country, and a strong history of agriculture, the local food movement is growing in the Berkshires. Many historic landscapes are or have once served as agricultural lands. Returning these lands, or portions of them, to productive use could help boost food production, create new ties to the region, and be a historically appropriate activity that helps illustrate the history of the site.

Energy Efficiency and Green Building

Historic structures often have a reputation for being very energy inefficient. However, research on this subject illustrates that this reputation is often more due to product industry advertising than fact. Combating this marketing and providing information on appropriate weatherization practices and materials for consumers will do much to advance the efficient rehabilitation of historic structures with appropriate material choices.

KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Benefits of Historic Preservation to Neighborhoods Often Overlooked

There are a number of communities actively seeking to revitalize neighborhoods – Pittsfield, North Adams, Adams and Great Barrington for example. Activities supporting revitalization often have elements of historic preservation, whether of houses, buildings or community spaces. Such efforts also involve general attention to the community fabric through cleanup, tree planting, and infrastructure improvements. Neighborhoods in need of reinvestment are most often those with older and historic buildings. This type of activity is more often equated with community revitalization rather than historic preservation. In this way, historic preservation is often overlooked as a key strategy, or element of a strategy to building back up neighborhoods and areas which have become neglected.

Historic Preservation at Odds with Certain State and Federal Regulations

Historic preservation objectives are, in some cases, complicated by state and federal regulations which shift the economic balance of projects so as to drive decision-making towards less sensitive options. Fortunately, at the state level, the Stretch Energy Code, an optional appendix of the state building code, and the base energy code exempt historic buildings listed in state or national registers, or designated as a historic property under local or state designation law or survey, or with an opinion or certification that the property is eligible to be listed. However, LEED, a national program for energy-saving design, undervalues the energy savings gained by historic preservation. Federal EPA lead regulations have greatly increased the cost of lead removal, impacting owners' rehabilitation and future use decisions.



The historic preservation forums received strong attendance from local Historical Commissions, with 13 of the county's 22 commissions participating in one of the two forums.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND STRATEGIES

The following goals, policies, and strategies will be pursued to achieve the vision for historic preservation in the region:

Goal HP 5.1: Link historic activities as a partner to economic development efforts.

Policy HP5.1.1: Work to promote historic tourism in the region.

Strategy A: Integrate Historic Tours into Regional Tourism Message and Materials

The Berkshire Visitors' Bureau, the Berkshire Chamber of Commerce and a number of local Chambers of Commerce each play a role in promoting local and tourist visitation of local sites and venues. While there is some site-specific reference to historic sites, largely historic house museums, there are not currently many materials available to knit sites together. The progress Housatonic Heritage has made to define and promote tours is included, but many smaller tours are not highlighted. Additional packaging of destinations by type (literary tour, Gilded Age Cottages tour, etc.) or place-based guides that integrate historic assets into an overall experience of a particular location could help promote the region and improve visitation to these excellent sites.

Strategy B: Locally-Driven Historic Materials for Residents and Visitors

Historic preservation partners can work together to improve the visibility of the variety of tours and trails available in the region through packaged materials and effective distribution. Partners should identify potential strategies with an eye on promoting historic tourism and work with the appropriate partners to pursue them. This should include not only the preparation of tours and handouts but also the collaboration of municipal, business, tourism, and other partners within the communities to help make these materials as widely available and possible.

Strategy C: Utilize Technology to Increase Marketing Capacity

There are numerous ways in which technology can be integrated into tourism activity. Photo sharing sites, virtual tours, websites, and social media are just a few ways in which technological advances are rapidly altering where and how visitors (and residents) learn and make decisions about traveling. Most organizations in Berkshire County rely heavily on websites and social media, but the use of digital tour media has not been embraced as significantly. Resources – funding and expertise – will be needed by most organizations to capitalize on this promotional and informational venue.

Policy HP5.1.2: Promote and enhance the value of historic preservation to downtowns.**Strategy A: Highlight Benefits of Tax Credits to Economic Site Rehabilitation Projects**

A number of studies have been conducted on the benefits and investment leverage provided by historic tax credits. Important samples of the types of projects that accrue benefits include commercial rehabilitation and reuse, municipal building renovations, arts and culture venue improvements and restorations, and affordable housing projects in historic structures. This message should be clearly communicated to community residents, agencies, businesses and leaders to better highlight the contributions of historic preservation activities.

Strategy B: Collaborate With Economic Development Entities About Historic Site Reuse Strategies and Financing

Historic preservationists can be helpful partners in municipal or Community Development Corporation (CDC) redevelopment projects by providing review and advice on bid specs and contractor proposals to help evaluate and minimize the potential impact on an historic property. This is especially important if the project developer wishes to apply for tax credits and grants for the project.

Goal HP 5.2: Collaborate to support local food and agriculture.**Policy HP5.2.1: Support local food production through historic property use or reuse.****Strategy A: Direct New Food-Related Industry to Existing Sites with a Priority on Historic Sites Where Possible**

There is great interest in growing a local food system where more value-added products are made with local farm products. The region has a number of historic sites, including closed schools and churches with commercial kitchen facilities and vacant mill spaces that could be used for higher-intensity operations. Adaptive reuse of these spaces is a priority and the local food connection is one avenue to consider. See also the Local Food and Agriculture Element.

Strategy B: Integrate Food Production into the Landscape of Neighborhoods

Local food security is a growing concern both as hunger rises and global food products become increasingly under pressure from climate change, population growth, and water shortages. Integrating food into the urban landscape, even under a Victory Garden concept, is one way to help increase local food production and food security at the household level. This should include historic neighborhoods and landscapes, whether part of a large historic estate, village green, or within an

urban neighborhood. See also Housing and Neighborhoods Element and Local Food and Agriculture Element.

