

# **LINCOLN RECONNAISSANCE REPORT**

---

## **BLACKSTONE VALLEY HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY**



**Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission  
Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission**

---

---

## **PROJECT TEAM**

---

### **Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission**

Richard E. Greenwood, Ph.D., Deputy Director

### **Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission**

Joanna Doherty, Community Planner

### **Project Consultants**

Gretchen G. Schuler

Shary Page Berg

### **Local Project Coordinator**

Albert Ranaldi, Jr., Town Planner

**December 2010**

### **Cover Photographs:**

Chace Farm on Great Road (BRVNHCC photo), Albion Dam in fall (BRVNHCC photo),  
Lincoln Woods Pond (BRVNHCC photo)

---

---

## CONTENTS

---

<b>Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>Regional Historical Themes</b> .....	2
<b>Lincoln History</b> .....	4
<b>Priority Heritage Landscapes.</b> .....	5
Great Road Area	
Israel Arnold House	
Lime Rock Village	
Lonsdale Bleachery	
Sayles Mill	
Wilbur Road	
<b>Regional Critical Concerns.</b> .....	14
Agricultural Landscapes	
Burial Grounds	
Civic and Institutional Properties	
Lakes, Ponds and Reservoirs	
Local Scenic Roads	
Mill Villages	
Stone Walls	
<b>General Preservation Planning Recommendations</b> .....	16
Survey of Heritage Landscapes	
National Register Program	
Community-Wide Preservation and Zoning Strategies	
Agricultural Landscapes	
Burial Grounds	
Civic and Institutional Properties	
Lakes, Ponds and Reservoirs	
Local Scenic Roads	
Mill Villages	
Stone Wall Preservation	
Funding of Preservation Projects	
<b>Conclusions.</b> .....	26
<b>Appendices</b>	
<b>A. Heritage Landscapes Identified by Community</b> .....	27
<b>B. Existing Resource Documentation and Planning Tools</b> .....	32
Survey of Historic and Architectural Resources	
State and National Registers of Historic Places	
Planning Documents and Tools	

---

## INTRODUCTION

---

The Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor includes 24 communities in Rhode Island and Massachusetts that are linked by a common geography and by historical events that helped to shape the Industrial Revolution, which is central to America's economic, social and political development. Five Rhode Island communities – Burrillville, Glocester, Lincoln, North Smithfield and Smithfield – have joined together to participate in a study of their shared legacy, a rich cultural heritage that represents the dynamic interaction between nature and culture.

Heritage landscapes are special places created by human interaction with the natural environment that help define the character of a community and reflect its past. They are dynamic and evolving; they reflect the region's history and provide a sense of place; they include the natural ecology that influenced land use patterns; and they often have scenic qualities. These landscapes are central to each community's character, yet heritage landscapes are vulnerable and ever changing. For this reason it is important to take the first steps towards their preservation by identifying those landscapes that are particularly valued by each community – a favorite local farm, a distinctive mill village, a unique Native American site or an important river corridor. The program is funded by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission (RIHPHC) and the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission (BRVNHCC).

The primary goal of the program is to help communities identify a wide range of landscape resources, particularly those that are significant and unprotected. The focus is on connecting landscapes to show how they are part of the larger heritage landscape that is the defining character of a community. Another important goal of the program is to provide communities with strategies for preserving heritage landscapes.

The methodology for Heritage Landscape Inventory programs was developed in Massachusetts and is outlined in the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation's publication *Reading the Land*. This methodology, which was used to study Blackstone River Valley communities in Massachusetts in 2007, has provided a baseline for the HLI program in Rhode Island. In each community the town planner served as the Local Project Coordinator (LPC) to assist the RIHPHC-BRVNHCC consulting team. The LPC organized a heritage landscape identification meeting at which interested residents and town officials offered input by identifying heritage landscapes. This meeting was followed by a fieldwork session including the consulting team and the LPC, often accompanied by other community members. This group visited the priority landscapes identified in the meeting and gathered information about the community. The final product is this Reconnaissance Report, prepared for each participating community.

---

## REGIONAL HISTORICAL THEMES

---

Each of the five communities participating in the program is unique, yet there are strong connections in their historic patterns of development – the ways in which the land was used and in which that history emerges today.

Rhode Island's Blackstone Valley is located in the northern part of the state and comprises cities like Providence and Pawtucket as well as small towns. The rich natural resources of this region attracted and supported Native Americans for thousands of years. Narragansetts, Nipmucks and Wampanoags moved through the area fishing along the rivers, hunting in the uplands, and establishing settlements where they cultivated crops and left behind burial and ceremonial sites.

Although this region was considered part of the Providence Plantation established in 1636, it was not until the late 1660s and early 1670s, just before King Philip's War, that Europeans began to establish themselves in the Blackstone Valley. Early farms were supported by grist and saw mills on the many rivers that flowed through these communities. In 1731 the study area (Burrillville, Glocester, Lincoln, North Smithfield and Smithfield) separated from the town of Providence to become Smithfield and Glocester.

The water power at the early mill sites was a key factor in the shift of the region's solely agrarian economy to a new base of textile mills and agriculture. This began with the 1793 Slater Mill in Pawtucket and was quickly followed by many small mill villages, which were the nuclei of development throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The rise in the textile industry led to expansion of the agrarian economy to sustain the mill villages.

Transportation patterns connecting the villages and their mills were important to the growth of the region. Several main routes followed old Indian trails and eventually were supplemented by the first turnpikes. The Blackstone Canal was constructed in 1824-1828 roughly paralleling the Blackstone River, and serviced the mills and villages in the valley.

Most of the towns flourished during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with a wider variety of industrial activities taking place – initially small-scale mills but by mid century larger mill complexes, most of which took advantage of the water power provided by the extensive network of rivers and streams. It was during this era that the present day village centers, which remain the focal point of all five communities, emerged. Many of the communities developed their social infrastructure in the 19<sup>th</sup> century – schools, granges, churches, burial grounds.

The early twentieth century brought better transportation systems – improved roads for the new travel modes of automobiles as well as trolleys – and new recreational use of the region's many lakes. However, at the same time came the decline of industrial activity in the Northeast, hence the reduction in use of the many large mill structures.

---

The second part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century brought further improvements to the transportation system and new patterns of suburban development. The decline of industrial activity continued except in a few instances where modern companies such as Tupperware reused factory buildings. Other businesses that have helped to sustain the regional economy include institutions, corporate headquarters, and local commerce necessary in all communities. Today, many of the region's residents commute to Providence.



- Blackstone River
- Participating Communities
- Other Rhode Island Communities in Blackstone Valley

## **BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY**

---

## LINCOLN HISTORY

---

Native Americans, including the Narragansett, Nipmuck and Wampanoag tribes, occupied Lincoln for thousands of years particularly along the waterways. There is one extremely rare Paleo-Indian period (10,000–6,000 BCE) site and several Archaic Period (6,000–500 BCE) sites documented in Lincoln. Waterways such as the Blackstone and Moshassuck Rivers were fertile ground for fishing, hunting, gathering and some agriculture. Lincoln was part of the Providence Plantation from 1636, but European settlers did not arrive until ca. 1661 when several families including the Whipples and Whitmans were the first to settle here. Lincoln was set off as part of Smithfield in 1731 and became the separate town of Lincoln in 1871. The final boundaries of Lincoln were established in 1895. The first church in Lincoln was the Quaker meetinghouse on Great Road (section that now is called Smithfield Avenue) built in 1704 with an addition in 1745.

Agriculture was the mainstay of the economy in the 18<sup>th</sup> century with the requisite saw and grist mills to support farming. In addition as early as the 1660s lime mining began in Lincoln at the Lime Rock quarries and evolved into a substantial industry by the late 1700s. Iron works also were established during the early settlement period. With the industrialization of the Blackstone River Valley there was a rising need for market garden farming and dairy farming in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with improved transportation routes that facilitated the transport of produce to small industrial villages. Several distinctive mill villages evolved around the textile mills on Lincoln's waterways.

Early roads followed presumed Native American trails along the Blackstone and Moshassuck Rivers. Great Road, also following the route of a Native American trail, was laid out in 1683. In 1804 the Louisquisset Turnpike opened connecting Providence with Lime Rock (one of Lincoln's villages) and this toll road was in operation longer than most until 1870. River Road was laid out in ca. 1840 and functioned as an important 19<sup>th</sup> century connector of Lincoln's mill villages along the Blackstone River. The short-lived Blackstone Canal passed through Lincoln's villages with three locks in Lincoln, but it was supplanted by the Providence to Worcester Railroad which passed through Albion and Manville. Twentieth century highways, which accommodated the automobile, linked the mill villages of Lincoln and other surrounding towns to Providence.

