

MILLVILLE RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

BLACKSTONE VALLEY / QUINEBAUG-SHETUCKET LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

MASSACHUSETTS HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY PROGRAM



Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor
Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor

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Cover Photos: Banigan City residence
Banigan City Schoolyard
Blackstone River

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INTRODUCTION

The 22 Massachusetts communities within the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor (BRV) and the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor (Q-S) are linked by a common heritage of agriculture and industry powered by the rivers and streams that dominate the landscape of south central Massachusetts. River Corridor towns extend from Mendon on the east to Brimfield on the west. While they range in size from the city of Worcester to the compact town of Hopedale, each is equally shaped by the interaction of nature and culture over time.

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 history of a community and provide a sense of place; they show the natural ecology that influenced land use patterns; and they often have scenic qualities. This wealth of landscapes is central to each community's character, yet heritage landscapes are vulnerable and ever changing. For this reason it is important to take the first step toward their preservation by identifying those landscapes that are particularly valued by the community – a favorite local farm, a distinctive neighborhood or mill village, a unique natural feature or an important river corridor.

To this end, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the two National Heritage Corridors (BRV and Q-S) have collaborated to bring the Heritage Landscape Inventory program to communities in south central Massachusetts. The primary goal of the program is to help communities identify a wide range of landscape resources, particularly those that are significant and unprotected. One focus is to identify landscapes that have not been previously surveyed or documented. Another important goal of the program is to provide communities with strategies for preserving heritage landscapes.

The methodology for the Heritage Landscape Inventory program was developed in a pilot project conducted in southeast Massachusetts and refined in Essex County. It is outlined in the DCR publication *Reading the Land*, which has provided guidance for the program since its inception. In summary, each participating community appoints a Local Project Coordinator (LPC) to assist the DCR-BRV/Q-S consulting team. The LPC organizes a heritage landscape identification meeting during which residents and town officials identify and prioritize the landscapes that embody the community's character and its history. This meeting is followed by a fieldwork session including the consulting team and the LPC, accompanied by interested community members. This group visits the priority landscapes identified in the meeting and gathers information about the community.

The final product for each community is this Reconnaissance Report. It outlines the community's landscape history; discusses broader land planning issues identified by the community; describes the priority heritage landscapes and issues associated with them, and concludes with preservation recommendations. Two appendices include a list of all of the heritage landscapes identified at the community meeting and a reference listing of land protection tools and procedures.



PART I

MILLVILLE'S HERITAGE LANDSCAPES



MILLVILLE'S LANDSCAPE THROUGH TIME

The town of Millville is situated on the Rhode Island border, in Worcester County. To the west lies Uxbridge, to the north Mendon, and to the east Blackstone. The town is a long, five square mile rectangle with the Blackstone River dividing the southern third of the town from the north. The soil, mainly Gloucester sandy loam, is suitable for the cultivation of hay and grains, as well as for market gardens and orchards. There is one small pond, Mansfield Pond, in the central part of town, and several streams including Angelica Brook, Spring Brook, and Hood's Brook, which drain into the Blackstone.

In the Contact and Plantation Periods (1500-1675), Millville's natural resources offered good seasonal hunting and fishing and later also provided good fields, meadows and pasture to colonial settlers. Early Native American trails likely included what are now Chestnut Hill Road and Central Street, running generally north-south from the Worcester area into Rhode Island. Millville was an outlying settlement of the Mendon Grant of 1667. A century later the area that would become Millville was established as Mendon's Third Parish and the Chestnut Hill Meeting House was built in 1769. The north-centrally located meetinghouse became the focus of early settlement and farming.

Towards the end of the Federal Period (1775-1830) the settlement changed dramatically. Prior to that time, three small pre-industrial mills including a grist mill in 1727 drew on the waterpower of the Blackstone River. Water powered textile industry came to the village with a cotton mill as early as 1796. In 1814, the first woolen mill on the Blackstone was built at the falls in Millville, joined by a second in 1825, as well as a scythe manufactory. In 1828, however, with the opening of the Blackstone Canal, the village of Millville attained new importance as a distribution center for raw materials and manufactured goods produced by a growing number of factories up and down the Valley. While the northern portion of Millville remained agricultural, the southern third, hugging the river and canal, became increasingly commercial and industrial. Millville shared this new identity with a similar industrial neighborhood downstream and in 1845, the two villages separated from Mendon to form the new town of Blackstone.

While the Blackstone Canal's failure in 1848 did away with the brisk river commerce, it also had a beneficial side effect: portions of the canal through Millville were converted to power canals and new, more substantial textile industries such as the Hall Woolen Mills provided residents with a replacement source of income. Furthermore, rail transport was built through the valley in the mid-19th century, including the Providence & Worcester in 1847 and the Norfolk County, later Boston, Hartford & Erie, in 1849. The competing railroads followed the river across town, bracketing the village center with their rail lines.

In 1877, following a serious economic depression, the Lawrence Felting Co. and the Woonsocket Rubber Co. bought the Millville water privilege and built large adjacent factories between 1882 and 1878. Streetcar service was introduced between Woonsocket and Worcester, along Main Street. The village's commercial center thus developed on the north side of the river, focused at the Main Street/Central Street intersection, while the focus of workers' housing, schools and churches was on the river's south side. By the end of the 19th century, both companies merged with the U.S. Rubber Company, and Millville's history over the next thirty-five years was dominated by its reliance on U.S. Rubber for economic support. Most smaller businesses had disappeared, and textiles had been replaced by the manufacture of rubber boots and wool and felt boot linings.

In 1916 Millville, proud of its new, late-industrial corporate identity, incorporated as a town independent of Blackstone. Production, however, ceased with the stock market crash of 1929. Soon after, during the Great Depression, U.S. Rubber closed its Millville plant and the Lawrence Felting Mill was destroyed by flood. The town's property valuation dropped while expenses – especially poor relief – continued to rise. Initially the discrepancy was made up by raising the tax valuation on industrial machinery and buildings, but U.S. Rubber protested, and was granted a tax abatement by the Commonwealth. The town, unable to raise money through taxes or bank loans, was forced into bankruptcy. From 1933 to 1945 Millville was put into receivership, its affairs managed by the state-appointed Municipal Finance Commission. The town's population dropped to half its former level, and residents looked beyond its borders for paid employment.

Subsequent attempts to revive Millville's industry were only partially successful, and those effectively ended when two major fires in 1976 and 1977 destroyed the remaining mill complexes. Today Millville describes itself as a *small rural town in the heart of the Blackstone Valley*. Its population has returned to pre-Depression levels, made up almost entirely of families whose incomes derive from non-local sources.

COMMUNITY-WIDE HERITAGE LANDSCAPE ISSUES

Concern for heritage landscapes is not new to Millville. The Chestnut Hill Meetinghouse, one of the earliest intact meetinghouses in Massachusetts, and its surrounding colonial-era graveyard, were accepted to the National Register in 1984. A number of studies and surveys, especially during the 1990s, focused local and regional attention on the historic and natural resources of the Blackstone River Corridor, and laid out solid plans for recreational development and landscape preservation. The corridor area includes three National Register Districts, and substantial acreage on both sides of the river is municipally owned.

Millville's Heritage Landscape Identification meeting, attended by interested residents including many representing town boards and local non-profit organizations, was held on March 15, 2007. During the meeting, residents compiled a lengthy list of the town's heritage landscapes, which is included as Appendix A of this report. As the comprehensive list was being created, attendees were asked to articulate the value of each landscape and identify issues relating to its preservation and use. In Millville, a number of related issues stood out at the meeting, and were reinforced by observations during the subsequent fieldwork.

A majority of the valued landscapes and features were located in the central river corridor that cuts across the town, which was the historic impetus for Millville's development. Municipal focus on this area began over ten years ago when the town acquired a 9-acre riverfront parcel, 181 Main Street, on the Blackstone. A planning session looking at potential uses and development of this riverfront property took place in 2001, but action on the recommendations has been stalled since that time.

At this year's Heritage Landscape Identification meeting, this riverfront area was again emphasized, associated with broad issues related to heritage landscapes and community character, that went beyond concern for a single, particular place. Residents identified four overarching issues.

- **Local identity:**
Millville has not been successful in creating a new, positive local identity since the loss of its economic base.
- **Shortage of funds:**
The limited attention and funds of this small town and its residents have been diverted from pro-active development and preservation projects to education, welfare, and public safety needs.
- **Lack of control:**
Millville needs empowerment to negotiate successfully with corporate and governmental entities that have vested interests in Millville.
- **Limited popular support:**
Millville needs broad-based local support for preservation and landscape enhancement efforts.

PRIORITY HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

Based on information gathered at the community meeting, attendees identified a group of priority landscapes for the consulting team to focus on, through field survey, documentation, and planning assessment. Each of the priority landscapes is highly valued and contributes to community character. None of them has any permanent form of protection.