Strategy C: Support Traditional Development Patterns as a Means of Retaining Agriculture

Traditional development patterns in the region have tended to be a compact town or village center surrounded by rural lands (agriculture and forest). To a large degree, this has remained true, although sprawl in recent decades is starting to blur the line between urban and rural areas.

Retaining this pattern supports traditional village centers and working landscapes that support local quality of life, aesthetics, and tourist activity.

Goal HP 5.3: Use historic preservation as a tool to help define and improve neighborhoods.

Policy HP5.3.1: Explore ways to highlight, redefine and protect historic neighborhoods, particularly in downtown or disadvantaged areas.

Strategy A: Minimize Economic Burden of Historic Preservation

Collaborate with housing and anti-poverty agencies to identify programs and approaches to minimize the economic burden of maintaining an historic property. This could include volunteer painting assistance crews or property maintenance programs to assist seniors in historic homes. In areas with a neighborhood group or association, these initiatives could be dovetailed with other community cleanup or maintenance initiatives. See also: Housing and Neighborhood Element.

Policy HP5.3.2: Work to balance public health and historic preservation aims.

Strategy B: Educate About Lead and Asbestos Abatement in Historic Structures

Historic structures are more than likely to contain some amount of lead paint and asbestos. New lead regulations enacted by the EPA in the past few years have made remediation more costly, creating more pressure on property owners renting to families with children or renters receiving public assistance benefits. Owner-occupied homes are also affected and homeowners should know the best practices and requirement for managing lead and asbestos exposure in the home. Adjusting to these new regulations and protecting health can be somewhat assisted by ensuring property owners are aware of the process and potential for home renovation projects, whether through a home contractor or as a do-it-yourself project.

Strategy C: Work With Health Entities to Promote the Health Benefits of Traditional Neighborhoods

Traditional neighborhoods offer a number of social, health, and environmental benefits to their residents. These neighborhoods tend to be more walkable and located near jobs, parks, retail and other services, reducing the need to drive and shortening commute times. Depending on neighborhood conditions, these benefits could be somewhat stifled by poor maintenance or conditions that would limit use or mobility such as an unsafe park or dangerous sidewalk. Historic preservation partners can partner with municipal or neighborhood groups or associations to highlight the history of neighborhoods and collaborate to pursue solutions to improving quality of neighborhood fabric.

Goal 5.4: Work to advance historically sensitive green building and renewable energy improvements.

Policy HP5.4.1: Support homeowners of historic properties to make cost-efficient home improvements.

Strategy A: Offer Workshops on Simple Preservation Projects

Coordinate with local hardware stores and historic home renovation professionals to offer workshops for homeowners on simple home preservation projects. These should highlight proper techniques and the range of potential materials that could be used to conduct an energy efficient and historically sensitive home improvement project.

Strategy B: Make Home Maintenance Information and Advice Readily Available to Homeowners

Assist historic homeowners in properly maintaining their homes by improving their access to unbiased product information as they plan their renovation projects. Many sources of information exist such as Preservation Massachusetts Historic New England and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Access could be improved through hand outs or a project guide referring homeowners to sources of thorough and up-to date information. Preservation Massachusetts and Historic New England also provide contractor listings for historic renovations.

Policy HP5.4.2: Coordinate with green building and energy efficiency professionals on appropriate approaches for historic properties.

Strategy A: Work to Include Historic Home Considerations in Energy Efficiency Professional Training

Work with educational venues such as Berkshire Community College, which play a role in educating building industry professionals on home energy audits and improvements to ensure that historic homes options are integrated into the curriculum.

Strategy B: Annual (Green) Historic Building and Remodeling Expo

Educate home construction and remodeling industry professionals on new materials through an expo event where contractors and industries can showcase their historically-appropriate materials. This should include green modifications such as solar on roof-tops as well as access to financial tools and incentives (rebates, tax breaks, tax credits, etc.).

IMPLEMENTATION

On March 20, 2014, the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission adopted the entire Sustainable Berkshires plan, which is comprised of eight elements:

- Economy
- Housing and Neighborhoods
- Climate and Energy
- Conservation and Recreation
- Local Food and Agriculture
- Historic Preservation
- Infrastructure and Services
- Land Use

The new regional plan, including the goals, policies and strategies set forth in this element, will be implemented by a variety of actors over the next decade. The plan contains numerous strategies, some of which are longer-term or “big ticket” items that will take some time and planning; others are already underway or can be implemented immediately. As a regional plan, this is a non-regulatory document whose main purpose is to set a cohesive strategy for the Berkshire region to align actions, priorities, and investments to yield the greatest benefit to the region.

Because implementation will be an active and evolving process over the next decade, the implementation strategy for all eight elements is contained under separate cover to allow it to be used as a working document. Updates to the elements will occur as needed over time to reflect major needs and trends of the region. However, the Implementation addendum to the plan is an administrative document that will serve three functions:

1. A schedule of implementation timeframes, responsible parties, and potential funding sources to be used or pursued;
2. A tracking mechanism for implementation actions taken over time to record progress as it is made; and
3. A planning tool to help the Commission and its other implementation partners pull out certain strategies to pursue in one or three-year action plans to help focus effort and achieve results.

In addition to the implementation addendum, a number of data points will be tracked over time to measure change in certain metrics. These metrics were selected based on available data that relates to the goals and strategies called for in each element. The metric reports will be openly available online through BRPC’s Berkshire Benchmarks program website (www.berkshirebenchmarks.org).

Appendices



Historic Preservation Element

- A:** Historic Preservation Forums
- B:** Municipal Historic Resource Inventories and Priorities

APPENDIX A: HISTORIC PRESERVATION FORUMS

FORUM SUMMARY

As part of the process for the Historic Preservation element of *Sustainable Berkshires* open forums were held on October 4 and 5, 2011 to discuss the current state and future directions for historic preservation in Berkshire County. Thirteen communities were represented by members of their local historical commissions, historical societies, and their residents. Regional groups, Housatonic Heritage and the Berkshire Historical Society, also participated.