First to settle in Lincoln were colonists from Providence and Quakers from Massachusetts – many escaping persecution. Members of one of the first families, the Arnolds, were Quakers and donated land for the 1704 meetinghouse. French-Canadians immigrated in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century particularly to Manville and Albion where they worked in the mills. The 20<sup>th</sup> century population figures for Lincoln had risen to nearly 9,000 in 1900, increased to 11,200 by 1950 and nearly doubled in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to nearly 21,000 at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This last growth spurt was in part due to suburbanization of Lincoln in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

---

## **PRIORITY HERITAGE LANDSCAPES**

---

Lincoln's Heritage Landscape Identification meeting was held on May 24, 2010. During the meeting residents compiled a lengthy list of the town's heritage landscapes, which is included in Appendix A. Attendees were then asked to articulate the value of each landscape and the issues relating to its preservation. Based on the information gathered, community members identified a group of priority landscapes to be visited by the consulting team during the fieldwork. Each of the priority landscapes is highly valued, contributes to community character and is not permanently protected or preserved.

These landscapes, which are listed alphabetically, represent a range of scales and types of resources from individual properties to an entire mill village. Several include areas that have multiple layers. For example a mill village that is considered a heritage landscape may also include specific features that are individually recognized as heritage landscapes. Such layering shows the complexity and interdependence that are characteristic of most heritage landscapes. The descriptions and recommendations included here are an initial step in identifying resources valued by the community and suggesting action strategies.

### **Great Road Area**

The scenic and historic character of Great Road is embodied in its relatively narrow winding route that is enhanced by wooded areas, open farmland and a large number of intact historic structures along the road side. Several well-preserved farms, cemeteries and old mill structures add to the picturesque quality of the section of Great Road between Saylesville Avenue and Breakneck Hill Road, while Lime Rock Village, settled in ca. 1665 around its lime quarries, is located at the northern end of Great Road. There are two National Register districts that include sections of Great Road – the Great Road Historic District on the southern end and the Lime Rock Historic District on the northern end. Lime Rock Village is a priority landscape addressed later in this report; therefore the focus here is on the southern end of Great Road.

This transportation corridor was laid out in 1683 and was the main north-south route through the Blackstone Valley until 1806 when a new toll road, the Louisquisset Turnpike, opened. It connected Mendon, Massachusetts to the north and other villages en route with Providence, to the southeast. The path of Great Road is likely to have followed old Native American trails that ran through the Moshassuck River valley. Among the first developments on Great Road were the Eleazer Arnold House (ca. 1687 in the National Register nomination, 1693 in Historic New England literature) and later the Saylesville Meetinghouse (1704-05, ca. 1745) on Smithfield Avenue in this southern part of Lincoln.

The Eleazer Arnold House, which is a National Historic Landmark, is referred to as a stone-ender for its end wall made of stone that rises into a chimney. Only a few examples of stone-enders remain in Rhode Island, and two are found in



---

Lincoln. The other is the Valentine Whitman, Jr. House, (ca. 1694) which is at the other end of Great Road, just north of Lime Rock Village.

Early mills cropped up using the water power of the Moshassuck River. Two mills along the Great Road and on the river banks are the Butterfly Mill and the Moffett (also Moffitt) Mill. The Moffett Mill had been built in ca. 1812 as a small machine shop and in the 1850s it was purchased by Arnold Moffett who had a wheelwright and blacksmith shop here that operated well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Butterfly Mill, built in ca. 1811 and converted to a residence in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was owned and operated by Stephen Smith who also built one of the most notable properties in Lincoln – Hearthside – in 1810. Architectural features of the fine Federal mansion include the unusual ogee-shaped gable ends and the monumental portico across the main facade.

This area has been of much interest to historians and preservationists for over 70 years. In the early days of historic documentation (1930s and 1940s) five properties on the Great Road were the subjects of the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) and three of those were listed in the National Register individually before the Great Road Historic District was listed in 1974. The properties that were individually listed are the Eleazer Arnold House (NR-1968), the Israel Arnold House (NR-1970; also a priority landscape –see below) and Hearthside (NR-1973). HABS also documented the late 18<sup>th</sup> century Croade Tavern and the ca. 1812 Moffett Mill.

The intensity of historic preservation activity in the 20<sup>th</sup> century helped to preserve the Great Road area in Lincoln. The town continues to focus attention on this section of Great Road and owns several key properties including Hearthside, the Moffett Mill, the Hannaway Blacksmith Shop and Chace (also Chase) Farm, a ca. 1860s house with outbuildings and agricultural fields comprising the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century dairy farm on the north side of the road.

The Eleazer Arnold House is owned by Historic New England. Other historic resources on Great Road are privately owned. In 1993 it was designated a “scenic roadway” by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation, however this brings recognition with little or no protection. Threats to the bucolic landscape of Great Road are development encroaching from the east and road improvements to accommodate increased traffic. Pressures on private owners of farms to develop rather than incur the cost of maintaining farmland and farm buildings are strong.

Solutions include:

- Pursue Local Historic District for the southern end of Great Road.
- Preserve agricultural fields along Great Road, much of which is town owned and will not benefit from many of the measures itemized under Agricultural Landscapes in **General Preservation Planning Recommendations Section**. Lease land for nominal fee to local farmer to maintain agricultural use.

- 
- Preserve road as scenic by identifying key features and adopting ordinances or standards for road improvements that preserve character – See also Local Scenic Roads in **General Preservation Planning Recommendations Section**.
  - Help private property owners to investigate tax credits for restoration and rehabilitation of National Register properties, particularly farm outbuildings, such as the iconic twin silos on the Chace Farm on the north side of Great Road. Incentives include the Rhode Island Historic Homeowner Tax Credit.



*The Israel Arnold House was individually identified as a priority landscape and is also part of the Great Road priority landscape*

### **Israel Arnold House**

The historic Israel Arnold House, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places individually and as part of the Great Road Historic District, is a ca. 1740 two-and-one-half story, center-chimney dwelling. The five-bay house has a low gambrel roof side ell consisting of one room with garret above. The eight-acre property is on the south side of Great Road high above the road with steep ledge across much of the frontage. The house faces south so that the driveway approaches the rear elevation.

The house was built by a member of the Olney family and soon passed to Israel Arnold, related to Olney by marriage. For many years it was believed to have been built in two stages; however the 1971 restoration, overseen by Antoinette Downing, revealed evidence of simultaneous construction. It is believed to be one of the best local examples of mid 18<sup>th</sup> century architecture and was documented in 1937 and 1940 by the Historic American Buildings Survey.

The eight-acre parcel including the Arnold House, a garage and a small playhouse or studio is presently for sale. There is some concern that the house is threatened by demolition due to its position on the parcel were it to be subdivided. Constraints on the property are the protected wetlands on one side and the steep ledge across the frontage making access to the property a challenge.

Solutions include:

- 
- Local Historic District designation of Great Road that will include this property. There is a study committee and consultant working on such a proposal. See also Community-Wide Preservation and Zoning Strategies in **General Preservation Planning Recommendations Section**.
  - Discuss with the owner the possibility of placing a Preservation Restriction on the property prior to its sale.
  - Identify a partner to move house on parcel or elsewhere if demolition is inevitable. Although a move is not optimal it is better than loss of this important example of an 18<sup>th</sup> century dwelling.

### **Lime Rock Village**

The settlement that grew into Lime Rock Village was established ca. 1665 along the northern end of Great Road. By the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Gregory Dexter and Thomas Harris were mining limestone that was used in mortar and plaster in buildings in Lincoln and other communities. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century the descendants of each family had thriving companies that incorporated – in 1823 (Harris Lime Rock Company) and 1854 (Dexter Lime Rock Company) – and merged near the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Today the Conklin Limestone Company continues to quarry here.

The rural residential village, which is framed by the Ballard Farm (1092 Great Road) on the south side and the Conklin Limestone Quarry (Wilbur Road) on the north side, is at the intersection of Great Road and Anna Sayles Road and stretches north along Great Road and west along Old Louisquisset Pike. The Nathaniel Mowry Tavern (1800-1820) is the center piece of the Ballard Farm which has late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century barns as well as newer more modern ones. North of the village center on Great Road is the highly significant “stone-ender” ca. 1694 Valentine Whitman, Jr. House (1147 Great Road), and west on Old Louisquisset Pike is the 1807 North Gate, built as a toll house and expanded into the Lime Rock Grange in 1904 and now home to the Blackstone Valley Historical Society. At the intersection of Great Road and Anna Sayles Road, marked by a planted circular island, there are several historic 19<sup>th</sup> century dwellings as well as the 1804 Mt. Moriah Masonic Lodge #8 (1093 Great Road), and the Lime Rock Village Cemetery. The Lime Rock Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.