The landscapes which were given priority status by Millville's community meeting represent a range of scales and types of resources. Together, they constitute elements of a larger, river-centered landscape that is both the birthplace of the town and the location of its defining industrial heritage.

Natural and cultural features, individual and civic histories, combine to present property owners and concerned citizens with a complex combination of present-day issues and opportunities. The descriptions and recommendations that follow are intended to be first steps and constructive examples for what needs to be an ongoing process: to identify what is valued and irreplaceable in the community, and develop strategies that will preserve and enhance Millville's landscape heritage.

Blackstone River

Description: The Blackstone River flows approximately 1.5 miles across Millville from west to east. It has only one significant fall over that length, which is marked by the Central Street bridge crossing of the river and the historic archaeological sites associated with Millville's industries. The Blackstone Canal parallels the river along its south bank. Its trenched canal no longer carries water in most sections; dumping has occurred along the bank and much of it is overgrown, but the berm is in good condition and is used by residents as a recreational walking path. The towpath remains on the *south* side of the canal, away from the river. The Canal and its notable engineered features are included in a National Register Historic District, and the well-preserved Millville Lock #21, downstream from the town's center, is a featured site of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, as the best-preserved lock of the entire length of canal.

A major cooperative effort sponsored by the Blackstone River Coalition is currently underway to improve water quality in and around the entire length of the river. The Coalition is a partnership of local and regional environmental groups and organizations whose goal is to restore the river and improve the health of its watershed. At present all of the Blackstone is designated a Class B river, an indicator that canoeing and kayaking, as well as catch-and-release fishing, are appropriate recreational activities. Swimming is discouraged. Millville's section of river is of somewhat better quality than upstream reaches, due to the inflow of cleaner water from the Mumford and other tributaries. It is host to an array of resident warm-water river fish species including yellow perch, large mouth bass, and pickerel. Both the stretch of river upstream from the island at Central Street, and downstream to the Triad Bridge and beyond, are considered highly scenic, with substantial woodlands and undeveloped parcels lining the banks. Public access to these parcels is very limited. About twenty years ago, there was some interest expressed in reconstructing the Red Bridge across the Blackstone between the former U.S Rubber

property on the north bank and Washington Street on the south. Since that time these plans have been dropped, and are unlikely to be feasible in the future.

Background: (See below for history of industrial development along the river.) The Blackstone was first dammed in Millville by Samuel Thompson in 1727 – a remarkable feat for the engineering of the period, but one which was simplified by the presence of a mid-river island that served to divide headrace from spillway with relatively little dam construction required. Subsequent mill owners found the site equally amenable to development so that, for two centuries, the river was viewed more as a power source – later with a handy transportation adjunct in the Canal – than a natural environment.



Issues:

- The Blackstone has retained a century-old reputation as a severely polluted body of water. This situation is slowly changing, and the Blackstone River Coalition has set a target date of 2015 for the entire length of the river to be fishable and swimmable.
- Access: The even width and smooth water downstream of the Millville dam makes this section of the Blackstone an ideal place to develop for recreational use, both as a historic park and potentially for kayaking, fishing and other outdoor recreation. On the south bank a three acre site is already owned by the Commonwealth, adjacent to a disused roadway, Washington Street, leading down to the river from Prospect Street. The remainder of this section of riverfront is owned by Lece Realty Trust, which purchased all of the former U. S. Rubber Co. property after the 1976 fire. Lece Realty is also owner of the island in the river where Central Street crosses; of a small parcel by the street on the north bank; and of two parcels including The Oval farther downstream on the north bank. Further complicating the issue of river access is the line of the Providence and Worcester Railroad property that parallels Main Street and across which no public access is officially permitted.

Recommendations:

- Become active participants in the Blackstone River Coalition efforts to improve water quality.

- Publicize clean-up efforts and recreational opportunities on the Blackstone, in order to build local appreciation for the river and promote broad-based stewardship of its resources.

“The Oval”, off Main Street

Description: Presently a 2.6 acre parcel of open land, the Oval was originally a baseball field constructed by the U.S. Rubber Company for its employee team. The diamond, though overgrown, is still visible, surrounded by chain link fence and a high backstop behind home plate. Some portion of the field is surfaced in coal dust (Presumably from the mill) which has kept it from totally reverting to grassland. The field was used, within recent memory, for local games and as a Little League field. The privately-owned parcel lies between the Town of Millville’s U.S. Rubber land (see above), and an apparent right of way, Washington Street, from Main Street to the site of the Old Red Bridge across the Blackstone (no longer extant). This parcel of land, although not individually inventoried, is included within the Main Street National Register Historic District.



Background: From 1905 to the Depression, baseball played an integral part in the lives of mill workers in the Blackstone Valley. Textile mill owners first formed company baseball teams to encourage teamwork and provide recreation for their employees prior to World War I. During the 1920s the “industrial leagues” became a major recreational focus of Valley towns such as Douglas, Northbridge, Hopedale and Millville. The Industrial Baseball League, Sunset Baseball League, and Blackstone Valley League were among the groups participating in this regional competition on fields and in uniforms underwritten by the local manufacturing companies. Company cutbacks and worker animosity during the Great Depression, however, put an end to company sponsorship. The industrial leagues virtually disappeared between 1931 and 1935, although the Blackstone Valley League was not officially disbanded until 1952. Even today, memories and tales of league baseball and its stars remain a cherished part of Blackstone Valley history. Some time ago, the present owner of the property offered to donate it to the Town but negotiations were unsuccessful.

Issues:

- Owner intentions: this parcel would clearly enhance the Millville riverfront area, since it is adjacent to the town-owned land (see below). It is not clear whether the owner would reconsider his offer of property transfer to the town.
- Deferred maintenance: lack of regular maintenance and use have allowed invasive species to encroach around field edges, and grasses have grown up through packed dirt surfaces; reconditioning of field for competitive use will require significant investment.
- Access issue: While this field would likely be useful, even under private ownership, as a local practice field, it abuts the P & W Railroad line that comes between it and public access from Main Street.

Recommendations:

The Oval would provide an excellent initial landscape focus to promote mixed-use development of Millville's riverfront. It would provide community access for all ages to the riverfront area. Its association with the industrial baseball league evokes a significant shared feature of Millville's history and an element of civic pride.

- Share this report with present owner of parcel. It is important for him to know that the town values this land as a significant heritage landscape. Discuss options for municipal acquisition of this parcel from present private owner.
- Record the property as a historic landscape on MHC Form H.
- Discuss value of rehabilitating this playing field with local, school, and Little League officials.
- Develop estimate of rehabilitation costs involved in returning property to competitive use.
- Explore possibilities for partnerships in acquiring and rehabilitating this property. A regional baseball league or a corporate sponsor from a neighboring town might be willing to underwrite or share the expenses of this project.
- Negotiate with P & W Railroad for public access along extant right of way (Washington Street) across P & W tracks to town land along Blackstone River.

Woonsocket Rubber Co. Office, 181 Main Street

Description: This is one of four buildings still standing on the municipally-owned 9.65 acre tract that originally housed the massive Woonsocket Rubber Company (U.S. Rubber) plant. The 1882 company office is a two-story brick, gable roofed Classical-style industrial building with arch headed, stone-silled windows that still retain remnants of window framing and double-hung sash. The office building is a contributing feature of the Main Street National Register Historic District Other buildings on the property include an adjacent brick-faced cement block garage with hip roof, and a clapboard

walled, shed roofed one story nurses station both from the 1920s. A late 20th century aluminum sided utility building stands 500 feet downstream.

At present the yard surrounding the office, which is closed off from access by a chain link fence along the railroad corridor, is being used by MassHighway as a materials storage depot for nearby bridge-raising projects, including construction debris as well as stockpiled new materials and trailers. Rebar is stacked immediately adjacent to the brick office building. Most of the protective plywood window and door coverings on the building have been removed since it was inventoried in 1994. The wooden bulkhead to a cellar entrance on the south end of the building has been pulled away from the structure, and there is open access to the interior. At some point in the past nearly all of the interior woodwork was removed, as well as much of the plaster. Despite these incursions, the mass of the building appears to be in remarkably solid condition, and the cellar floor and woodwork appear relatively dry. The garage and nurses station are in varying stages of disrepair.



The mill access road, now a path, leads from Main Street past the office building to the Blackstone and then parallels the riverbank eastward. Trash and older abandoned vehicles dot the pathway, while stone support piers and other structural remains line the riverbank. The river's edge is shaded by good-sized trees and both sides of the path are grassy. Minor tracks between path and river evidence the area's use by fishermen and wild animals.

Background: The company office building was part of a large plant constructed by the Woonsocket Rubber Company in 1882. Together with the adjoining Lawrence Felting Company, Woonsocket Rubber – later U. S. Rubber – was the dominant employer in Millville, and its failure was instrumental in the bankruptcy of the town in 1933. After the fires of 1976 and 1977, a private owner purchased all of the mill parcels and has retained ownership of many of them to the present. The Town of Millville acquired 181 Main Street in a tax taking in 1999.