Christopher Skelly, Director of Local Programs for the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) began the forum with a summary of historic resources in Berkshire County. The attendees then reviewed a list of their historic resources listed on the National Register of Historic Sites, and maps related to those resources. They were asked to note any resources which are endangered, those needing updated surveys, and additional information, such as National Register Historic sites which were demolished. The forum attendees also noted additional preservation priorities in their communities.



Christopher Skelly of the Massachusetts Historical Commission describes tools and techniques to attendees of a Historic Preservation forum in Lenox.

Following the first break-out session, Christopher Skelly presented information about the preservation tools and techniques most appropriate for Berkshire County communities.



Members of the Adams Historical Commission and Adams Historical Society discuss the preservation priorities and tools needed in their community.

These tools were public education, advocacy, state and federal regulations (use of federal or state funds triggering a review process), demolition delay, local historic districts, grants, preservation restrictions, federal and state tax credits, working with other municipal officials, and establishing relationships with partner organizations.

After discussion and questions about the tools and techniques presented by Mr. Skelly, Michele Barker, Area Circuit Rider for Preservation Massachusetts introduced herself as a technical assistance resource for Berkshire communities. The attendees then had the opportunity to work in groups to discuss the major opportunities and challenges related to historic preservation in Berkshire County and the tools and techniques previously discussed.

ADDITIONAL OUTREACH

Following the forums, BRPC staff made contact with local historical commissions or historical societies in communities that did not have a representative at a forum. In these cases survey forms were sent by mail or email to be filled out by members at a subsequent meeting. There are still a number of outstanding responses, in part due to the limited nature of some LHC meeting schedules. These communities are still included in Appendix B: Municipal Historic Inventories and Priorities; however the information included is limited to the historic register listings and other public information.

APPENDIX B: MUNICIPAL HISTORIC INVENTORIES AND PRIORITIES

The community profiles on the following pages are a compilation of national and local historic listings, local preservation bylaws or other preservation mechanisms currently in place, and a summary of current preservation activities the municipalities are engaged in, and needs they have identified. The summary information was contributed by members of local historical commissions, local historical societies, municipal planners and residents. Attempts were made to include each municipality, but some did not participate. Any community interested in completing a worksheet or updating the information in the below summary is invited to contact BRPC.

KEY FINDINGS

Themes

Most common themes linking historic resources were agriculture and industry and their related settlements; religious, commercial, recreational and burial sites were noted by at least two communities.

Endangered Resources

Churches, burial grounds and the scenic nature of communities were each described as endangered resources by multiple communities.

Tools and Techniques of Interest

Surveys and Inventories

Updated survey and inventory forms are a need throughout the county. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has noted that every community in Berkshire County has outstanding needs in this area. Numerous communities self-indicated there is a need to survey new properties and revise existing surveys for their general historic resource inventories and their National Register sites.

Protective Bylaws and Programs

There were a few expressions of interest in general protective tools, but overwhelmingly local historic districts and demolition delay were considered highly important. Learning more about funding mechanisms, particularly those which can provide the required match for Massachusetts Historical Commission grant programs, was an interest; the Community Preservation Act was suggested as one particular funding vehicle. At least three communities would like to learn more about or develop incentives for private property owners to engage in historic preservation activities. Some communities mentioned these tools and techniques as general needs, but most described education as a first step, both for local historical commissions and the community at large.

Regionalized Approach

Interest in a regional entity to support, coordinate and promote preservation activities throughout the county was a consistent theme during the outreach forums and within the survey responses. The suggested forms of such an organization ranged from a new non-profit, one following the model of a land trust, building out a preservation program at the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, and/or an informal networking structure. It was suggested that such an entity could support fundraising, advocacy, educational needs of local communities and preservation groups, and possibly offer technical and administrative support to groups.

Current Activities

Activities vary greatly by community, but there are numerous examples of preservation efforts for significant local historic resources. While the size and approach of these projects vary, they are universally enabled by local volunteer and community support. In some cases preservation projects have helped to reinvigorate the local historical commission or society, and they have sparked interest in the community about the importance of preservation activities.

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At-A-Glance Comparison

	National Historic Landmarks	National Register Sites	National Register Districts	Local Historic Districts	Demolition Delay Bylaw?	Active Historical Commission?
Adams	0	13	2	0	No	Yes
Alford	0	0	0	0	No	No
Becket	1	0	3	0	Yes	Yes
Cheshire	0	0	0	0	No	No
Clarksburg	0	0	0	0	No	No
Dalton	1	4	1	0	No	Yes
Egremont	0	1	2	0	No	Yes
Florida	0	1	0	0	No	No
Great Barrington	1	9	1	1	No	Yes
Hancock	0	1	0	0	No	No
Hinsdale	0	0	0	0	No	No
Lee	0	5	2	0	No	Yes
Lenox	1	10	0	1	No	Yes
Monterey	0	3	0	0	No	Yes
Mount Washington	0	1	0	0	No	No
New Ashford	0	0	0	0	No	No
New Marlborough	0	1	2	0	No	Yes
North Adams	0	17	9	0	No	Yes
Otis	0	0	0	0	No	No
Peru	0	0	0	0	No	No
Pittsfield	2	17	2	0	Yes	Yes
Richmond	0	5	1	0	No	Yes
Sandisfield	0	3	0	0	No	Yes
Savoy	0	0	0	0	No	No
Sheffield	0	2	2	1	No	Yes
Stockbridge	3	3	4	0	Yes	Yes
Tyringham	0	1	1	0	Yes	Yes
Washington	0	5	2	0	No	Yes
West Stockbridge	0	3	0	0	No	Yes
Williamstown	0	2	4	0	Yes	Yes
Windsor	0	0	0	0	No	No

ADAMS

National Register Sites

- Anthony House
- Armory Block
- Barrett (PJ) Block
- Berkshire Mill No. 1
- Hoosac Street School
- Jones Block
- Mausert Block
- Park Street Firehouse
- Pittsfield & North Adams Passenger Station and Baggage & Express House
- Phillips Woolen Mill
- Quaker Meetinghouse
- Simmons Block
- Maple Street Cemetery

Note: The Renfrew Mill No. 2 was on the National Register, but has since been decertified following its demolition.