Issues confronting the village are the future of the quarry, which is an historically significant industrial landscape, and new development of surrounding open space, particularly the Ballard farm land that wraps behind the village on its southeast side. Part of the Ballard Farm already has been subdivided.

Solutions include:

- Consider Local Historic District designation. The resources in Lime Rock Village are intact and worthy of protection. See also

---

Community Wide Preservation and Zoning Strategies in  
**General Preservation Planning Recommendations Section.**

- Preserve road as scenic by identifying key features and adopting ordinances or standards for road improvements that preserve character – See also Local Scenic Roads in **General Preservation Planning Recommendations Section.**
- Complete cultural landscape report for the quarry which is a significant industrial landscape, and if it must close work with property owners to find a use that can preserve some of the structures and context.
- Explore agricultural strategies with Ballard Farm owners such as the sale of development rights through the *Farmland Preservation Act* (Rhode Island General Law Chapter 42-82) administered by Department of Environmental Management's Division of or donation of easements in return for tax benefits.



*Quarry in Lime Rock*

### **Lonsdale Bleachery**

The Lonsdale Bleachery is a large industrial complex located in the mill village of Lonsdale. The mill village evolved in two stages with the older village in Lincoln (on the west side of the river) and the newer village in Cumberland across the Blackstone River. The Lonsdale Company was established between 1831 and 1834 by Nicholas Brown and Thomas Ives of Brown & Ives. This was one of the first textile companies in Rhode Island to be run by superintendents with owners not directly involved with day-to-day operations. The Browns had made their fortune in maritime businesses and first entered the textile industry as financiers of Slater Mill in Pawtucket (1793) and the Blackstone Manufacturing Company (early 19<sup>th</sup> century). The success of these businesses led them to seek other financial interests in textiles. The Browns continued to own the Lonsdale Company into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The complex includes some buildings from the first period of construction ca. 1833 and many more from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century when the complex was reorganized for use as a bleachery. The Lonsdale Historic District was listed on the National Register in 1984.



*Lonsdale Bleachery*

The Bleachery buildings are located on about 30 acres between the Blackstone River on the east and the Blackstone Canal on the west. Most of the 19 remaining buildings are of brick construction and range between one and three stories. Some have low towers or smoke stacks and most have strings of windows that are set into the brick walls. Several of the buildings were constructed ca. 1850 while most are early 20<sup>th</sup> century. A couple of buildings are situated on the banks of the Blackstone River and new businesses have taken advantage of the scenic and recreational setting.

Preserving and reusing buildings at the Lonsdale Bleachery have been challenges for many years. In 2002 Mass Audubon led the Blackstone Valley Visioning Project in which the Lonsdale Bleachery was one of eight case studies. In 2005 the town contracted to use the information from the visioning project to develop a Redevelopment Plan for the Bleachery. The challenges include multiple property owners with complex property lines (37 parcels) that run through buildings, code violations, lack of up-to-date utilities and infrastructure, drainage issues and pollution. Furthermore some of the buildings are in a floodplain. Two recommendations of the Redevelopment Plan have been implemented – adoption of a Mill Conversion District Ordinance and formation of a Lincoln Redevelopment Agency to manage the necessary public sector aspects of redevelopment on this multi-property, multiple-owner site.

Solutions stated in the Redevelopment Plan are based on mixed use development:

- Apply Lincoln's Mill Conversion Overlay District Ordinance to accomplish mixed uses in the Bleachery buildings.
- Consider Federal and State Historic Preservation Investment Tax Credits and Affordable Housing Tax Credits if reuse includes a housing component.
- Promote amenities of site such as bike and walking paths along river.

---

## Sayles Mill

Saylesville, Lincoln's last mill village to be established, was strategically located between ponds and on one of Lincoln's two major rivers, the Moshassuck River. Barney Pond and Bleachery ponds were important sources of the clean water essential to the bleaching process. The first mill in Saylesville was a textile printworks established in the 1830s which failed within a few years. In 1847 William F. Sayles purchased the printworks mill and water privilege on the Moshassuck River (which was incorporated into the Blackstone Canal from 1828 to 1849) and opened a textile bleachery providing a service for many surrounding mills. His complex burned in 1854 and Sayles immediately reconstructed a full mill complex. His brother joined him in the 1860s and by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century the mill, then run by William's son, Frank Sayles, as the Sayles Company became a leading textile finisher in the United States.

The complex covers 40 acres and has many large two and three story mill buildings dating from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some buildings have been remodeled to meet small business needs as well as warehouse facilities. Most buildings are of brick; foundations are granite under 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings and concrete under later construction. Some have classical detailing with large, round-headed windows, granite and brick stringcourses, and brick modillion blocked cornices. The ca. 1875 Mill Office is on Scott's Pond at the entrance to the complex as is the ca. 1854 building and its many additions. Along the canal there is an exceedingly long brick building with one wall that actually borders the waterway. The Sayles Mill complex is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Saylesville Historic District.



*Sayles Mill*

The most pressing issue for the Sayles Mill is lack of tenants, resulting in many underused or vacant buildings. Only a few of the buildings in the complex are occupied so that demolition-by-neglect is a concern as are the many constraints on reusing the buildings such as code issues, drainage, pollution and actual property lines that slice through some buildings. The complex is in a manufacturing zone.

Solutions may include:



- 
- Use the Mill Conversion Overlay District Ordinance for mixed-use development.
  - Consider Federal and State Historic Preservation Investment Tax Credits and Affordable Housing Tax Credits if reuse includes a housing component.

### **Wilbur Road**

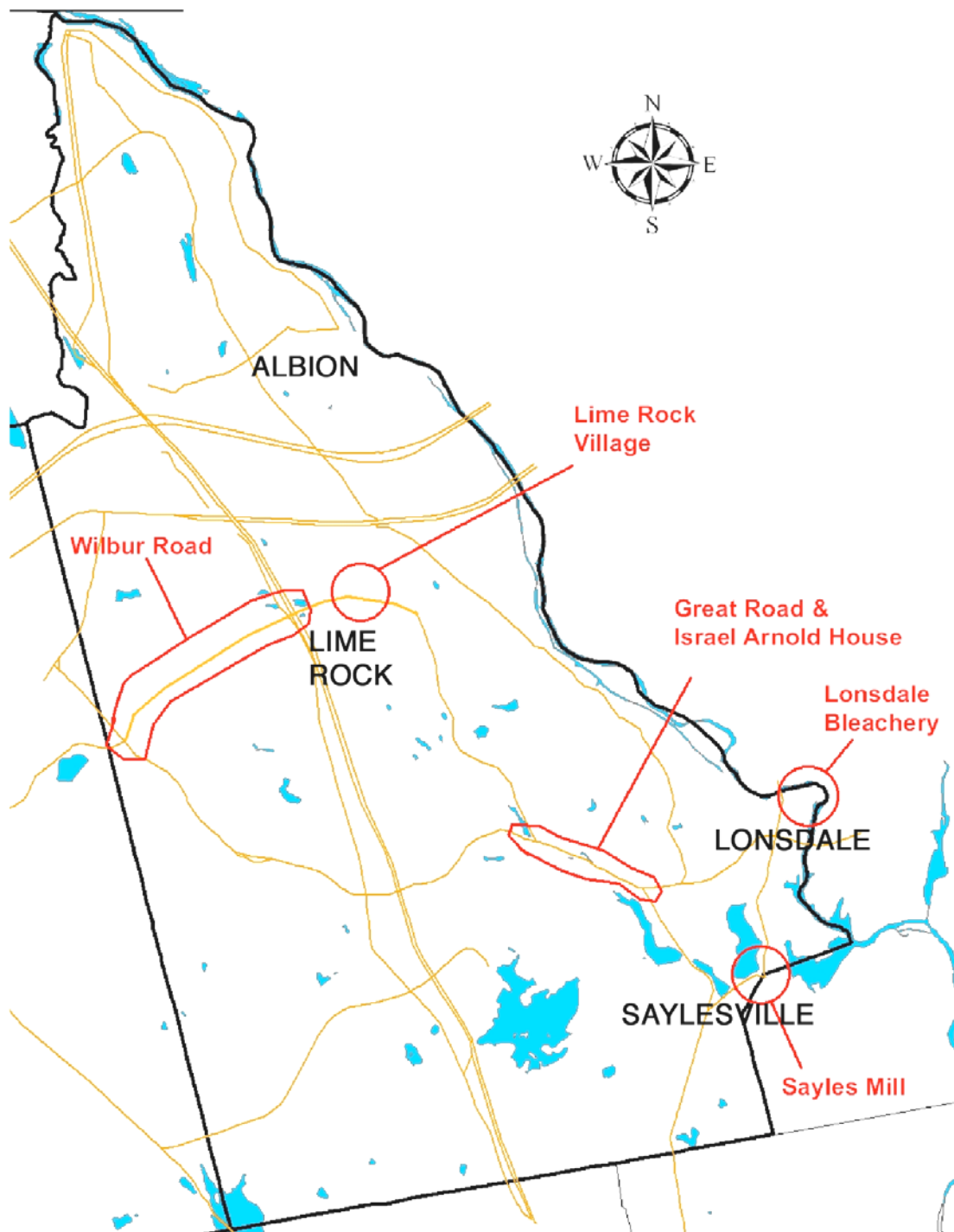
Farmland, limestone quarries, woodland and many historic properties make up the scenic character of Wilbur Road, which branches off of Great Road in Lime Rock Village and travels westerly crossing over Route 146 and the Old Louisquisset Pike (Route 246) to the town line with Smithfield. That part of Wilbur Road between Great Road and the Old Louisquisset Pike is in the Lime Rock Village National Register Historic District. The section west of the pike is a winding rural road with no edge – only the travel lanes – and has several old Federal dwellings in farm settings.