Issues:

- Immediate issue: disregard of property's fragility and non-supervision by Millville officials of Mass Highway's misuse of storage rights.

- Severe lack of stewardship for historic building resulting in significant safety and vandalism issues.
- Lack of public access to riverfront property due to P & W railroad tracks.
- Possible industrial contamination: The major – and likely most expensive – issue concerning adaptive reuse of the building and surrounding property is the likelihood of industrial pollutants on the site. The 2001 planning meeting about the property indicated that a Chapter 21E assessment was underway at the time, but its findings are not known.

Recommendations:

- Brick office building:
 - Take immediate steps to protect and preserve the building by installing secure door and window coverings.
 - Evaluate the condition of roof and cover if necessary.
 - Request regular patrols by Millville Police to monitor security.
- Nurses Station:
 - Stabilize building in current condition by removing encroaching vines and shrubbery
 - Evaluate condition and potential for reuse
 - Proceed as above if appropriate.
- Garage:
 - Stabilize building in current condition by removing encroaching vines and shrubbery
 - Establish minimal maintenance plan for structure, which may provide useful future storage for site.
- Access: negotiate public access along extant right of way across P & W tracks to town land along Blackstone River.
- Consider the office building as structural focal point for Millville riverfront enhancement or development. It is historic. It is apparently structurally sound. It is architecturally attractive. It is within easy access of the river and of Main Street (pending an arrangement with P & W), with adjacent parking.
- Any planning for reuse of the office building should be incorporated into a plan for the nine acres that surround it. Form a Millville Riverfront Steering Committee to revisit the 2001 planning discussion and recommendations for next steps.

Edward S. Hall House, 5 Central Street

Description: The Hall House is Millville’s most ambitious example of the Greek Revival style. It features such stylish elements as a hip roof, a colossal Doric portico, and flush horizontal boarding on the facade. The house is set near the street on a 1.04 acre parcel near the corner of Main Street; the depressed tracks of the Providence and Worcester rail

line form the parcel's northern boundary. A picket fence on granite curb defines the street edge and a granite path leads to the front door. The two-story, symmetrical building includes a two-story gabled rear ell. A gable-roofed carriage house with sliding barn doors and central cupola stands to the right rear of the yard area. The building's facade is nearly obscured by mature arborvitae; access to Central Street has effectively been cut off by recent elevation of the Central Street bridge directly in front of the property. House and carriage house are in need of substantial maintenance work. The Hall House is a contributing building in the Central Street National Register Historic District.



Background: The Hall House is attributed in some sources to Edward S. Hall, with a construction date of 1854. Another source dates the building to 1838, before Hall's coming to Millville, and speculates that the house was based on an planbook design by architect Asher Benjamin, but no substantiation for this has yet been found. Hall and his brother Charles, who apparently had been managing a woolen mill adjacent to this property since the late 1840s, purchased the mill property from textile manufacturer Welcome Farnum in 1854, renaming the company Hall Woolen Mills. Edward Hall's imposing mansion was carefully sited at the intersection of Central and Main Streets, on a rise that overlooked the mill and the river. The Halls were bankrupted in the 1871 recession and both house and mills passed into other hands. From the 1920s to 1970s, the property was in the possession of Thomas J. and Hannah Lalor, and consequently is often referred to today as the "Lalor House."



Issues:

- As a heritage landscape, this property has been badly damaged by the imposition of the raised P & W bridge and roadway in its front yard. It is still a beautiful building, with a gracious side and back yard and charming carriage house, but its original

picket-fence-and-curb front line has been replaced with safety barrier fencing beside a concrete overpass.

- Deferred maintenance of house and grounds, including massive arborvitae.
- Owner intentions concerning property and lack of permanent protection.

Recommendations:

- Share this report with present owner of parcel. It is important for the owner to know that the town values this property as a significant heritage landscape.
- Maintain contact with the owner and offer to explore purchase or protection options with her should she or her family choose to sell the property.
- Continue to monitor MassHighway activity to secure public access from Central Street – most recently indicated as a stairway down from street level to the town-owned former U.S. Rubber property.
- Town and owner should explore feasibility of establishing an alternative public right of way along the edge of the Hall property to town-owned land, while still protecting the privacy of the residence. This might provide an easier access point than the above.

Banigan City Workers Housing

Description: On the south side of the Blackstone River, twenty-four approximately 5000-square-foot lots line both sides of Hope Street and the uphill side of Prospect Street where they terminate near Angelica Brook. This is New Village, more commonly called Banigan City. Eighteen of the lots include especially large examples of two-family, restrained Shingle style houses. The roads parallel each other and the river, and houses uniformly face the roadways, with varied yard treatments. The Banigan City houses are of uniform plan and style, two-story rectangles with narrow end to the street. The house facade includes a hooded front entry and a two-story polygonal bay window. Recent owners have introduced a range of additions and variations to the houses and applied different sidings, but the group remains easily recognizable as a fine example of late-19th century corporate housing and associated landscaping. The 1994 Millville Historic Resources Survey recommended this neighborhood as eligible for consideration as a National Register District.

Background: Banigan City is Millville's largest cluster of mill housing, built for employees in 1885 on Woonsocket Rubber Company land and named for the company's president Joseph Banigan. The eighteen houses are examples of particularly progressive design in affordable housing for mill workers. Their long, narrow shape, with four rooms arranged front to rear on each floor, provided more space, light and ventilation than earlier worker housing in Millville, and became the model on which subsequent duplexes were built throughout town.

Banigan City was laid out with a cross street, Washington Street, which lead downhill from Hope Street, across Prospect Street, over the disused Blackstone Canal, then across

the river via a covered bridge to the baseball field and the rubber company plant, over the railroad tracks, and out to Main Street. The only portion of the street still in use is the section connecting Hope and Prospect Streets. A neighborhood two room elementary school, Banigan City School, was built on Prospect Street within ten years of the housing construction.



Issues:

- Loss of neighborhood integrity: while pride of ownership is evident in the well-tended condition of yards and buildings in Banigan City, at least three of the original buildings are no longer extant. A number of larger houses have recently been built nearby, on the north side of Prospect Street, and there are vacant lots where further construction might take place. A new Senior Center has also just been built on Prospect Street. These modern structures reduce the size of the historic neighborhood.

Recommendations:

- Share this report and the 1994 MHC Area Form G information with neighborhood residents, to inform or remind them of the historical value of Banigan City.
- Consider protection of this area through designating it a Neighborhood Conservation District (see Appendix B).
- Incorporate planning for this neighborhood with park planning for the Banigan City Schoolyard (below) and, more broadly, with Millville riverfront planning for the village center section of the Blackstone River.

Banigan City Schoolyard

Description: The site of the Banigan City School, erected in 1897 as a two room schoolhouse for the children of neighboring mill families, is located on a 100 x 200 foot parcel that reaches from Prospect to Hope Streets. The partially wooded parcel slopes down toward the Blackstone River, with a 30' by 36' building foundation between the two streets. A cut granite retaining wall at Prospect Street includes granite steps leading

to a terrace, with a second set of steps in front of the building foundation. The cellarhole is in moderately stable condition, with some upper wall collapse on the Hope Street side. Banigan City worker houses stand to the east, and a newly erected Senior Center to the west. Senior Center landscaping has cut away a portion of the west slope of the site, and the Center's buried water pipes to a neighboring well cut across the schoolhouse terrace. The site and the adjacent Senior Center are both owned by the Town of Millville.

Background: This school was built on land donated by the U. S. Rubber Company through its president, Joseph Banigan. Banigan, an immigrant Irish-American, embodied the American rags-to-riches dream of success, and established a widespread reputation for himself through his benevolence and generous donations to civic, religious, and Irish causes and organizations. *During* the period of Millville's receivership, the building was closed in 1944 and subsequently razed.



Issues:

- This site, between the small Banigan City neighborhood and the Millville Senior Center, is ideal for a small urban park. Community members have suggested that the site be landscaped, and connected by a walkway with the adjacent Senior Center property.
- As a park, the schoolhouse site would provide a buffer between the Banigan City neighborhood and any further development in the Prospect Street vicinity.
- As a park, the site could be an appropriate local memorial to Joseph Banigan, whose constructive influence on the town is still appreciated.
- The park could also serve as one of a series of interpretive stops within easy reach of the Blackstone Bikeway and any future Millville riverfront development along the Blackstone.

Recommendations:

- Incorporate planning for this neighborhood with broader neighborhood preservation and development efforts along the Millville riverfront.
- Develop a park site plan, remove the shrubby growth that covers much of the parcel, lay out a walkway to the Senior Center and provide access to Hope Street. A well-planned sign could interpret the site and the civic significance of Joseph Banigan’s contributions to Millville.
- Consider partnering with a local scout troop or garden club in the execution of this plan. This would make an excellent Eagle Scout project.