National Register Districts

- Summer Street
- Mount Greylock Summit

Local Designations

Mount Greylock Scenic Byway and Route 16 Scenic Byway

Protective Bylaws and Supporting Programs

Adams has a façade and signage program which has subsidized many storefronts and building improvements in the downtown

Endangered Sites

The sites noted as endangered are the Armory Block, the Mausert Block (both categorized as endangered due to their pending rehabilitation status).

Themes in Community

Themes include agricultural, recreational, residential, commercial, municipal buildings and burial grounds.

Recent Activities

- There is ongoing rehabilitation of the Quaker Meeting House and the Jones Block. There are current efforts to rehabilitate the Armory Block and the Mausert Block.
- The Historical Commission is active, though it was noted as inactive in the State Historic Preservation Plan. There is also an active Historical Society. These groups engage in public education efforts and advocacy.

Additional Priorities for Preservation

- Mass National Guard Armory (currently privately owned)
- Briggs House
- Adams Free Library
- Adams Town Hall (former Plunkett Mansion)
- St. Stanislaus Church (the status is in limbo)
- St. Mark's Church (Episcopalian church for sale),
- Old Town Hall, Laura Cohen (an individual, local communist history)
- Congregational Church
- Elks (Unitarian Church)
- Masonic Lodge (Methodist Church), Plunkett Hospital,
- Plunkett School
- Adams Memorial School (in use for one more year as a school)
- Greylock Art Gallery
- Mountain Club and the Baptist Church.

Needs in Community

- All National Register sites and districts were noted as needing updated survey work.
- McKinley Square is a potential new historic district or thematic area.
- Establishment of local historic districts and other preservation initiatives have been proposed, but did not make it to Town Meeting due to opposition. Respondents suggested demolition delay, preservation bylaws and local historic districts could work in Adams.
- There is a need to establish or enhance relationships with schools to teach students local history.

Potential Regional Initiatives

A regional non-profit for preservation, similar to the Berkshire County Natural Resource Council would be a benefit.

ALFORD

National Register Sites and Districts

There are no National Register sites or districts in Alford.

Recent Activities

The State Historic Preservation Plan notes that the Local Historical Commission in Alford has recently been reactivated.

Needs in Community

- Survey activity in the town is needed.
- Alford is one of the few Berkshire communities with nothing on the National Register.

BECKET

National Landmark

- Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival

National Register Districts

- Becket Center
- Middlefield-Becket Stone Arch Railroad Bridge
- North Becket Village Historic District

Local Designations

Route 20 in Becket is part of the Jacob's Ladder Trail Scenic Byway.

Protective Bylaws and Supporting Programs

- Demolition Delay
- Community Preservation Act

Endangered Sites

Sites of concern are:

- Pleasant Street Quarry (needs a survey and more information)
- Bancroft Village (demolition and development threats)
- Higley Apothecary Shop (stabilization is currently needed)

Recent Activities

In 2008, the Becket Historical Commission conducted local historic district studies for Becket Center and the North Becket Village Historic District. The advancement of this initiative was tabled due to concerns about impacts on property values, in part made more prominent by recent economic changes.

Needs in Community

- Bancroft Village is a potential new historic district. Research was conducted by the UMass Archaeology Department. It is a mill village noted as endangered due to demolition and development.

- Additional priorities for preservation: Pleasant Street Quarry, Bancroft Village, Higley Apothecary Shop, Becket Quarry and Forest (major intact quarry owned by the Becket Land Trust), two state YMCA camps (particularly Gibson Hall), Fred Snow House (birthplace of major Mormon leader), Mallen House (quarry museum), Brewster House (restored Colonial), and Boulder Grange (1890's estate).

CHESHIRE

National Register Sites and Districts

There are no National Register sites or districts in Cheshire.

Needs in Community

- Survey activity in the town is needed.

CLARKSBURG

National Register Sites and Districts

There are no National Register sites or districts in Clarksburg.

Needs in Community

- Survey activity in the town is needed.
- Clarksburg is one of the few Berkshire communities with nothing on the National Register.

DALTON

National Landmark

- Crane & Company Old Stone Mill Rag Room

National Register Sites

- Dalton Grange Hall No. 23
- East Main Street Cemetery
- Fairview Cemetery
- Fitch-Hoose House

National Register District

- Cranesville

Protective Bylaws and Supporting Programs

- There is a scenic road bylaw.

Endangered Sites

A number of sites in Dalton were noted as endangered. The Fitch-Hoose House is in need of stabilization work and restoration.

Recent Activities

- The Fitch-Hoose House was recently listed on the National Register.
- The Dalton Historical Commission is active. They regularly host special presentations and have special projects. Currently they are focused on stabilizing the Fitch-Hoose house.
- A Massachusetts Preservation Project Fund Grant was received to advance work at the Fitch Hoose House. The Dalton Historical Commission started a recent fundraiser selling historic tiles depicting the site. The BRPC assisted in writing and administering this grant activity.