Solutions may include:

- Update survey for properties west of Old Louisquisset Pike and evaluate for National Register eligibility.
- Preserve road as scenic by identifying key features and adopting ordinances or standards for road improvements that preserve character – See also Local Scenic Roads in **General Preservation Planning Recommendations Section**.
- Preserve agricultural fields along Wilbur Road by discussing preservation and conservation easements with property owners or purchase of development rights through the *Farmland Preservation Act* (Rhode Island General Law Chapter 42-82) administered by Department of Environmental Management's Division of Agriculture to help maintain agricultural uses – See also Agricultural Landscapes in **General Preservation Planning Recommendations Section**.



*Aerial view of Wilbur Road*



**Note: Priority landscapes are shown in red**

**LINCOLN'S PRIORITY LANDSCAPES  
BLACKSTONE VALLEY HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY**



---

## **REGIONAL CRITICAL CONCERNS**

---

In addition to the six specific landscapes identified as priority landscapes, which are described in the preceding section, Lincoln residents identified 50 landscapes overall, many of which reflected issues that were common to all five communities participating in the Heritage Landscape Inventory. The full list of landscapes that were identified for Lincoln is in Appendix A, but the regional issues that they represent are summarized below.

### **Agricultural Landscapes**

Farmers are the stewards of agricultural landscapes that represent important scenic resources, provide fresh, locally grown food and other products to the community, and convey the agrarian lifestyle of days past. Loss of active farming and development of agricultural property were concerns of residents who attended meetings in each of the study area's five towns. Lincoln identified seven agricultural landscapes.

Preservation of agricultural land is best addressed comprehensively by establishing priorities. Priorities will depend on the physical attributes of each farm; its economic viability; the wishes of the owner; and the importance of the farm to the community. In part those were the questions asked during the landscape identification meeting in each community.

### **Burial Grounds**

Each town in the study area has a large number of burial grounds, which are identified on a statewide list, the Rhode Island Cemetery Commission database. The inventory lists 82 burial grounds or cemeteries in Lincoln, some of which were identified at the meeting as critical because they are often not known, not accessible and threatened by lack of maintenance or development. Many of these are small family burial grounds which are seriously overgrown and have damaged or missing monuments.

### **Civic and Institutional Properties**

Many historic buildings, such as schools, churches and granges, have outlived their primary or original function yet they are important as part of the historical record and often an important aspect of the visual and ephemeral character of the rural countryside or of a village center. Unless they have a valid present use, funds are typically not available to preserve them. Lincoln identified a meetinghouse, school, Masonic lodge and a war memorial individually and mentioned other property types in the context of their relationship to village centers.

---

## **Lakes, Ponds and Reservoirs**

Bodies of water such as lakes, ponds and reservoirs, in each community of the study area, present challenges to nearby residents and to the town. Most lakes and ponds have a distinct historical background connected with early mills and recreational activities. Many reservoirs were dug to provide drinking water. They are part of the background story and important to the quality of life today. Challenges are impacts of present-day uses, which are more intense than in the past and in many cases are impacting water quality. Invasive species tend to thrive due to the high level of nitrates in the water often caused by lawn and farm fertilizers.

## **Local Scenic Roads**

One of the many ways that Lincoln residents see and enjoy their town is traveling along the public roads, many of which retain their historic alignment, narrow road width and scenic views over open fields. Stone walls line some of Lincoln's rural roads and delineate the boundaries of former agricultural fields. Qualities that make a road scenic are stone walls, mature trees, few curb cuts, and views across fields. Threats are road widening, loss of trees and stone walls and many new curb cuts. Two of Lincoln's priority landscapes are historic road corridors.

## **Mill Villages**

Mill villages along the rivers enrich the landscape, but pose challenging issues, particularly when they include large mill structures which are underused or no longer occupied. Small mill structures are easier to adapt to new uses while large mill structures tend to face more difficult issues such as contamination, complex ownership structure, as well as utility and infrastructure voids that are problematic. In addition the dams associated with mills, many of which are privately owned but publicly regulated, can be costly to maintain and rebuild. With the absence of industrial uses and reuse of mill structures particularly for housing, there are new residents, some of whom may be less connected with the community due to work locations outside of Lincoln, but also there may be new residents who are interested in supporting community heritage and conservation issues.

## **Stone Walls**

Stone walls line roadways and cut across fields and woods marking property lines or outlining former pasture land, wood lots or other rural special places. They tend to have specific regional characteristics and contribute to the scenic and historic character of each and every community. In this northern region of Rhode Island stone walls are single and double width, of varying heights and are made of various sizes of rounded irregular fieldstones rather than flat fieldstones common to coastal regions in Rhode Island.

---

## GENERAL PRESERVATION PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

---

Recommendations pertaining directly to the priority heritage landscapes can be found in the section that describes the specific landscape. This section of the Reconnaissance Report offers more general recommendations relevant to preserving the character of the community that are applicable to a wide range of community resources and that cover some of the “Regional Critical Concerns” discussed in the preceding section.

Lincoln’s residents place high value on the community's strong sense of place, which is created by its varied natural features and land use patterns that made use of the fertile land as well as the rivers and streams for water power.

The town is looking beyond the obvious resources to the more subtle values of landscapes, streetscapes, rural roads, mill village neighborhoods and other natural and cultural assets that define the overall fabric of the community. Like most municipalities, Lincoln is facing multiple pressures for change that threaten land-based uses and natural resources, especially its remaining farms and mill villages. Special places within the community that were once taken for granted are now more vulnerable than ever to change.

Preservation planning is a three-step process: **identification, evaluation and protection**. It also is essential to form partnerships as no one entity and no one strategy is sufficient in effecting comprehensive preservation planning. In Rhode Island the RIHPHC ([www.preservation.ri.gov/](http://www.preservation.ri.gov/)), the BRVNHCC ([www.nps.gov/blac/](http://www.nps.gov/blac/)), Preserve Rhode Island (<http://preserveri.org/>) and Grow Smart Rhode Island ([www.growsmartri.org](http://www.growsmartri.org)) all are significant partners in preservation that can provide education, planning strategies and technical assistance for preservation activities.

Rhode Island’s mandatory comprehensive planning – resulting in Comprehensive Plans that must be updated every five years – recognizes the importance of natural and historical resources which are discussed in their own section in the plans. Heritage landscapes have been addressed by some plans and less so by others; however, now is the time to incorporate them into the Comprehensive Plan. The inclusion will enhance the overall planning for these rich cultural aspects of each community.

Traditionally preservation planning has involved a limited set of strategies that target specific types of historic resources. However, a more comprehensive approach has been gaining recognition, leading preservation planners to better understand the way in which planning goals as reported in Comprehensive Plans and the local zoning code may impact the cultural resources of the town. To this end the recommendations include some proposed changes and additions to local comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances.

Recommendations that apply to a broad range of resources are discussed below. These recommendations are listed in the order in which they are most logically addressed when applying the three-step preservation planning process as

---

described above. Thus the goal will be to (1) identify, (2) evaluate, and (3) protect using traditional as well as more progressive strategies.

### **Survey of Heritage Landscapes**

While the heritage landscape inventory process helped to identify a wide range of resources that are valued by Lincoln residents, only the priority landscapes are described in any detail in this report. Thus the vital first step in developing preservation strategies for heritage landscapes is to record more detailed information about these and other resources. One cannot advocate for something unless one knows precisely what it is – the physical characteristics and the historical development. It is this information that often engages the public in wanting to preserve resources.

Nearly all historic resource documentation in Lincoln dates back 30 years or more, therefore updating of the survey will help to illuminate today's property condition and issues. The RIHPHC survey methodology is a starting point. Many of the heritage landscapes may be more critically understood with a cultural landscape identification approach as outlined by the National Park Service in Bulletin #30, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes* <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb30/>.