Udor Tower, off Central Street

Description: The Udor Tower, dominating the landscape of downtown Millville, stands on bedrock next to the Longfellow Municipal Center at the corner of Central and Fletcher Streets. It is a 25-foot high, 9-foot diameter fieldstone water tower with a carved white marble sign set into the southwest face reading “UDOR TOWER”. A recent DCR-funded preservation plan prepared for the Longfellow Municipal Center includes the tower in a landscape design that extends from Fletcher Street on the north, to Central Street on the east, to the Blackstone River on the south and west. A 2007 structural engineering evaluation classifies the masonry as “single leaf” construction and in generally excellent condition. It is a contributing feature of the Central Street National Register Historic District and is considered to be an iconic landmark in the town.



Background: The tower was constructed by Charles H. Fletcher between 1877 and 1886, adjacent to a house he also built on the site, to provide water for household use. It originally included a wooden cistern in the upper portion of the tower, and a conical roof. Fletcher subsequently moved his Queen Anne style house back a short distance on Fletcher Street, and erected a three-story commercial building (no longer standing) beside the tower. It has been suggested that the “Blarney Castle” listed on Fletcher’s 1886 tax valuation was this tower, and that the word *udor* derives from the ancient Greek word for water.

Issues:

- Lack of appreciation: some residents consider the tower to be an eyesore, and recommend it be dismantled.
- Maintenance: Town lacks the means and expertise to maintain tower.
- Funding: 2007 recommendations by Structures North Consulting Engineers for stabilization work total \$70,750. The Millville Historical Commission was unable to achieve the match required by MHC for a Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF) grant to execute Phase I of the recommendations.
- Local fundraising efforts have been drained from Tower to new Senior Center and new school.

Recommendations:

- The Udor Tower might be a good focus for some creative fundraising. Fundraising efforts could focus on specific elements of the stabilization project.
- Historical Commission funds, amounting to \$500 annually, might therefore be freed up for other near-term projects associated with improvement of the Millville riverfront.
- Explore the possibility of partnering with a professional masons organization in funding or doing work on the tower. Given the interesting characteristics of the tower's stonework, this might be an attractive service project for them.



PART II

BUILDING A HERITAGE LANDSCAPE TOOLKIT



EIGHT TOOLKIT BASICS

As our communities undergo rapid land use changes, heritage landscapes are particularly threatened because they are often taken for granted. There is a broad variety of resources that communities can call upon to protect these irreplaceable resources. Below is a checklist of the basics. Each is discussed in the sections that follow and in Appendix B.

1. Know the resources: Inventory

We cannot advocate for something until we clearly identify it – in this case, the physical characteristics and historical development of the town’s historic and archeological resources. The necessary first step is to record information about the resources at the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

2. Gain recognition for their significance: National Register Listing

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation’s official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Listing brings a number of benefits including recognition, consideration when federally-or state-funded projects may impact the resource, eligibility for tax credits, and qualification for certain grant programs.

3. Engage the public: Outreach, Education and Interpretation

In order to create a community of advocates, we need to raise public awareness and broaden the base of support. This includes developing opportunities to learn about and celebrate the places and history of the town, as well as to care for them.

4. Think in context: Comprehensive and Open Space Planning

It is important that Open Space Plans and Comprehensive or Master Plans address heritage landscapes as vital features of the community, contributing not only to unique sense of place but also to environmental, recreational and economic health.

5. Develop partnerships: The Power of Collaboration

Protecting community character, respecting history, and promoting smart growth are interrelated concerns that impact heritage landscapes and require collaboration across a broad spectrum of the community. This includes communication among town boards and departments, as well as public-private partnerships.

6. Defend the resources: Zoning, Bylaw and Ordinance Mechanisms

Effective and innovative preservation tools exist in the legal and regulatory realm. These range from a wide array of zoning, bylaw and ordinance mechanisms, to incentive programs and owner-generated restrictions on land use.

7. Utilize the experts: Technical Assistance

Regulations and creative solutions for heritage landscapes are constantly changing and emerging. Public and private agencies offer technical assistance with the many issues to be addressed, including DRC, MHC, the Heritage Corridor and the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission.

8. Pay the bill: Funding Preservation

Funding rarely comes from a single source, more often depending on collaborative underwriting by private, municipal, and regional sources. Each town also has a variety of funding sources that are locally-based and sometimes site-specific.

MILLVILLE’S TOOLKIT – Current Status and Future Additions

What follows is a review of the tools that Millville already has in place, as well as a number of additional tools that fall within some of the categories noted above. The tools already in place for Millville provide a good foundation for heritage landscape preservation, but their efficacy as protection for the town’s natural and cultural resources can be significantly improved by strengthening existing measures and putting others in place. Appendix B includes extended descriptions of preservation measures; the specific applications of those tools to Millville’s resources are described below. In addition, the appendix contains a full description of further avenues and creative approaches that Millville can consider in developing a multi-pronged strategy for preservation.

Many of the recommendations that follow apply to the group of landscapes and features described above, considered within the broader context of a Millville “riverfront park.” At present, as one resident observed, much of the area *is just looking abandoned – which is what it is*. Yet participants both in the community meeting and during fieldwork at the sites clearly had a vision of the area as it might become: an integrated, well-used and useful heritage area, respectful of Millville’s past and attractive to residents, a draw for regional visitors and once again a source of community pride.

Making that vision a reality will require skill, patience, political savvy, money and – perhaps most important – strong determination. Some of the recommendations for the riverfront are self-evident. Some require extensive outlay of time, money and/or political clout. Primary among them are two preliminary requirements:

- Millville needs to clearly **define the goals** and benefits of developing its town land along the Blackstone for recreational use and cultural and natural resource protection.
- Millville needs to **involve the entire community** in this project through:
 - developing a strong coordinating board or committee,
 - engaging in ongoing public outreach,
 - hiring a permanent town planner to serve as supervisory coordinator for the project.

One tool that has been proven to be one of the single most valuable resources in protecting heritage landscapes has been the Community Preservation Act (CPA). Towns that have approved the CPA have been able to leverage funding for such activities as historic resource surveys, acquisition of conservation restrictions and open space, adaptive reuse of historic structures, and signage programs. More information about the CPA can be found in Appendix B under number 6 - Defend the Resources: Laws, Bylaws and Regulations and number 8 - Pay the Bill: Funding Preservation.

The rest of the recommendations are arranged in the same sequence as DCR’s toolkit basics checklist. These tools should be considered in combination with those recommendations made in Part I for Millville’s priority landscapes.

1. Know the resources: Inventory

Current:

According to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the town's inventory includes documentation for 275 buildings, structures and sites, primarily within the Blackstone Canal (1995), Central Street (2003), and Main Street (2006) National Register Districts. In addition, Millville has documented one precontact Indian site and nineteen historic archeological sites on MHC inventory forms.

All Millville's priority landscapes with the exception of The Oval have been inventoried in accordance with current MHC standards. A number of them are either included or mentioned in more than one Area survey or National Register District nomination.

Additions:

It is recommended that a similar, archeological survey be completed for the community but, until such time as that can be accomplished, the Historical Commission should prepare for a reconnaissance-level survey of precontact and, especially, historic industrial sites in town. This can be accomplished by gathering documentary, graphic and cartographic information on known resources. The information gathered will provide a solid basis for professional review and eventual completion of the archeological survey in accordance with MHC standards.

Document The Oval on MHC Form H and file with local and state historical commissions.

2. Gain recognition for their significance: State and National Register Listing

Current:

Millville is fortunate to have three neighboring areas designated as National Historic Districts, which incorporate 211 properties and features:

- Blackstone Canal Historic District, 1995
- Central Street Historic District, 2003
- Main Street Historic District, 2006

The Chestnut Hill Meetinghouse was listed as an individual property in 1984, and is also protected by a Preservation Restriction (2002). All of the above are automatically listed in the State Register of Historic Places.

There are no local historic districts in Millville.

Additions:

It is recommended that the Millville Historical Commission pursue designation plans with the MHC and revisit their prioritization of sites and areas for listing. A number of other areas, including the Banigan City Worker Housing, were considered potentially eligible for National Register listing.

3. Engage the public: Outreach, Education and Interpretation

At this stage in Millville's planning, public outreach is the single most important activity needed to advance the town's proposed preservation and recreational development ideas and plans. It is vital to develop a wide range of ways to reach out to the public and raise heritage landscape visibility.

In 1991, for instance, Millville held a Heritage Celebration day, a festive and family-oriented celebration of the town's rich history. Tours of historic sites, led by costumed interpreters, attracted hundreds of residents and heightened awareness.

Current:

Historical Commission members have been involved in historic tours for Millville's school children for some time. These are currently being enhanced with in-school activities.