EGREMONT

National Register District

- North Egremont
- South Egremont

National Register Sites

- Westover-Bacon-Potts Farm

Endangered Sites

A number of sites in Egremont were noted as endangered:

- Jug End State Reservation (in deteriorating condition, very endangered)
- Egremont Inn Site (230+ year inn destroyed in fire 2 years ago, the site now contains 1830's shell and much rubble, has been offered to the town for use as a park)
- Egremont Plain Village

Themes in Community

Themes in the town's historic resources (and examples of each) include:

- Agriculture (Westover-Bacon-Potts Farm)
- Industrial life (S. Egremont Village)
- Farming village life (N. Egremont Village, potential Egremont Plain Village)
- Recreation (Jug End Road)

Recent Activities

The Local Historical Commission has recently been reactivated.

- The Friends of Egremont History have been working with BRPC to develop a map about historic structures throughout the community.
- The Egremont Planning Board is researching village center zoning to better support the underlying village patterns in North and South Egremont and the uses within those villages.

Needs in Community

- Help educating the populace about the benefits of a demolition delay bylaw and local historic district.
- Develop and pass demolition delay and local historic district bylaws.
- Funding for outside specialists to help with local preservation work.
- The HC would like support in getting demolition delay and a local historic district developed and passed.

Potential Regional Initiatives

- The Knox Trail was a transit route from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston via Alford, N. Egremont, and Great Barrington; preservation of it could be a regional initiative.
- A historic preservationist added to BRPC staff could spearhead multi-jurisdictional initiatives. This would avoid having one town "manage" others in a project.

FLORIDA

National Register Sites

The Hoosac Tunnel is partly in the town of Florida.

Local Designations

Part of the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway runs through Florida.

Needs In Community

Survey activity in the town is needed.

GREAT BARRINGTON

National Landmark

WEB Dubois Boyhood Homesite

National Register Sites

- Clinton A.M.E. Zion Church
- Dwight-Henderson House
- Mahaiwe Block
- Monument Mills
- Rising Paper Mill
- Searles Castle
- Society of the Congregational Church of Great Barrington
- Truman Wheeler Farmstead
- U.S. Post Office (Main)

National Register District

Taconic and West Avenues

Local Designations

Downtown Historic District (Local Historic District)

Protective Bylaws and Supporting Programs

- Local Historic District (Downtown)
- Design Review Board
- Village Center Overlay District
- Housatonic Mills Revitalization Overlay District

Endangered Sites

The Truman Wheeler House needs extensive restoration and continued stabilization work, requiring significant resources.

Recent Activities

- The Great Barrington Historical Society is actively engaged in the preservation of the Truman Wheeler House and site, which includes seven (7) buildings and two (2) acres of land. Ultimately the Wheeler site is envisioned to become a local historical museum, archive and educational center. It has many original intact features such as floorboards, fireplaces and hardware.
- Recent National Register listings include the Clinton AME Church, the Mahaiwe Block, and the Truman Wheeler House.
- There have been strong connections drawn between open space, history and culture in the town. The recent River Walk project is a recreational and interpretive trail with many points of historical and cultural interest.
- The current Master Planning effort has identified historic resources as very important to the community. Goals of the plan will likely address updating property inventories and identifying funds, partners, and regional efforts for collaborations. The Master Plan will also focus on design and a review of existing design guidelines will likely be part of the process.
- There is interest in proposing a scenic road bylaw, demolition delay and the Community Preservation Act. The latter was attempted previously at Town Meeting, but was not approved.

Needs in Community

- Funding for preservation activities is needed.
- Education about why demolition delay and local historic districts are important is also a need.

HANCOCK

National Register Sites

Hancock Town Hall

Needs in Community

- The State Preservation Plan notes that the local historical commission is only somewhat active.
- Survey activity in the town is needed.

HINSDALE

Note: Please contact BRPC to share information about historic preservation in Hinsdale.

National Register Sites and Districts

There are no National Register sites or districts in Hinsdale.

Needs in Community

- The local historical commission should be reactivated.
- Survey activity in the town is needed.
- Hinsdale is one of the few Berkshire communities with nothing on the National Register.

LEE

National Register Sites

- Golden Hill Bridge
- Hyde House
- Hyde School
- Merrell Tavern
- Sullivan Station

National Register Districts

- South Lee
- Lower Main Street

Local Designations

Jacobs Ladder Trail Scenic Byway

Protective Bylaws and Supporting Programs

Scenic Roads Bylaw

Endangered Sites

There are numerous mills in Lee which have ceased operating. They are varying in condition and have a range of reuse options.

Themes in Community

Themes in the Town of Lee include agriculture, recreation, and mills.

Recent Activities

- The Local Historical Commission is active. They recently submitted thirteen (13) inventory forms to the Massachusetts Historical Commission.
- Sullivan Station, the Lee railroad depot, was recently nominated and accepted for the National Register of Historic Places.
- The Baird and Benton Block on Main Street (the upper floors of which were vacant for decades) underwent an adaptive reuse. The building now houses the College Internship Program and the exterior was restored to its historic condition.

Needs in Community

- Priorities for preservation include: the First Congregational Church, the former St. George Church (in the process of adaptive reuse), Elizer Smith House (now apartments), and the Lee Town Library.
- There is potential for a paper mill historic district. Most mills have closed and the memory of this heritage is endangered.

LENOX

National Landmark

The Mount

National Register Sites

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Church on the Hill | • Lenox High School | • Trinity Episcopal Church |
| • Citizen's Hall (Interlaken) | • Lenox Library | • Ventfort Hall |
| • Elm Court | • Lenox Railroad Station | • Wheatleigh |
| • Lenox Academy | | |

National Register Districts

N/A

Local Designations

Lenox Historical District (downtown) – Local Historic District

Protective Bylaws and Supporting Programs

- Local Historic District
- Community Preservation Act
- Village Center Zoning

Endangered Sites

- The Church on the Hill Cemetery has collapsing burial stones from important times in Lenox history.
- The Lenox Historical District is considered endangered; the guidelines for signage and property maintenance requirements aren't clear. The local historic district should be expanded.