- Compile a list of resources that are under-represented or not sufficiently documented, beginning with the heritage landscapes already identified by the community.
- Document unprotected resources first, beginning with the most threatened resources.
- Make sure to document secondary features on rural and residential properties, such as outbuildings, stone walls, and landscape elements such as circulation networks, boundaries and land use patterns that are physically apparent.
- Record a wide range of historic resources including rural landscapes and industrial resources.
- Include heritage landscapes in the next Comprehensive Plan Update.

Ongoing community-wide archaeological reconnaissance survey would help to identify patterns of ancient Native American and later European occupation and to identify known and probable locations of archaeological resources associated with these patterns. Known and potential ancient Native American and historic archaeological sites should be documented in the field for evidence of their cultural association and/or integrity. Care should be taken to keep archaeological site information in a secure location with restricted access.

---

## National Register Program

While the National Register does not automatically preserve a property, it does provide an opportunity for state review of proposed modifications in cases where federal or state monies or permits are being utilized.

Using the information generated in survey work and accompanying National Register evaluations, Lincoln could expand its National Register of Historic Places program to augment the nominations that already exist. The 1982 Report of Lincoln's Historic and Architectural Resources recommended consideration of other properties for inclusion in the National Register. The list is included in Appendix B.

The first step is to re-evaluate each property and district on the potentially eligible lists in Appendix B of this report for eligibility, followed by developing a National Register listing plan, taking into consideration each property's integrity and vulnerability. Properties that are in need of recognition in order to advance preservation strategies should be given priority. In addition evaluation of archaeological sites (two are included in the list) and other historic resources not on these lists for National Register listing (generated in 1982 and 2003) may yield a longer list of potentially National Register eligible properties.

## Community-Wide Preservation and Zoning Strategies

Nearly all preservation strategies address village and neighborhood character in some manner. As described above, thorough documentation is an important first step in the preservation planning process, followed by National Register listing where appropriate. Following identification and evaluation, each community looks for strategies to protect the special areas in the community. There are traditional preservation planning strategies and land use and planning strategies that have been used to support preservation. Some of the tools are described below.

**Local historic district zoning** is one of the most effective traditional preservation strategies in many Rhode Island communities and under consideration now in Lincoln. It is based on Rhode Island General Laws Title 45, Chapter 45-24.1 for *Historical Area Zoning*. A local historic district ordinance, which is adopted through a local initiative, recognizes special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected by the designation. These districts are one of the strongest forms of protection for the preservation of historic resources. They are adopted by the Town Council. Lincoln is studying the feasibility of adopting an Historical District Zoning Ordinance and designating as its first district a Great Road Historic District.

**A demolition delay ordinance** provides a time period in which municipalities and property owners can explore alternatives to demolition. While relatively rare in Rhode Island, demolition delay ordinances are employed more widely in other states. Such ordinances allow communities to defer demolition of historic structures for an allotted period of time. This delay may help to deter developers

---

and owners from demolishing historic structures that need new systems or are in the middle of a lot making it more challenging to subdivide. In Rhode Island demolition delay has only been adopted in a couple of communities and is part of the zoning ordinance.

**Neighborhood architectural conservation districts** are local initiatives that recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected. They are less restrictive than local historic districts but still embrace neighborhood character. These districts are used in many states across the nation and are similar to local historic district designation but less restrictive; regulations tend to address massing and scale rather than materials and architectural detail. However Rhode Island's state statute for local historic districting can be tailored to the needs of a community in a more flexible way than in many states. Therefore the flexibility and the less restrictive standards of a neighborhood architectural conservation district may be less applicable than in other states. Perhaps in instances where a local historic district ordinance has been written for one part of a neighborhood or village in a town, a neighborhood architectural conservation district may be more appropriate for another neighborhood where there is a need to embrace neighborhood character without the restrictive regulations of an already established local historic district.

**Conservation cluster development** seeks to preserve open space while allowing for the same building yield with more compact development. While most ordinances are similar in goals and implementation there may be ways to make this approach to subdivision more enticing or a requirement for large parcels in particular. This would be a particularly effective way in which to develop a large rural parcel. It is a method in which to preserve certain land uses as well. For parcels in large parcel zoning districts subdivision should require the submittal of a conventional subdivision plan and a conservation development plan. The reviewing board should be able to approve the better of the two plans and offer an additional unit or percentage of units based on the size of the land area and development size. The open space set aside could be farm land that remains in agricultural use.

**Flexible zoning** gives the Planning Board the ability to shift some of the dimensional requirements in a subdivision in order to preserve certain features on a property such as key historic structures, stone walls, a stand of trees, or a promontory, as long as there is no increase in density.

**Overlay districts** provide a new set of rules for the development of land in a particular area that supersedes the underlying zoning can help to accomplish goals without creating a whole new zoning district. Overlay districts may be used to preserve certain vistas along rural roads, or certain development patterns in a village center. Lincoln has several overlay districts including two river valley overlays and a village commercial mixed-use overlay district.

---

## Agricultural Landscapes

As land use pressures intensify, farm owners now need multiple tools and partners to retain and work their land. Thus, preservation strategies require partnerships to assist in that stewardship.

- Document historic barns and other farm outbuildings. Consider The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR) “Barns in the Highland Communities” report as a model.
- Encourage owners to investigate the sale of development rights through the *Farmland Preservation Act* (Rhode Island General Law Chapter 42-82) administered by Department of Environmental Management’s Division of Agriculture.
- Enroll farmland in program established by the *Farm, Forest and Open Space Act* (Rhode Island General Law Chapter 44-27) to ensure that the land is assessed at its farming use value rather than potential development use. Enrollment requires an approved conservation plan outlining best management practices.
- Adopt the *Right to Farm Act* (Rhode Island General Law, Chapter 2-23) in order to support farmers when there are conflicts in adjacent land uses.
- Form an *Agricultural Preservation Commission* to help advocate for farmers, develop zoning that is beneficial to farmers, and assist in implementing goals to preserve farming that appear in study area Comprehensive Plans and Updates.
- Join *Rhode Island Agricultural Partnership*, a newly formed coalition with a mission to enhance agriculture and local food systems and develop a five-year strategic plan to sustain and improve agriculture in Rhode Island.
- Support *Rhode Island Center for Agricultural Promotion and Education* [www.rifarmways.org](http://www.rifarmways.org) and its New England FarmWays program. This organization supports farmers in planning, research, management, marketing, local communication, tourism and other pertinent topics to local farmers.

## Burial Grounds

While the Rhode Island Historical Cemetery Commission <http://www.historicalcemeteries.ri.gov/> has a data base of all of its burial grounds, in most cases very little is known about the historic resources, current ownership and existing conditions of each burial ground, particularly the smaller, less well-known ones.

- Map all burial grounds in Lincoln, preferably with GPS locations in town.

- 
- Prepare updated inventory to identify burial grounds that are particularly vulnerable to change, followed by preservation plans for those that are at the highest risk.
  - Consult organizations such as the Association for Gravestone Studies <http://www.gravestonestudies.org>, which are a good source of information for citizens interested in documenting burial grounds. Stone conservation work should only be undertaken by a trained conservator.
  - Establish an Adopt-a-Cemetery program to provide care for burial grounds in poor condition.
  - Adopt an ordinance that preserves and protects burial grounds and cemeteries as well as a buffer area around the same, similar to North Smithfield's *Preservation and Protection of Cemeteries or Burial Grounds* ordinance.

### **Civic and Institutional Properties**

Reuse of civic and institutional properties requires knowledge of land use regulations in the area, needs of the community and a conditions assessment of the property in order to understand cost and benefit of reuse options.

- Develop assessment report of building or structure to include architectural description, history, conditions, zoning, allowed uses, options, etc.
- Form friends groups to raise private funds to maintain civic and institutional properties and to solicit private partners such as local businesses to assist in funding preservation of historic civic and institutional buildings.
- Arrange adaptive reuse charrette to brainstorm about ways in which to preserve under-used or vacant buildings.



*Adaptive use is important to preserving structures such as the Pullen Corner School, also known as the "Hot Potato School"*



---

## **Lakes, Ponds, and Reservoirs**

Preservation of waterbodies such as lakes, ponds and reservoirs takes cooperation among abutters and other users of the waterbodies. Some of the challenge is lack of information about the ill-effects of certain types of activities.

- Develop water-quality testing program. Advertise results with interpretive information.
- Develop brochure for property owners on methods of protecting water quality by not using chemicals on lawns, etc. This type of educational information can be general for all water sources and personalized to the specific resource with photographs and facts about the water source.