Two Millville Historical Commission members serve as volunteer National Park Service guides. They conduct occasional walking tours in the vicinity of Millville Lock #21, just downstream from the Central Street area, and teach small group classes.

The Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor has published a walking tour guide to Millville that describes the history and significance of a number of central village sites, as well as providing brief historical background to the town as a whole.

Additions:

Develop consistent signage to be used at historic sites along the riverfront to raise community awareness and make the historic connections between landscape features more apparent.

Preservation Mass, a statewide preservation advocacy organization, is a good source of support for local preservation efforts. Millville should keep in mind the organization's annual *10 Most Endangered* program as way to advocate for resources that are imminently threatened.

Most important to the success of this project is an early and intensive effort to educate and engage Millville residents from all parts of town as to the range of benefits to be derived from the envisioned riverfront improvements – not just those residents within walking distance, or those who are “preservation-minded.” Local cable programming, short feature articles in regional newspapers, and the Town's website are all low-cost media that can widely disseminate information and encourage broad-based support for this project.

4. Think in context: Comprehensive and Open Space Planning

Current:

Millville prepared a Land Use Master Plan in 1995 that was adopted by the Planning Board. Concerns regarding the impact of commercial development on residential areas led to the plan's not being formally acted on by Town Meeting. The plan is a very thorough and well-thought-out document, conscious of community character and heritage landscapes in Millville. There are many specific recommendations for zoning mechanisms and amenities that will protect and strengthen the town's heritage landscapes.

A number of other, more specific planning initiatives have also taken place in recent years, that specifically impact the downtown and the riverfront area.

- Longfellow Municipal Center Landscape Preservation Plan; 1999.
- Udor Tower structural report; 2007.
- National Register District nominations (see above); 1995, 2003, 2006.
- Results of charrette following town acquisition of 181 Main Street property; 2001.
- Plan for Blackstone River Bikeway
- MassHighway plan and locally-negotiated terms for Central Street bridge work and materials storage

Additions:

Revisit the Land Use Plan, work to resolve the conflicts that prevented its approval by Town Meeting, adopt the Plan and lay out an action plan for its implementation. As mentioned, Millville needs to clearly define the goals and benefits of developing its town land along the Blackstone for recreational use and cultural and natural resource protection. To begin, revisit the plans and studies that have already been prepared for the riverfront area. Edit and amalgamate the information and proposals into a cohesive strategic action plan with which to move forward.

Supplement strategic plan with any further research needed on current conditions (for instance, a historic structures report and Chapter 21E report for U.S. Rubber company property)

In addition, Millville needs an Open Space and Recreation Plan, both to plan for protection and improvement of its open space resources and to make funding available for the town from the state's Division of Conservation Resources. Highlight the issues and opportunities associated with Millville riverfront planning, as they are detailed in the present reconnaissance report.

5. Develop Partnerships: the Power of Collaboration

The Land Use Plan recommended that permit applications for structures in the vicinity of the Town's National Register Districts be submitted by the Building Inspector to the Historical Commission for recommendations concerning ways to preserve the visual and historic integrity of the area. This kind of collaboration would be very helpful for Millville as it works to achieve the multiple objectives of preservation and growth, and has been successful in other communities.

More specifically in regard to conservation and multi-use recreational development of the riverfront, collaboration is not a goal, but rather a necessity. The first step in collaboration is to establish a Steering or Heritage Landscape Committee composed

of selected stakeholder representatives, to guide the planning and implementation of the Park through to completion.

The number and range of present stakeholders – to say nothing of potential new partners – is impressive. The Steering Committee needs to look to and work with all of the stakeholders in one way or another to realize its vision. Stakeholders include:

- Town of Millville
- Millville Historical Commission and Historical Society
- Massachusetts Historical Commission (historic and archaeological resources)
- MassHighway (District 3)
- Private landowners including Lece Realty and Banigan City homeowners
- Millville Senior Center
- Department of Conservation and Recreation (Blackstone Bikeway; Millville Lock)
- National Park Service (Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor)
- Providence and Worcester Railroad (landowner; right of way; public access; fall foliage train tours)
- Blackstone River Association (water quality; recreational use of waterway)

It is vital that there be strong links between community economic development, open space, and recreation agendas in order to successfully address Millville’s environmental and development challenges. There should be regular joint meetings of the town boards involved with land-based and cultural resource issues. This scheduled interaction will help to maintain communication, coordinate planning priorities, and advance programs that support and promote community character and heritage landscapes.

6. Defend the Resources: Zoning, Bylaw and Ordinance Mechanisms

Current Mechanisms

Village Center Zoning: Millville adopted Village Center Zoning to preserve the character of the village center by modifying setbacks and encouraging a compact growth pattern.

Additional Mechanisms

Open Space Zoning is recommended in the Land Use Plan, which includes a thorough description of the mechanism. This plan and its recommendations have not yet been enacted. The town did, however, recently apply for a smart growth grant to create an open space residential development.

Adopt Site Plan Review as recommended in the Land Use Plan, which allows a Town board to obtain detailed information on a proposed development and assess its impacts on the neighborhood and the town. Millville is the only town in the Blackstone Valley without a Site Plan review provision.

Adopt the Scenic Roads Act (MGL Chapter 40-15C) as recommended in the 1995 Land Use Plan and designate roads for which there would be review and approval for the removal of trees and stone walls within the right-of-way.

Develop policies and implementation standards for road maintenance and reconstruction, including bridge reconstruction, 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 higher than those funded by MassHighway Department.

Concerning historic preservation specifically, it is important for Millville to move beyond National Register designation and consider additional protective mechanisms that would preserve privately-held parcels within the riverfront area, such as the Hall House property and The Oval. Three strategies have consistently proven effective as basic preservation tools in communities throughout Massachusetts.

Demolition Delay Bylaws provide a time period in which towns can explore alternatives to demolition. The Millville Historical Commission should work with MHC staff to develop a bylaw that would best suit Millville's needs. They should also work with other town groups to publicize the advantages of a demolition delay bylaw to the community. The most valuable aspect of this bylaw is that it creates space within which to have a conversation about how private and public needs can both be met in the service of preservation. Many towns have found that a delay of one year is the most effective time frame within which to negotiate alternatives to demolition. A majority of the bylaws apply to all structures built over 50 years ago, in accordance with federal standards.

Neighborhood Architectural Conservation Districts (NACD), further explained in Appendix B, are local initiatives that recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected. Banigan City is a good example of a neighborhood that would benefit from such local designation.

Local Historic Districts (LHD), further explained in Appendix B, are also local initiatives and the strongest form of protection to preserve special areas with distinctive buildings and places. Millville's Land Use Plan recommended this as a preservation mechanism, particularly given the residential development pressures that will increasingly be exerted on the town.

7. Utilize the experts: Technical Assistance

There are many sources of technical assistance to which Millville can turn for guidance on the varied issues associated with this cluster of priority landscapes. Staff from the Blackstone Heritage Corridor, from the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and from the Massachusetts Historical Commission, are knowledgeable and helpful in the areas of preservation and conservation planning, as well as being able to connect local proponents with other regional and governmental sources of support.

A list indicating the wide range of available governmental and non-profit sources of technical assistance can be found in Appendix B.

8. Pay the bill: Funding Preservation

It is clear that Millville's small size and limited tax base make it impossible for the town to foot more than a small portion of the bill for the envisioned riverfront project. The town can make a big dent in its share of the bottom line, however, through passage of the Community Preservation Act as soon as possible. In consequence of this action, Millville would create a matching-funds base that could be earmarked for open space acquisition (The Oval), historic preservation (Udor Tower; Mill Office), recreation (riverfront planning and development), and other aspects of the larger project.

There are numerous other funding sources that can be tapped for the Millville riverfront project, but their identification, and the exact role they might play, is dependent on completion of the planning process described in #4.

See Appendix B of this report for an overview of preservation funding sources. Millville's heritage landscape along the Blackstone engages the interests of organizations and agencies well beyond the preservation community, however, and many of these may prove to be useful investment partners.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Millville's residents have a strong sense of place, defined by the town's varied natural features and the historic land use patterns that grew out of them. The town has already done extensive documentation and evaluation of the most significant buildings and sites in the vicinity of the Blackstone. It must now also look beyond these resources to the landscapes, streetscapes, rural roads, neighborhoods and other natural and cultural assets that more broadly define the community's character. Like most municipalities, Millville is facing multiple pressures for change that will have permanent impact on land-based uses and natural resources. Special places within the community that were once taken for granted are now more vulnerable than ever to change.

The Millville Reconnaissance Report is a critical tool in starting to identify the rich and diverse heritage landscapes in Millville and in developing creative preservation strategies and partnerships. Millville will have to determine the best ways and sequence in which to implement the recommendations discussed above. The town would do well to form a Heritage Landscape Committee, as described in DCR's publication, *Reading the Land*.