Recent Activities

- The Lenox Historical Commission has actively followed development activities and advocated for the interest of historic preservation. This includes the reconstruction of historic Westinghouse lights in the historic district during a recent downtown streetscape project and advocating for a material change for a sidewalk renovation on West Street.
- The Historical Commission is working on historic street name signs for the district and is advancing an historic plaque program.
- A recent proposal for a demolition delay bylaw was unsuccessful.

Needs in Community

- Additional priorities for preservation include the Church on the Hill Cemetery, Lenox Community Center, Whistler's Inn, Summer White House, Spring Lawn, Cranwell, Blantyre, Lake Side and the Aspinwall Hotel site at Kennedy Park.
- There is a need for education about the importance of historic preservation town-wide and with municipal leaders. There is a specific interest in learning more about preservation restrictions.

Themes in Community

Suggested themes include Revolution and early settlement, Civil War, industrialization, early 20th century, Gilded Age, 'upstairs-downstairs' (i.e. intersecting lives of master and servant), and authors.

MONTEREY

National Register Sites

- Rev. Adonijah Bidwell House
- Captain John Brewer House
- Rock Ridge

Endangered Sites

- The Monterey Historical Society points to a lack of maintenance and planning as the greatest contributors to historic preservation challenges in the Town.
- A historic home deeded to the Town was demolished but the guest cottage was kept and is rented. There are a number of maintenance issues related to this historic property.
- The Monterey Historical Society has an extensive collection of materials related to local history, but it has no permanent, publicly accessible home. In recent years the Monterey Historical Society scanned the collection into electronic format using appropriate museum software. The collection is accessible as a virtual museum

Recent Activities

- One (1) building survey form was recently submitted.
- A local historic district designation was attempted but failed at Town Meeting; respondents close to the effort believe there was significant misinformation about results of the designation.
- As previously mentioned, the local archives have been stored electronically.

Needs in Community

- The State Historic Preservation Plan notes that the Local Historical Commission should be reactivated.
- Survey activity in the town is needed.
- In the community there are proponents of establishing a historic district to include a specific Town-owned property, in order to make more grant funds available for its maintenance and restoration. The Historical Society believes this would be an ideal location for its history collections and the town records.
- Additional technical assistance for archiving collections.

Regional Initiatives

- A regional organization to provide web space for various town historical societies.
- A regional initiative working with local municipalities to gain cooperation in standards of preservation, security for historical artifacts and documents, and in funding the rehabilitation of Town-owned buildings.

MOUNT WASHINGTON

National Register Sites

- Benjamin Osborn House

Needs in Community

- Survey activity in the town is needed.

NEW ASHFORD

National Register Sites and Districts

There are no National Register sites or districts in New Ashford

Needs in Community

- Survey activity in the town is needed.
- The local historical commission is noted as only somewhat active.
- New Ashford is one of the few communities in Berkshire County without a National Register listing.

NEW MARLBOROUGH

National Register Sites

Thomas Shepard House

National Register Districts

- Mill River
- New Marlborough

Recent Activities

- The recently passed Comprehensive Plan for the Town of New Marlborough identified the need for new and updated resource identification and surveys, and submission of National Register nominations for appropriate properties.
- The Historical Commission has been reviewing the historic district boundaries and implications and process for local historic districts.
- The Planning Board is engaged in a process to develop village center zoning for Town Meeting. This is an effort to more closely align zoning requirements with the underlying historic village patterns.

Needs in Community

There is a need for survey activity and new National Register nominations.

NORTH ADAMS

National Register Sites

- | | | |
|------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| • Armstrong House | • Clark Biscuit Company Hillside Cemetery | • Sherman (William B.) Farm |
| • Arnold Print Works | • Hoosac Tunnel | • Sykes House |
| • Beaver Mill | • Johnson School | • St. Joseph's School |
| • The Boardman | • Norad Mill | • Wells House |
| • Charles Browne House | • Sherman (Eber) Farm | • Windsor Print Works |
| • Crowley House | | |

Note: The Hathaway Tenement and the Johnson Manufacturing Company are also listed on the National Register but have since been demolished and should be decertified from the list

National Register Districts

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Blackinton | • Freeman's Grove | • Monument Square – Eagle St. |
| • Church Street | • Freight Yard | • Mount Greylock Summit |
| • Church Street – Caddy Hill | • Monument Square – Eagle St. | • Normal School |

Endangered Sites

- Numerous churches and mills are considered endangered due to their changes in or lack of use.
- Eagle Street and the East Street Market were noted specifically as sites of concern.
- Throughout the city there are swaths of historic homes which are suffering from blight and neglect. The issue is, in part, due to the much smaller population today than was in the City at its peak.

Recent Activities

- The Clark Biscuit Company was recently nominated for the National Register of Historic Places and underwent an adaptive reuse; it is now an apartment building.
- The North Adams Historical Commission is active and works with the City's Community Development Department.

Needs in Community

- Additional priorities for preservation include Barber Leather mill, Mohawk Theatre, Eclipse Mill, Greylock Mill and the North Adams Public Library (the former Houghton Mansion).
- A few buildings were noted as endangered in the Monument Square – Eagle Street historic district.
- Members of the Historical Commission note that they need to work more with the Building Inspector.
- There is a need in the community for demolition delay and consideration of establishing local historic districts.
- There is a need for financial incentives for individual homeowners to rehab historic homes.

Themes in Community

Themes in North Adams include engineering (i.e. flood control chutes, Hoosac Tunnel), religious, Colonial and post-Colonial.

OTIS

National Register Sites and Districts

There are no National Register sites or districts in New Ashford

Local Designations

The Knox Trail recently received designation as a scenic trail.

Endangered Sites

A Church built in 1900 is falling down and the town has condemned it. It would cost approximately \$220,000 to bring it up to modern standards.