An important partner in solutions for waterbodies may be *Save the Lakes* ([www.stlri.org](http://www.stlri.org)), an organization dedicated to preserving and improving fresh water in Rhode Island. Workshops presented by the organization have included information about backyard sustainable landscaping practices that protect the quality of water.

## **Local Scenic Roads**

Scenic roads are an integral part of the historic fabric of a community. They are highly valued by residents and visitors alike. Yet, roads must also accommodate modern transportation needs and decisions regarding roadways are often made with travel requirements as the only consideration. The visual quality of a road is made up of characteristics that are within the public right-of-way and those that are on private property including tree canopies, stone walls and views across open fields. Rhode Island has a Scenic Roadways program for the designation and preservation of scenic state roads. Only eight roads have been so designated one of which is in Lincoln. The local Highway Department can request designation of a particular state road or sections thereof; however that would not apply to the many winding rural roads that are evocative of Lincoln's agricultural past, except for Great Road. The best protection is for the town to adopt a local designation process with an ordinance that provides review for certain actions that may change the scenic quality of roads.

Protection of scenic roads therefore requires more than one approach.

- Complete an inventory with descriptions and photo documentation of each of the roads in Lincoln including the character-defining features that should be retained.
- Adopt design criteria to be considered when approving removal of trees and stone walls, such as a provision allowing only one driveway cut per property on scenic roads. This is particularly applicable to subdivisions and not appropriate for working farms that often require multiple entrances. Once adopted coordinate procedures between the Highway Department and the Planning Board that reviews subdivisions.

- 
- Consider a scenic overlay district that may provide a no-disturb buffer on private property bordering on scenic roads or adopt flexible zoning standards to protect certain views.
  - Develop local policies and implementation standards for road maintenance and reconstruction, including bridge reconstructions, which address the scenic and historic characteristics while also addressing safety. This is an important public process in which the community may have to accept responsibility for certain costs to implement standards that are not acceptable to projects funded by Rhode Island Department of Transportation. Such standards should have a section addressing the way in which the local Highway Department maintains roads, for example requiring a public hearing if any trees or stone walls are to be removed or if additional pavement is to be added to a town road during reconstruction or repair. Policies can be adopted by local boards having jurisdiction over roads, or can be adopted through an ordinance passed by the Town Council. In developing policies consider factors such as road width, clearing of shoulders, walking paths, posted speeds. A delicate balance is required.



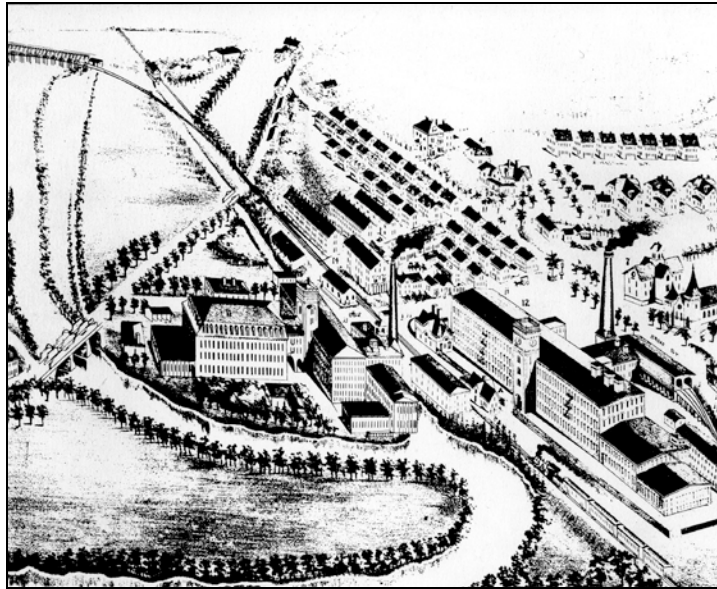
*Rural view in northwestern part of Lincoln*

### **Mill Villages**

Preservation strategies appropriate for mill villages often support economic development due to the cohesiveness of villages and the character of many of the buildings. To maintain the size, scale and massing within the village as well as preserve distinctive building types, local historic district designation is the most effective tool. Other zoning strategies may help to make large mill buildings more viable such as: overlay districts that may provide additional allowed uses; and flexible zoning that may allow flexibility in dimensional requirements. The Rhode Island Historic Homeowner's Tax Credit can be an important preservation tool for residences that are listed in the National Register, providing homeowners with a 20% tax credit for approved, exterior restoration work. The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit provides tax incentives for the rehabilitation of

---

income-producing properties, as does the state Historic Preservation Investment Tax Credit (currently unavailable but could be re-instituted).



*Preserving mill villages such as Lonsdale is a critical issue for Lincoln*

### **Stone Wall Preservation**

Stone walls are vulnerable to development of rural parcels, widening of rural roads and even as a source of revenue. There are two mechanisms that have been used in some Rhode Island communities – one is an incentive, the other is a regulation.

A state statute (R.I.G.L. § 44-3-43) provides a valuation exemption of up to \$5,000 that can be subtracted from the assessed value of a property that retains its stone walls. A municipality must adopt an ordinance to take advantage of this state statute. Within this statute the definition of “historic stone walls” is those stone walls that pre-date 1900 and are a vertical alignment of natural stones. The tax exemption can only be applied to walls that are at least three feet in height, at least 50 feet in length and are maintained.

Four communities in Rhode Island have developed regulatory ordinances that provide a modicum of protection. Each relies on the definition of “historic stone walls” in the tax exemption statute. The Town of Smithfield has developed an ordinance that has become the model for other communities - the Smithfield Stone Wall Protection and Preservation Ordinance. This law gives the legal authority to the municipality to fine an owner who removes stone walls without necessary permits or conditions in a permit. Other communities in this study area are working to adopt an ordinance similar to Smithfield’s.

---

## Funding of Preservation Projects

Funding for preservation projects is an important aspect of implementing preservation strategies. Both the RIHPHC and BRVNHCC have limited funding programs to assist communities in preservation-related issues. Communities that have adopted historic district zoning are eligible for Certified Local Government (CLG) status. Once designated a CLG by the RIHPHC, the community is eligible for some survey and planning grants through the RIHPHC. Lincoln would not be eligible for CLG designation until it adopts an Historic District Zoning Ordinance. Other funding sources include:

- *Preservation is Local* grants for planning and documentation projects often leveraged with CLG funding – the grant program operated in 2009-2010 funded by a federal Preserve America grant. The availability of future grant funds is unknown. RIHPHC Program.
- *Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)* funds for improving community facilities, neighborhood revitalization, and economic development. A limited funding source particularly for non-entitlement communities which includes all five towns in the study area.
- The *Federal Investment Tax Credit (ITC)* can make a difference in the financing of a project that is completing a substantial rehabilitation of an income producing property that is listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. A “certified rehabilitation” that is carried out in accordance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation is eligible for a 20% investment tax credit. RIHPHC Website.
- The *Historic Preservation Investment Tax Credit* is presently not funded but may be re-instituted. It played a significant role in preserving many important historic resources and was particularly useful in the redevelopment of large mill structures. RIHPHC Program.
- The *Historic Homeowner's Tax Credit* can assist owners in the cost for rehabilitating their National Register-listed home. RIHPHC Program.
- Local funding sources such as the real estate conveyance tax payable to municipalities may be redirected to preservation of heritage landscapes such as agricultural land. Use of these funds is community policy determined at the local level. Other sources may be local businesses that may benefit from preservation of property.

Funding for state programs varies from year to year. When planning Lincoln's heritage landscape inventory program, contact relevant agencies to determine whether funding is available.

---

## CONCLUSIONS

---

The Lincoln Reconnaissance Report is a critical tool in starting to identify the town's rich and diverse heritage landscapes and in beginning to think about preservation strategies. Lincoln will have to determine the best way to implement the recommendations discussed above. One approach that might help the town begin the process is to form a Heritage Landscape Committee which would work to implement a comprehensive landscape inventory and to guide implementation of recommendations of this report.

Landscapes identified in this report, especially the priority landscapes, will typically need further documentation. That documentation in turn can be used in publicity efforts to build consensus and gather public support for their preservation. Implementation of recommendations will require a concerted effort that includes partnerships among municipal boards and agencies, local non-profit organizations, and state agencies and commissions.

Distribution of this Reconnaissance Report to the municipal land use boards and commissions will assist in making this one of the planning documents that guides Lincoln in preserving important features of the community's character. The recommended tasks will require cooperation and coordination among boards and commissions, particularly Lincoln's Planning Board and Conservation Commission. It also is advisable to present this information to the Town Council. Distribution of the report to the land trust, neighborhood associations and any other preservation-minded organizations such as the Blackstone Valley Historical Society will broaden the audience and assist in gathering interest and support for Lincoln's heritage landscapes. Finally, this report should be distributed to the owners of landscapes identified through this process, especially the high-priority landscapes. This could help owners understand the significance of their property, its importance to the community, and options for protection.