Some of the landscapes identified in this report will benefit from further documentation in accordance with MHC guidelines. The documentation in turn will provide an information base for the local publicity needed to build consensus and gather public support for landscape preservation. Implementing many of the recommendations in this report will require a concerted effort by, and partnerships among municipal boards and agencies, local non-profit organizations, and regional and state agencies and commissions.

There are no quick fixes for the challenges of managing growth and funding preservation. Many of the recommended tasks and approaches will require cooperation and negotiation to be successful. They will require time and a good dose of patience, as volunteer schedules, legislative procedures, and funding cycles try to mesh.

Circulating this Reconnaissance Report is an essential first step. The recommendations should be presented to the Board of Selectmen, who represented Millville in its application to the Heritage Landscape Inventory program. Copies of the report should be available on the town's web site and distributed to town departments and boards, particularly Millville's Historical Commission, Planning Board, and Conservation Commission and will also be useful for the Millville Historical Society, neighborhood associations, local land trusts, and other preservation organizations. Finally, a reference copy belongs in the town library. All of these circulation efforts will broaden citizen awareness, and result in increased interest and support for Millville's heritage landscapes.

Finally, the project team suggests that the following recommendations be the top three priorities for Millville as the town works to protect the character of its community:

1. Create a Millville Riverfront Steering Committee to oversee planning and development of the town's heritage riverfront.
2. Engage Millville's citizens in heritage planning and activity.
3. Work for passage of the CPA in Millville.

APPENDIX A

MILLVILLE HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

This list was generated by local participants at the Heritage Landscape Identification meeting held in Millville on March 15, 2007 and follow-up fieldwork on April 30, 2007. **There are undoubtedly other heritage landscapes that were not identified at the HLI meeting noted above.** The chart has two columns, the name and location of the resource are in the first; notes about the resource are in the second. Landscapes are grouped by land use category. Abbreviations used are listed below.

APR = Agricultural Preservation Restriction
 LHD = Local Historic District
 PR = Preservation Restriction

CR = Conservation Restriction
 NR = National Register
Bold = Priority Landscape

Summary of Priority Landscapes:

Blackstone River
“The Oval”
Woonsocket Rubber Co. Mill Office
Edward S. Hall House
Banigan City Workers Housing
Banigan City Schoolyard
Udor Tower

Agriculture	
DiCecco Farm	house and fields; raise horses; some acreage developed as house lots.
stone silo Vineyard St.	short stone silo remnant, part of Medric Ethier farm property
Archaeology	
Old Red Bridge	site by Blackstone River and Canal includes granite abutments of wooden covered bridge between Banigan City and U.S. Rubber Co.
Civic / Institutional	
Banigan City Schoolyard Prospect & Hope Sts.	site of school, of which stone foundation and steps remain; now open space adjacent to new senior center (located in Cole’s Field)
Chestnut Hill Meetinghouse Thayer St. + Chestnut Hill Rd	with cemetery; built 1769 as Mendon’s South Parish meetinghouse. Georgian, square-plan two-story clapboard structure. NRI 1984; PR 2002
Old Millville Cemetery Chestnut Hill & Main Sts	earliest known cemetery in town

Wilson Family Cemetery Providence St.	
Wilson Cemetery Central St.	
Norden Cemetery	located in Uxbridge and Millville; founded by benevolent society of Scandinavian millworkers.
St. John's Church Central St.	stone building
New Hope Baptist Church Central Street	Originally a Lutheran church, now home to a Baptist congregation.
Longfellow Municipal Center Fletcher St.	Brick building, originally Longfellow School (1851); annex, now police station, was built as nursery/kindergarten addition
little red schoolhouse Chestnut Hill Rd	now private home
Polish American Citizens Club Ironstone St.	Civic institution representative of a prominent ethnic group in town.
VFW/American Legion Post	now closed
Commercial / Industrial	
Mill Office 181 Main St.	brick mill-office building of U.S. Rubber Co., now town-owned. Only substantial building remaining of town's largest employer.
Udor Tower off Central St.	cylindrical stone water tower for commercial building (no longer standing) on Central St. in front of the current Municipal Center.
blacksmith shop	said to be inspiration for Longfellow's <i>Village Blacksmith</i> .
Millville Lock #21	best preserved lock on Blackstone Canal; owned by the Commonwealth and managed by DCR; intended to be developed as park and trail but presently no access except small pedestrian walkway.
granite quarry	
Miscellaneous	
Blackstone River and Canal	Includes associated historic, scenic and potential recreational resources; focus of interest is on area around and including the island at Central St..
theme: viewscapes	- from Carroll Property - from Mayflower Hill beyond lock, looking toward river - from behind Bergeron House on Lincoln St - from Main St. east end: south-facing vista of river, railroad bridge, lock area; twinkling lights of town at night.
theme: stone walls	throughout town
Open Space/ Recreation/ Parks	
"The Oval"	old baseball field built by U. S. Rubber Co for industrial league games; presently privately owned; adjacent to 181 Main St. town-owned property.

Roswell-King property	town land behind new elementary school; includes trail down into deep valley, improved with bridge over seasonal stream built as Eagle Scout project; landscape includes exposed rock face, deep pool. “You’d think you were in the middle of nowhere;” “kind of a special place”.
Soldiers Memorial Park	
Town Hall Park	now open space; was location of original town hall
Mansfield Pond	
pond near Hill St.	
Residential	
Edward S. Hall House Central Street	aka Lalor House; c. 1840-50; Greek Revival style with pillared portico. Located in Central St NHD, adjacent to town-owned 181 Main St.
Banigan City Workers Housing Hope + Prospect Sts.	duplex houses built by U.S. Rubber Co, c. 1885.
Main St / Chestnut Hill	mid-19 th century terraced housing; one brick house c. 1850.
Chesley St.	worker cottages
Preston St.	triple-deckers on steep hillside
Central Street Historic District	National Register District, 2003
Main Street Historic District	National Register District 2006
Transportation	
Triad Bridge	three-tier railroad crossing of Blackstone River; proposed Blackstone bikeway designed to cross on this bridge
Grand Trunk Railway rail bed	one section, near Harkness Road, used to be “a nice Sunday afternoon walk”; abutments visible on Central Street constructed for overpass. Grand Trunk railbed, c. 1912-1915, was never completed.
Thayer Street	scenic road: winding; stone walls; some new houses
Quaker Street	scenic road

APPENDIX B

GUIDE TO PRESERVATION AND PLANNING TOOLS FOR HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

Preservation planning is a four-step process: **identification, evaluation, education and protection**. Within the realm of protection, there is a vast array of tools that communities can call upon and that are most effective when used in combination with one another. Stewardship of these resources involves education and community support, planning with a clear set of goals, and regulatory mechanisms.

Three useful documents to consult when planning preservation strategies are:

- ◆ Department of Conservation and Recreation, *Reading the Land*
- ◆ Massachusetts Historical Commission, *Survey Manual*
- ◆ Massachusetts Historical Commission, *Preservation through Bylaws and Ordinances*

The following eight sections – based on the Toolkit Basics – detail the resources and strategies available for heritage landscape preservation—from documentation and evaluation, to public education, to regulating activities and finding the revenue necessary to fund the effort.

1. KNOW THE RESOURCES: INVENTORY

The vital first step in developing preservation strategies for heritage landscapes is to record information about the resources on MHC inventory forms. One cannot advocate for something unless one knows precisely what it is – the physical characteristics and the historical development.

Survey methodology has advanced since the early work of the 1980s. If a community had survey work done during that time period, it is time for an inventory update, looking at resources in a more comprehensive and connected way than may have been done at that time. Even if survey work is more recent, there may be a need to document more resources throughout the community.

Using the Massachusetts Historical Commission survey methodology:

- ◆ Compile a list of resources that are under-represented or not thoroughly researched, beginning with heritage landscapes.
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Record a wide range of historic resources including landscape features and industrial resources.
- ◆ Conduct a community-wide archaeological reconnaissance survey to identify patterns of prehistoric and historic occupation and to identify known and probable locations of archaeological resources associated with these patterns. Known and potential precontact and historic archaeological sites should be professionally field-checked to evaluate cultural

associations and integrity. A professional archaeologist is one who meets the professional qualifications (950 CMR 70.01) outlined in the State Archaeologist Permit Regulations (950 CMR 70.00).

NOTE: The Inventory of Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth contains sensitive information about archaeological sites. The inventory is confidential; it is not a public record (G.L. c. 9, ss. 26A (1)). Care should be taken to keep archaeological site information in a secure location with restricted access. Refer to the MHC article "Community-Wide Archaeological Surveys" which appeared in Preservation Advocate, Fall 2005, and which can be found at the following MHC link: <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcpdf/pafall05.pdf>.