Recent Activities

- A 200th anniversary effort has helped mobilize recent interest in the history of Otis.
- The local historical commission has become more active recently. They submitted two new inventory forms to the Massachusetts Historical Commission and have begun survey planning. A National Register nomination for Richard Pearl House is underway. They are also updating some of the original 1980's survey forms.
- The East Otis Restoration Committee has an ongoing project to restore the 1850 East Otis School. Some of those involved in the effort are alumni of the long-running schoolhouse. The outside of the building has been worked on, but continued efforts are needed to begin the interior.

Needs in Community

- The seasonal nature of the Otis community makes it difficult to maintain momentum to complete projects. There are also some divides between the different villages in the town.
- There are concerns from the public that historic listings could prevent changing the outside of their houses. There is little priority setting town-wide about what is important to preserve.
- Specific needs include Circuit Rider help for technical assistance in completing and initiating historic preservation projects and education about Local Historic District designation (center of town is a prime location for a local historic district).

PERU

National Register Sites and Districts

There are no National Register sites or districts in Peru.

Local Designations

The Knox Trail recently received designation as a scenic trail.

Needs in Community

- Survey activity in the town is needed.
- The local historical commission is inactive.
- Peru is one of the few communities in Berkshire County without a National Register listing.

PITTSFIELD

National Historic Landmarks

- Arrowhead, Herman Melville House
- Hancock Shaker Village

National Register Sites

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| • Allen Hotel | • Old Central Fire Station | • Providence Court |
| • William Russell Allen House | • Old Central High School | • South Mtn. Concert Hall |
| • Berkshire Life Insurance Co. | • Old Town Hall | • Springside Park |
| • Eaton Crane & Pike Company Factory | • Pilgrim Memorial Church and Parish House | • Wahconah Park |
| • Samuel Harrison House | • Pittsfield Cemetery | • Wollison-Shipton Building |
| • Morewood School | • Charles Whittlesey Power House | |

National Register Districts

- Park Square
- Upper North Street Commercial

Local Designations

Protective Bylaws and Supporting Programs

- Demolition delay
- Façade and signage program

Endangered Sites

The William Russell Allen House and Springside Park were noted as endangered. The William Russell Allen House is state-owned and some stabilization has been done, but more is needed.

Themes in Community

Themes in Pittsfield include Downtown Commercial, Religious, and Cultural.

Recent Activities

- Pittsfield's 2009 Master Plan supports historic preservation efforts.
- The City has a contract with the Hancock Shaker Village/UMass historic preservation program to perform survey work.

Needs in Community

- Most of the listed National Register sites need updated surveys.
- Preservation priorities include Brattle Farm (600 Williams Street), the former Miss Hall's School (149 Bartlett Ave.), the Goodrich House (823 North Street), St. Joseph's Church Convent (414 North Street), the Country Club of Pittsfield, the Pontoosuc Mills complex, the main Hillcrest building (a former estate).
- The Park Square National Historic District could be extended to Broad Street.
- Needs include identification of funding sources, review of regional needs, and mechanisms to bring together similar communities.
- There is interest in proposing the Community Preservation Act (was denied once), establishing a local historic district, and in construction advising for preservation projects.
- Historic centers and historic neighborhoods in the vicinity of the city core are assets to explore.
- There is potential for the establishment of local historic districts and protective zoning measures.
- There are needs for public education and working with municipal officials related to historic properties.

Potential Regional Initiatives

There is a need to develop regional coalitions to address funding source issues, educational tools, and make property owners more aware of programs which might be available to them.

TOWN OF RICHMOND

National Register Sites

- Goodwood
- Kenmore
- Nichols-Sterner House
- Northeast School
- Shaker Farm

National Register Districts

Richmond Furnace – both a historical and archeological district

Needs in Community

Survey activity in the town is needed.

SANDISFIELD

National Register Sites

- Montville Baptist Church
- New Boston Inn
- Sage (Philemon) House

Recent Activities

The Montville Baptist Church was recently listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Needs in Community

- Survey activity in the town is needed.
- The local historical commission was listed as inactive in the State Historic Preservation Plan.

SAVOY

National Register Sites

Mohawk Trail

Recent Activities

The local historic commission was reactivated in 2005.

Needs in Community

Survey activity in the town is needed.

SHEFFIELD

National Register Sites

- Colonel John Ashley House
- Covered Bridge

National Register Districts

- Sheffield Center
- Sheffield Plain

Local Designations

Ashley Falls – Local Historic District

Protective Bylaws and Supporting Programs

Local Historic District

Endangered Sites

The vernacular landscape is particularly vulnerable. The resources include barns, cider presses, saw mills (and similar early industry), workshops, farms and older houses. There is limited ability to maintain them through generational transfers.

Themes in Community

The agricultural vernacular (working) landscape was described as a theme.

Recent Activities

- A new inventory form was recently submitted to the Massachusetts Historical Commission.
- The Town Hall was recently restored, but the upper floors remain to be finished.
- A corridor landscape conservation project was spearheaded by the Sheffield Land Trust including farmland, forest, etc. and historic resources. This project is not yet completed. Many individuals and organizations have been involved in this effort; there is a strong volunteer presence with expertise.
- The old high school building and a historic house were lost when the space was needed and there was no system in place to educate the public about what was happening.

Needs in Community

- The Local Historical Commission was recently reactivated.
- The existing inventory of historic properties has recently been updated.
- Funding the local share of matching grants is a challenge. It is also difficult to find the expertise to help with initial project assessments and planning.
- The general challenges in the community include a lack of funding for projects, limited recognition of the importance of the value of the community's historic nature, conflicts between development and preservation, and the lack of a demolition delay bylaw.