## APPENDIX A: HERITAGE LANDSCAPES IDENTIFIED BY COMMUNITY

This list was generated by local participants at the Heritage Landscape Identification Meeting held in Lincoln on May 24, 2010. The follow-up fieldwork was completed on June 10, 2010. **There are undoubtedly many other heritage landscapes that were not identified at the HLI meeting noted above.** The chart has two columns, the names and locations of resources are in the first; notes about resources are in the second. Landscapes are grouped by land use category. Abbreviations are listed below.

CR = Conservation Restriction

NR = National Register

\* = Priority Landscape

LHD = Local Historic District

PR = Preservation Restriction

Agriculture	
<b><i>Ballard Farm</i></b> 1092 Great Rd	NR. In Lime Rock HD. Ballard Farm is the present day name for the early 19 <sup>th</sup> century Nathaniel Mowry Tavern. The Mowrys ran taverns in Lime Rock from the mid 18 <sup>th</sup> century and opened this tavern in ca. 1800. The tavern operated until the late 19 <sup>th</sup> century when it became a farm with barns and agricultural fields on Great Road that wrap behind the southeastern edge of district to Wilbur Road.
<b><i>Butterfly Farm</i></b> 679 Great Road	NR. In Great Road HD. Dairy herd in 19 <sup>th</sup> C. Has a roadside stand, agricultural fields. A 1995 survey form.
<b><i>Chace Farm</i></b> 667 Great Road	NR. In Great Road HD. Also spelled Chase. Town-owned 90-acre farm. Mid to late 19 <sup>th</sup> C. dwelling, late 19 <sup>th</sup> C. Hannaway Blacksmith Shop (board and batten construction), gazebo. Passive recreation. Was a dairy farm producing and delivering milk until 1965.
<b><i>Lime Rock Grange</i></b> 1873 Old Louisquisset Pike	NR. In Lime Rock HD. The long two-story building was built in 1807-08 as Northgate, so named for its original purpose as the ca. 1807 tollhouse and gatekeepers dwelling for the turnpike. In 1904 it was purchased by the Lime Rock Grange #26 and converted to a meeting place for the grange. In 1971 it was bought by the Blackstone Valley Historical Society.
<b><i>Hall's Chicken Farm</i></b> Great Road	Dairy farm until 1940s.
<b><i>Jackson Farm</i></b> 24 Sherman Ave.	Farmhouse, barn and outbuildings with fencing and stone walls forming paddocks.
<b><i>Thibadault Farm</i></b> River Rd	Located on the east side of River Road, north of Maplehurst. Farmhouse on hill overlooking Blackstone River and Canal, agricultural fields slope from house down to river, some remaining agricultural outbuildings.
Burial Grounds and Cemeteries	
<b><i>Lime Rock Cemetery</i></b> Great Road	NR. Part of the Lime Rock HD. 1730s-1860s.

<b><i>Pullen Corner Cemetery</i></b> Angell Road	Small cemetery that may include Native American graves.
<b><i>Quaker Cemetery</i></b> Great Rd	1730s – 1880s. Next to Friends Meetinghouse in Saylesville.
<b><i>Wright Burial Ground</i></b> Great Rd	In Lime Rock section of Lincoln. The old family burial ground is 63' by 70'. Stone dates range from 1819 to 1930.
<b>Centers/Villages</b>	
<b><i>Albion</i></b> Main St, School St	NRHD. Mill village with mill complex, mill housing and a church on Blackstone Canal and River.
<b><i>* Lime Rock</i></b> Great Road	NRHD. Village evolved around limestone quarrying which began in 17 <sup>th</sup> C. and dominated the economy into the 19 <sup>th</sup> C.
<b><i>Lonsdale</i></b> Main Street	NRHD in Cumberland and Lincoln. Mill village on Blackstone River – old village on Lincoln side, new village on Cumberland side. Frame and brick multi-family and large supervisors and administrators houses on east side of Lonsdale Avenue.
<b><i>Manville</i></b>	NRHD. Manville Company Workers Housing HD. Begun in 1812 on old iron factory site – mill buildings on Cumberland side and the housing on Lincoln side of the Blackstone River.
<b><i>Quinville/Old Ashton</i></b> Lower River Road	NRHD. First mill village established in 1809 on Blackstone River in Lincoln. Also known as Old Ashton. A mill village – was part of Ashton mills across river in Cumberland. Only housing remains. Kelly House now a transportation museum owned and operated by RIDEM as part of Blackstone River State Park.
<b><i>Saylesville</i></b>	NRHD. Late 19 <sup>th</sup> C. neighborhood having been established in the 1840s. Between Scotts Pond and Barney and Bleachery Ponds with Blackstone Canal through industrial part of village.
<b>Civic/Institutional</b>	
<b><i>Friends Meetinghouse</i></b> 374 Great Rd	1704-05, with a ca.1745 addition. First house of worship in Lincoln, located in Saylesville part of Lincoln. Early part is one story and the addition is two stories.
<b><i>Pullen Corner Schoolhouse</i></b> Angell & Whipple Rds	NR. Better known as the Hot Potato Schoolhouse it was built in ca. 1850 as a one-room schoolhouse. Name derived from teacher who donated stove and potatoes to feed children who had no lunch. Operated until 1922.
<b><i>Mt. Moriah Masonic Lodge</i></b> 1093 Great Rd	NR. In Lime Rock HD. The brick two-story building started as a one-room schoolhouse which in 1804 was enlarged to the two –story building – school continued in first story and Masons above. Building taken over by Masons in 1870 and is the Mt. Moriah Lodge #8.

<b><i>World War I Monument</i></b> Pearl Street	NRHD 1919. Granite obelisk with globe top in Manville. Reported to be first WWI monument erected in RI and possibly first in US. – Dedicated in May 1919.
<b>Industrial</b>	
<b><i>Albion Mill</i></b> School Street	NR. In Albion HD. On banks of Blackstone River at bottom of School Street in village of Albion. Large brick mill structure represents four building periods beginning with ca. 1850 center section. Cotton weaving and spinning begun by Chace brothers. Converted to residences.
<b><i>Blackstone Canal</i></b>	NRHD One of best remaining sections of short-lived canal in Lincoln between Ashton Dam and Front St. passing through Quinnville (Old Ashton) to Lonsdale. See Transportation also.
<b><i>Dams on Blackstone &amp; Moshassuck Rivers</i></b>	Dams are located along the rivers at mill sites. Some are privately owned and others are owned by the state or municipality. Maintenance, repair and coordination of use of dams are challenges facing Lincoln and other surrounding communities. Expense and enforcement of regulations are issues.
<b><i>Hannaway Blacksmith Shop</i></b> 669 Great Road	NR. In Great Road HD. Next to Butterfly Mill. Was operated by Hannaway family.
<b><i>Lime Kilns &amp; Quarry</i></b> Various locations	NRHD At multiple locations in Lime Rock, at CCRI and on Dexter Rock Road. Off Dexter Rock, Old Louisquisset and Sherman Roads.
<b><i>*Lonsdale Bleachery</i></b> Cook St	NRHD. On both sides of Blackstone Canal. Oldest mill is Mill Number 3 constructed in 1833. Textile bleachery here.
<b><i>Moffett Mill</i></b> Great Road	NR. Part of Great Road HD. Started as machine shop built in ca. 1812 by George Olney – purchased in 1850 by Arnold Moffett (also Moffit) – the building and part of stone dam and sluiceway survive on Moshassuck River.
<b><i>*Sayles Mills</i></b> Walker St & Industrial Cir	NR. Part of Saylesville HD. Late 19 <sup>th</sup> C village established around textile bleaching after 1847. Sayles Bleachery on site of 1830s printworks. Burned in 1854 and Sayles rebuilt immediately. Mill complex covers 40 acres between Barney and Scott's ponds. Blackstone Canal ran through mill complex; however the canal closed (1847-49) at same time that first mills built.
<b>Native American</b>	
<b><i>Burial Ground</i></b> Rt. 146 at Sherman Ave.	Native American burial ground on south side of Lime Rock.