2. GAIN RECOGNITION FOR THEIR SIGNIFICANCE: NATIONAL REGISTER LISTING

Survey work includes evaluation of whether resources meet the qualifications for National Register listing. This will provide new information about the eligibility of properties. Using the information generated in the survey work and the accompanying National Register evaluations, expand your town's National Register program.

- ◆ Develop a National Register listing plan, taking into consideration a property's or area's integrity and vulnerability. Properties in need of recognition in order to advance preservation strategies should be given priority.

3. ENGAGE THE PUBLIC: OUTREACH, EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

The best stewards and advocates for heritage landscape protection are members of the community. There are many ways to communicate the importance of these special places to the public, and to connect their preservation with the shared values and goals that community members have already expressed in various planning documents and forums.

Think creatively about how to educate the community about the values and threats to heritage landscapes, and how each town resident benefits from these special places. Use a combination of strategies to get the word out about heritage landscapes and preservation of community character, including:

- ◆ **Festivals and Tours** – Tours are a great way to draw attention to the history around us, and to engage more people in caring for it. Consider hosting a Heritage Celebration Day including tours and family-friendly activities, or plan a celebration around a particular place or area on a meaningful date. Make sure events are well publicized.
- ◆ **Signage and Banners** – Signs are a very effective way to announce special historic sites and districts. Banners can also bring attention to the significance of an area and make a celebratory statement about its contribution to the town.
- ◆ **Written Materials** – Clear, concise and engaging written material with engaging illustrations is a reliable way to relay information about community character and heritage landscapes. Make use of fact sheets and flyers to get the word out on particular issues such as a town ordinance that protects heritage landscapes, a threat that needs to be addressed, or an upcoming event.

- ◆ **School Curricula** – Start teaching at a young age. Children are very receptive to engaging stories, and there are no better stories to excite childrens’ imaginations and build pride of place than stories of their town’s past and present. Teachers have an opportunity to connect history with environmental issues through classroom study, hands-on history projects, and field exploration of a town’s heritage landscapes. Subsequently, students have an opportunity to teach their parents that preservation is everybody’s business.
- ◆ **Lectures and Workshops** – Use these forums to raise awareness, educate at a deeper level about the community’s history and its resources, and broaden the base of interest.
- ◆ **Website** – Keep Historical Commission and local historical organizations’ entries on the town’s website current, and include information about issues, proposals for preservation strategies, and upcoming events.
- ◆ **Press Releases** – Use all avenues including press releases to keep the public informed when a meeting or event is about to occur. Work with local reporters to develop special interest articles that highlight landscape resources.

Remember that bringing an issue or a heritage landscape to people’s attention once will have only short-term effect. Outreach, education and interpretation must be ongoing concerns that involve preservation and conservation interests, teachers and community organizations in repeated projects to attract and engage the general public.

4. THINK IN CONTEXT: COMPREHENSIVE AND OPEN SPACE PLANNING

Communities use a variety of planning exercises and documents to define their goals and vision of the future, address community-wide issues, and recommend measures to respond to them. There are state mandates for towns to prepare Comprehensive or Master Plans and Open Space and Recreation Plans.

- ◆ Comprehensive or Master Plans provide an important frame of reference for land use decisions, and incorporate all of a community’s issues including economic development, housing and transportation into an integrated plan. Heritage landscapes need to be seen through the lenses of community character, historic preservation, environmental health, and economic viability and growth. Their future and the values they contribute should be addressed within these multiple perspectives, not solely as historical assets of the community.
- ◆ Like Comprehensive Plans, Open Space Plans look holistically at the community—its history, demographics and growth patterns, and current conditions—to make recommendations that protect open space and natural resources for ecological health and public benefits. The Heritage Landscape Inventory Program provides a framework for looking at these important resources, and this new understanding should be incorporated into Open Space Plans.

5. DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS: THE POWER OF COLLABORATION

Because heritage landscapes encompass such a broad range of resources and issues—from preservation of town centers, scenic roads and river corridors to promotion of smart growth and economic development – stewardship of these resources involves many interests in a community. It is essential that there be good communication between the many departments and committees that address issues related to heritage landscapes. Collaboration between public and private partners is also an essential element in a successful

preservation strategy. National Heritage Corridor personnel are helpful guides to partnership opportunities for projects you may have in mind.

- ◆ Broaden the base. Preservation, particularly preservation of landscapes, is not just for the Historical Commission. It is important that the cause not be marginalized by those who view preservation as opposed to progress, or to personal interests. A look at DCR's *Reading the Land* shows the range of organizations and viewpoints that value heritage landscapes.
- ◆ Nurture public-private partnerships. Friends groups, neighborhood associations, and local land trusts all have important roles to play to spread the word, and to expand the capacity of the public sector to care for heritage landscapes.
- ◆ Take advantage of forums created to share issues and ideas. For instance, the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources offers a "cluster" format for monthly discussion and information exchange meetings among area farmers.
- ◆ Share resources across communities. Towns that lack funding for a town planner position, for instance, have found that "sharing" a planner with another community can be quite effective.

6. DEFEND THE RESOURCES; LAWS, BYLAWS AND REGULATIONS

A wide range of laws, bylaws and regulations is available to protect heritage landscapes. Following are brief descriptions of some of the most widely used and/or most effective of these tools, arranged alphabetically.

Adaptive Reuse Overlay District

An Adaptive Reuse Overlay District is superimposed on one or more established zoning districts in order to permit incentive-based reuses of existing built properties. These districts can be created to allow for the adaptive reuse of properties of a certain kind, or within a specified area within a community. As an overlay zone, all regulations pertaining to the underlying zone apply, except to the extent that the overlay zone modifies or provides for alternatives to the underlying requirements.

Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APR)

This program, managed by the Department of Agricultural Resources, offers to pay farmers the difference between the "fair market value" and the "agricultural value" of farmland located on prime agricultural soils, in exchange for a permanent deed restriction which precludes any use of the property that will have a negative impact on its agricultural viability. This program is different from the *Chapter 61* program, which provides tax incentives for short term restrictions.

Community Preservation Act

The Community Preservation Act is statewide enabling legislation that allows communities to assemble funds for historic preservation, open space protection and affordable housing through a local property tax surcharge (up to 3%, with some allowable exemptions) and state matching funds. These funds can support a wide variety of activities, including inventory and documentation of historic resources, restoration and acquisition.

Conservation Restrictions (CR)

A permanent deed restriction between a landowner and a holder - usually a public agency or a private land trust; whereby the grantor agrees to limit the use of his/her property for the purpose of protecting certain conservation values in exchange for tax benefits. EOEEA's Division of Conservation Services

provides assistance to landowners, municipalities, and land trusts regarding conservation restrictions and has produced *The Massachusetts Conservation Restriction Handbook* as a guide to drafting conservation restrictions.

Corridor Protection Overlay District

A Corridor Protection Overlay District is intended to promote appropriate development within a given corridor, serving to protect natural (and sometimes cultural) resources. As an overlay zone, all regulations pertaining to the underlying zone apply, except to the extent that the overlay zone modifies or provides for alternatives to the underlying requirements. The Corridor Protection Overlay District can be used cooperatively by adjoining communities to help maintain continuous protection across town lines.

Demolition Delay Bylaw

With a Demolition Delay Bylaw, requests for a permit to demolish a historic building must first be reviewed and approved by the local historical commission. Demolition Delay Bylaws are either list-based (applying only to a specific list of buildings that have been previously identified), age based (applying to all buildings that are older than a certain age – typically 50 years), or categorical (applying only to resources that meet a specific criteria, such as having been documented on Massachusetts Historical Commission forms). If the historical commission does not approve of the demolition and deems a structure significant, it can impose a delay period, during which time the property owner is encouraged to explore alternatives to demolition. Delay periods of 6 months are common, although communities are increasingly adopting delay periods of up to one year.

Design Review

Design Review is a non-regulatory process that is undertaken by a town appointed Design Review Board. The board reviews the design of new construction and additions – typically those taking place in already built-up areas. Recommendations are made to the planning board to help preserve appropriate building patterns and architectural styles, with the goal of maintaining the overall character of a given area. Design Review Boards often limit their review to exterior architectural features, site design and signage.

Downtown Revitalization Zoning

Downtown Revitalization Zoning seeks to encourage businesses to locate in downtowns. Zoning of this nature is typically written to be attractive to businesses of a certain kind that would work well within the given infrastructure and transportation needs, but can also incorporate some of the same elements as Village Center Zoning (see below), such as encouraging mixed use development at a pedestrian-friendly scale, with minimal setbacks and offsite parking.

Flexible Development Zoning

Flexible Development Zoning allows for greater flexibility and creativity when subdividing land, to conform and work with the natural and cultural resources of a site and minimize alteration or damage to these resources, rather than follow standard requirements of subdivision regulations. While this does not prevent land from being subdivided, it does allow for the protection of some features, serves to preserve some undeveloped land, and promotes better overall site planning.