STOCKBRIDGE

National Landmark

- Chesterwood, Daniel Chester French Home and Studio
- Mission House
- Naumkeag

National Register Sites

- Glendale Power House
- Stockbridge Casino
- Villa Virginia

National Register Districts

- Elm-Maple-South Street
- Main Street
- Old Curtisville
- Shadow Brook Farm

Protective Bylaws and Supporting Programs

- Cottage Era Estate Adaptive Re-use or Rehabilitation
- Scenic Roads
- Demolition Delay
- Community Preservation Act

Recent Activities

Six (6) inventory forms were recently submitted to the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Needs in Community

Priorities for preservation include IS 183, agricultural sites, the Interlaken paperwood pulp monument, and the Stockbridge Train Station.

TYRINGHAM

National Register Sites

Methodist Episcopal Society of Tyringham

National Register Districts

Tyringham Shaker Settlement

Protective Bylaws and Supporting Programs

Demolition Delay

Recent Activities

One (1) burial ground survey form was recently submitted to the MHC.

Needs in Community

Survey activity in the town is needed.

WASHINGTON

National Register Sites

- Clark-Eames House
- Philip Eames House
- Saint Andrew's Chapel
- Sibley-Corcoran House
- South Center School House

National Register Districts

- Upper Washington
- Lower Washington

Endangered Sites

- Both Old Town Hall and St. Andrews Chapel need more than the level of maintenance they currently receive to forestall deterioration. A lack of funds or wide-spread support hampers efforts.
- Several old cemeteries are being swallowed up by the forest, without funds for upkeep.

Recent Activities

- The Washington Historical Commission has recently been reactivated.
- The community has successfully preserved a one-room little red schoolhouse, the stained glass and other elements in St. Andrews Chapel (ongoing) and an extensive archive of historic papers. They are making progress in preserving and reusing the Old Town Hall by installing a partial new roof. The Select Board supports eventual renovation of the building for use as a museum/storage of archival papers and artifacts.
- These projects all benefitted from strong individual volunteer efforts. St. Andrews chapel hosts from weddings held there in the warm season. There is project specific fundraising and structural repairs are supported in part through town discretionary monies.

Needs in Community

- Repeated efforts to catalog, preserve and find a permanent home for the fragile archival materials (books, photographs, correspondence, business records, railroad memorabilia etc.) have failed. The collection has been moved seven (7) times and has suffered damage with each move. It is now scattered in 2 different locations in town.
- Education about the town's unique heritage and outreach to get more residents involved in preservation efforts would be very valuable. There is no known curriculum in the local schools which specifically teach local and regional history. The Washington Historical Commission believes such a curriculum would be a great asset to all the communities involved. Visits to historic buildings, collections of archival material and auditing oral histories would all help children and adults develop a sense of place and pride in their heritage.
- Appropriate matching grants for some of the work on historic buildings;
- College interns to help with cataloging and displaying archival collection;
- Networking with other towns in state which have faced similar challenges;
- Specific educational topics include sources of matching funds, grant application process, successes and failures in other towns, information on the many benefits of historic preservation to the community; and
- Outside resources to help develop a plan for the needed outreach and strategy to make it a reality. These resources could include help from other towns in the Berkshires, from colleges/universities, and guidance from Mass Historical about other Commonwealth resources.

WEST STOCKBRIDGE

National Register Sites

- West Stockbridge Town Hall
- Congregational Church
- West Stockbridge Grange

Endangered Sites

- There are some buildings in the village core which are of concern. The train station building is for sale and renovation of the Card Lake Inn appears to be on hold.
- The West Center and Maple Hill section of town are most at risk for loss of scenic quality. These were the first settled areas of town and retain their rural character. There were significant agricultural lands, but now much of the area has been developed for housing.
- The State Line area still has a few historic homes remaining; many residences were significantly modified, demolished or are in danger of collapse.
- Rockland Cemetery needs to have grave stones refurbished, repaired or protected.

Themes in Community

Plentiful heritage resources remain in West Stockbridge, though some are in ruinous state. Themes include agriculture, natural resources and industrial sites, such as the numerous quarries in town.

Recent Activities

- The West Stockbridge Historical Society has recently been reactivated. The town, led in part by this group, is in a unique period of increasing interest in its history and retaining the unique character of the town. They took control of the (old) West Stockbridge Town Hall and are planning for its renovation/restoration. It will have a Preservation Restriction placed on it by the Massachusetts Historical Commission in Spring of 2012 as a condition of receiving a grant from the MHC's Preservation Projects Fund.
- There are efforts by the Planning Board to update their downtown zoning to better reflect and support the existing character, much of which is historic in nature.

Needs in Community

- There are another 10-20 properties (there were about 130 inventoried in the 1980's) which should be included on the inventory forms in addition to neighborhoods and many industrial sites. The existing inventory forms were completed in the 1980's and are in need of updating and additional information.

- There are distinct neighborhoods/areas of West Stockbridge retaining significant historic homes, patterns and other contributing resources. These include the town center, West Center, Rockdale/Freedleyville and Williamsville. The town center and Williamsville are considered the most likely candidates for National Historic District designation.
- Time, leadership and motivation to continue and expand efforts to protect the unique character of the Town.

WILLIAMSTOWN

National Register Sites

- Simond (Col. Benjamin) House
- US Post Office – Williamstown Main

National Register Districts

- East Lawn Cemetery and Sherman Burbank Memorial Chapel
- Five Corners
- Mill Village
- Williamstown Rail Yard and Station

Protective Bylaws and Supporting Programs

- Demolition Delay
- Community Preservation Act
- Scenic Roads

Endangered Sites

The local historical commission representative noted no historic preservation concerns in the Town.

Needs in Community

The State Historic Preservation Plan noted a need for survey activity and developing priorities for future surveys.

WINDSOR

National Register Sites and Districts

There are no National Register sites or districts in Windsor.

Needs in Community

- Survey activity in the town is needed.
- The local historical commission is inactive.
- Windsor is one of the few communities in Berkshire County without a National Register listing.