<b><i>Quinsnicket Rock</i></b> Lincoln Woods	One of the ceremonial sites in Lincoln Woods on the eastern edge of Quinsnicket Pond. Associations with pre-colonial inhabitants and was incorporated into Stephen Smith's designed landscape when this area was part of his Hearthside estate.
<b>Natural / Open Space / Parks</b>	
<b><i>Chace Park</i></b> 667 Great Road	NRHD – Located in Great Road HD. Town-owned park that is on same property as Chace Farm (also Chase Farm). See Agriculture.
<b><i>Fairlawn Golf Club</i></b> 3 Sherman Ave	Family owned nine-hole public golf course built in 1969.
<b><i>Gateway Park</i></b>	NRHD. Located in Great Road HD. This restored farm field next to the Eleazer Arnold House on Great Road was part of the Lincoln Creamery in the 20 <sup>th</sup> century.
<b><i>Kirkbrae Country Club</i></b> 197 Old River Rd	Near Lime Rock. Private 18-hole golf course. Club established in 1962. Has swimming pool, health center, dining room and accommodations for large banquets.
<b><i>Lincoln Woods</i></b>	Was part of the Stephen Smith estate (Hearthside). Acquired by State in 1909 for rural park – part of Providence Metropolitan Parks. Includes Olney Pond of which only part was in 1909 purchase. Rest of pond bought in 1930s. Olmsted Brothers plans left landscape in natural state with added bridle paths, and upgrade of roads and footpaths. In 1930s camping amenities, bridges, bath house etc added. Remnants of past use remain such as foundations, stone walls, a quarry, textile mill site, etc.
<b>Residential</b>	
<b><i>17<sup>th</sup> C. Stone-Enders</i></b> 487 & 1147 Great Rd	Eleazer Arnold (ca. 1687 or 1693, NR, NHL) and Valentine Whitman, Jr. (ca. 1694, NR) Houses are best examples and two of the only remaining early stone-enders found in RI.
<b><i>A. E. Arnold House</i></b> 500 Great Rd	NR – In Great Road HD. Now referred to as the Tarentaso property, the ca. 1790 A. E. Arnold House is a Federal Style dwelling
<b><i>Blais Property</i></b> Walker St	At Scotts Pond, historically the former Scott Tavern on Walker Street
<b><i>Hearthside</i></b> 677 Great Rd	NR. In Great Road HD. Unusual stone structure with ogee gable ends and monumental open porch across the façade. Built in 1810-1811 by Stephen Smith who owned Butterfly Mill. Planted with unusual plant material – part of property now Lincoln Woods. Hearthside is now town owned and operated by Friends of Hearthside. Open to the public.
<b><i>*Israel Arnold Property</i></b> 600 Great Rd	NR-IND and in Great Road HD. Known as the Israel Arnold House for the second owner, the house was built in ca. 1740 by an Olney (related Arnold by marriage). Restored by Antoinette Downing in 1971. Now referred to as the Hysko-Corrigan property referring to recent ownership.

<i><b>Kissinger Property</b></i>	NRHD. Located in the Great Road HD. Early grist mill converted to a dwelling.
<i><b>Lantern Road House</b></i>	Old abandoned house of interesting construction techniques.
<b>Transportation</b>	
<i><b>Albion Traffic Dummy School &amp; Main Sts</b></i>	1932. In Albion Village at intersection over top of main well that supplied water to villagers.
<i><b>Blackstone Canal &amp; Bike Path</b></i>	Canal built in 1820s paralleling river to improve transportation between Worcester and Providence. Operated only until 1848 when it was eclipsed by the Providence and Worcester Railroad. Bike path constructed along old Tow Path.
<i><b>Breakneck Hill Rd</b></i>	Designated State Scenic Road. Branches off of Great Road.
<i><b>*Great Road</b></i>	NR – Part of Great Road HD. 1683 connection with Providence – southern end in Lincoln of note particularly between end of Smithfield Avenue and Breakneck Hill Road which is listed in NR.
<i><b>*Wilbur Road</b></i>	NR. Part of Lime Rock HD. Picturesque with several historic dwellings, lime quarry and kiln, church, school.
<b>Waterbodies Brooks, Ponds, Rivers</b>	
<i><b>Scott Pond</b></i>	Fed by the Blackstone River.
<i><b>Wenscott Reservoir</b></i>	Native American sites here.

## **B: EXISTING RESOURCE DOCUMENTATION AND PLANNING TOOLS**

---

Lincoln already has important planning tools in place to document current conditions within the town; identify issues of concern to town residents; and develop strategies for action. This section of the Reconnaissance Report identifies some of the existing planning documents and tools that provide information relevant to preserving heritage landscapes in the community.

### **Survey of Historic and Architectural Resources**

The Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission's (RIHPHC) Inventory of Historic and Architectural Resources is a statewide program that identifies significant historic resources in each municipality in the State. Historic properties are listed on RIHPHC data sheets, which record the basic information about properties: descriptions, location recorded on historic maps, and names associated with the property.

Most Lincoln properties were recorded in 1980 and analyzed in *Historic and Architectural Resources of Lincoln, Rhode Island: A Preliminary Report* published in 1982. Some properties have been preserved using recommendations included in the Preliminary Report; others have been altered or lost; and still others remain undocumented.

Landscape survey work of the 1980s included photographs only for Lincoln Woods. The published 2001 report *Historic Landscapes in Rhode Island* describes three local properties: the Great Road Streetscape, Chace Farm on Great Road and Lincoln Woods. Great Road is a priority landscape in this project and Chace Farm is located in the Great Road Area. Lincoln's Comprehensive Plan also mentions Whipple Road near the Smithfield town line as a significant yet vulnerable landscape.

There are many archaeological sites that have been documented and are on file at the RIHPHC.

### **State and National Registers of Historic Places**

The National Register of Historic Places is the official federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that have been determined significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture. Lincoln has eight National Register districts:

- Albion Historic District (1984)
- Blackstone Canal Historic District (1971, 1991)
- Great Road Historic District (1974)
- Limerock Village Historic District (1974)
- Lonsdale Historic District (1984)
- Manville Company Worker Housing Historic District (2009)
- Old Ashton Historic District (1984)
- Saylesville Historic District (1984)

Thirteen properties are individually listed in the National Register including:

- Ballou House, Albion Road (1984)
- Eleazer Arnold House, Great Road (1968)
- Elliott-Harris-Miner House, 1406 Old Louisquisset Pike (1984)
- Hearthside, Great Road (1973)
- Israel Arnold House, Great Road (1970)

- Jenckes House, 81 Jenckes Hill Road (1984)
- Jenckes House, 1730 Old Louisquisset Pike (1984)
- Lime Kiln, off Dexter Rock Road (1984)
- Lime Kiln, off Old Louisquisset Pike (1984)
- Lime Kiln, off Sherman Road (1984)
- Pullen Corner Schoolhouse, Angell Road (1984)
- Saylesville Meetinghouse/Smithfield Lower Meetinghouse, Smithfield Avenue (1978)
- Whipple-Cullen House, Old River Road (1991)

The Eleazer Arnold House, a stone-ender 17<sup>th</sup> century dwelling is also a National Historic Landmark.

The 1982 Preliminary Report of Lincoln's Historic and Architectural Resources recommended consideration of several districts and many individual properties for inclusion in the National Register. Nearly all have been listed in the intervening years and are included in the list above. Those not yet listed include:

- Arnold Bakery, 234 Chapel Street (Saylesville)
- Milk Can, Louisquisset Pike

The 2003 Update to the town's Comprehensive Plan listed many more properties that have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register or that should be studied for potential listing. The list included the Arnold Bakery and the following:

- Ashton Viaduct, Washington Highway
- Bastow Frame Shop, 20 Knowles Street
- Crookfall Brook Factory Site
- Crookfall Brook Historical and Archaeological District
- Lincoln Community School, Breakneck Hill Road
- Lincoln Woods State Park, Breakneck Hill Road
- Olney Arnold House, 100 Cobble Hill Road
- Paine's Mill Site, Louisquisset Pike in Lincoln and North Smithfield

The Manville School, which was on this list, was recently listed as part of the Manville Company Worker Housing District.

## Planning Documents and Tools

All municipalities in Rhode Island are required to write a Comprehensive Plan and to update that plan every five years. The town's latest update to the *Lincoln Comprehensive Plan* was written in 2003. Lincoln also has other important planning documents that provide a framework for town decision making. Important regulatory accomplishments related to community character and heritage landscapes are:

**Mill Conversion District.** This section of the zoning ordinance creates overlay districts to provide opportunity to preserve and re-use three of Lincoln's large historic mill complexes while preserving the surrounding neighborhoods and to promote mixed uses – residential and commercial in these properties which are the Sayles Finishing Plant, Lonsdale Bleachery and the Cotton Plant. Each conversion project must show evidence that the standards used are consistent with those of the National Park Service (Secretary of Interior's Standards of Treatment of Historic Properties).

**River Valley Overlay Districts.** There are two overlay districts – one for the Blackstone River and one for the Moshassuck River – each with the purpose of finding compatible uses to preserve each river valley.

**Village Commercial Mixed Use Zone.** The purpose of the zone is to promote small scale businesses and residential uses consistent with the pedestrian scale and character of the villages of Lincoln.