Local Historic Districts (LHD)

LHDs recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and their settings are preserved. They offer the strongest form of protection available for historic resources. LHDs are administered by a Local Historic District Commission (distinct from the community's Local Historical Commission), which reviews proposed exterior changes to buildings within the district. The kinds of changes that are reviewed vary according to the terms of the local bylaw.

Neighborhood Architectural Conservation Districts (NCD)

Neighborhood Architectural Conservation Districts (sometimes known as Neighborhood Conservation Districts) are local initiatives that recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of the neighborhood are important. They are less restrictive than Local Historic Districts in that they focus on a few key architectural elements and massing, scale, and setback in an effort to embrace overall neighborhood character. As in Local Historic Districts, changes are reviewed by a Neighborhood Architectural Conservation District Commission.

Open Space Zoning

Open Space Zoning – also known as Cluster Development Bylaw, Open Space Communities Zoning, Open Space Development Overlay District, Open Space Preservation Subdivision, or Open Space Residential Development – allows greater density than would otherwise be permitted on a parcel, in an effort to preserve open space. Typically, construction is limited to half of the parcel, while the remaining land is permanently protected under a conservation restriction.

Right to Farm Bylaw

A Right to Farm Bylaw asserts the rights of farmers to pursue agricultural activities, provides community support for farming activities and requires dispute resolution so that abutters cannot make nuisance claims. Agricultural landscapes are widely considered to be significant heritage landscapes for which there is constant concern of potential development. This bylaw serves to help active farmers remain just that - active.

Scenic Overlay District Zoning

Scenic Overlay District Zoning protects scenic vistas by providing for a no-disturb buffer on private lands, thereby helping to maintain specific viewpoints. This type of zoning is more far-reaching than a Scenic Roads Bylaw (see below) and may be applied to numbered routes.

Scenic Roads Bylaw

The Scenic Roads Bylaw requires that a public hearing be held prior to the removal of any trees or stone walls that fall within the public right of way on a designated scenic road. Depending on how it is written, the bylaw may apply to a predetermined list of roads or encompass all roads in a community (other than numbered routes). The bylaw applies whenever there is any public or private impact to trees or stone walls within the right of way, including activities such as road widening, utility company work or creating private driveways.

Scenic Vista Protection Bylaw

Scenic Vista Protection Bylaws require additional design criteria for any proposals for new construction in areas that are determined by the town to be a scenic vista. Vistas may encompass natural, cultural and historic features.

Shade Tree Act

The Shade Tree Act is a part of MGL Chapter 87, which defines all trees within the public way as public shade trees. The municipal Tree Warden is responsible for the care, maintenance and protection of all public shade trees (except those along state highways). Trimming or removal of any public shade trees greater than 1.5” in diameter requires a public hearing. Chapter 87 applies to all communities; however, some communities have adopted their own Shade Tree Act Bylaws that provide stricter regulations than those mandated in Chapter 87.

Site Plan Review

Site Plan Review provides the planning board (and other boards and committees, depending how the bylaw is written) with an opportunity to consider a variety of community concerns – such as impacts to

vehicular circulation, scenic vistas, topography and natural resources – during the permit process. Boards may comment on site plans and request changes to the design. Site Plan Review is typically limited to large scale projects and tied to the special permit process.

Smart Growth Zoning – Chapter 40R

Smart Growth Zoning (Chapter 40R) provides financial rewards to communities that adopt special overlay zoning districts allowing as-of-right high density residential development in areas near transit stations, areas of concentrated development, or areas that are suitable for residential or mixed use development. Such zoning can help direct compact growth to areas that are already developed – such as historic village centers – thereby discouraging growth in less suitable areas.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

TDR is a regulatory technique that allows a landowner to separate building or development rights from the property and sell them, receiving compensation for preserving land and allowing for the development to occur in areas selected for higher density projects. In essence, development rights are "transferred" from one district (the "sending district") to another (the "receiving district"). As a result, development densities are shifted within the community to achieve both open space preservation and economic goals without changing overall development potential.

Village Center Zoning

The goal of Village Center Zoning is to meet the needs of a small-scale, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly area by encouraging compact development. New construction is required to be built at a scale that is compatible with the neighborhood and to have a reduced (or no) setback from the street. Parking may be directed to discourage large lots in front of buildings. Village Center Zoning shares many similarities with Traditional Neighborhood Development, and the terms are sometimes used interchangeably.

Wetlands Protection Act and Bylaws

The Wetlands Protection Act (MGL Chapter 131, Section 40) protects wetlands by requiring a careful review by local conservation commissions of proposed work that may alter wetlands. The law also protects floodplains, riverfront areas, land under water bodies, waterways, salt ponds, fish runs and the ocean. Communities may also adopt their own Wetlands Protection Bylaw, providing stricter regulations than those mandated in Chapter 131.

7. UTILIZE THE EXPERTS: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Beyond DCR and the Heritage Corridor, technical assistance is available from many governmental and non-profit sources, most often free of charge to municipalities and non-profit organizations.

- ◆ [American Farmland Trust](#): Clearinghouse of information supporting farmland protection and stewardship.
- ◆ [Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission](#): The regional planning agency charged with assisting communities with local planning efforts in this region.
- ◆ [Citizen Planner Training Collaborative](#): Provides local planning and zoning officials with training opportunities and online information; they also hold an annual conference to support land use planning.
- ◆ [Green Valley Institute](#): Provides technical assistance about land use planning to communities within the Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor. Web site and publications contain information of use to communities throughout the region.
- ◆ [Massachusetts Historical Commission](#): Provides technical assistance as well as grants to municipalities and nonprofits for preservation planning and restoration projects.

- ◆ [New England Small Farm Institute](#): A non-profit dedicated to providing technical assistance, information and training to farmers.
- ◆ [The Trustees of Reservations](#): Offers conservation and landscape protection workshops, publications and connections through the **Putnam Conservation Institute**. The Trustees also manages a unique **Conservation Buyer Program** that links interested sellers with conservation-minded buyers and assists with establishing permanent property protection mechanisms.
- ◆ [Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources](#) is the state agency dedicated to supporting the agricultural activities in the state through special initiatives, programs and technical assistance.
- ◆ [The Trust for Public Land](#) is a national non-profit that assists municipalities with land conservation efforts.

8. PAY THE BILL: FUNDING PRESERVATION

Funding for preservation projects is an important aspect of implementing strategies to protect heritage landscapes. There are local, state, regional, national and non-profit funding programs and resources that can assist communities in preservation and land conservation-related issues. The availability of such assistance varies from year to year and private property is not always eligible for funding. Examples include:

Local Funding Assistance

- ◆ Towns that have adopted the **Community Preservation Act (CPA)** find it to be an excellent funding source for many heritage landscape projects. While tricky to pass in lean economic times, the number and types of projects that are benefiting across the Commonwealth makes the CPA worthy of consideration. Such projects include MHC inventory, National Register nominations, cemetery preservation, open space acquisition and preservation and restoration of public buildings. The CPA (M.G.L. Chapter 44B) establishes a mechanism by which cities and towns can develop a fund dedicated to historic preservation, open space and affordable housing. Local funds are collected through a 0.5% to 3% surcharge on each annual real estate tax bill. At the state level, the Commonwealth has established a dedicated fund which is used to match the municipality's collections under the CPA. The amount of the surcharge is determined by ballot vote at a local election.

Adoption of the Community Preservation Act, by a majority vote on a ballot question, fosters **partnerships** among historic preservationists, conservationists and affordable housing advocates. At least 10% of the funds must be used to preserve historic resources; at least 10% must be used to protect open space; and at least 10% must be used to advance affordable housing. The remaining 70% must be used for one of these three uses as well as recreational needs and can be distributed in varying proportions depending upon the projects that the city or town believes are appropriate and beneficial to the municipality. Additional information about the CPA can be found at www.communitypreservation.org.

- ◆ Municipalities can establish **land acquisition funds**, increasing their revenue from sources such as an annual fixed line item in the municipal budget; income from forestry, farming and leasing of town-owned land; gifts and bequests; grants and foundation funding; and passage of the CPA, detailed above.

State Funding Assistance

Funding for a variety of preservation projects, primarily for municipalities and non-profit, is available through the [Massachusetts Historical Commission \(MHC\)](#), the EOEEA [Division of Conservation Services](#) (DCS), the [Department of Conservation and Recreation](#) (DCR) and other state agencies. Further information on these programs is available on the agency websites.

- ◆ **MHC Survey and Planning Grants** support survey, National Register and a wide variety of preservation planning projects.
- ◆ The **Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF)**, administered through the MHC, funds restoration and rehabilitation projects.
- ◆ Towns that have a local historic district bylaw may apply for **Certified Local Government (CLG)** status which is granted by the National Park Service (NPS) through the MHC. At least 10% of the MHC's yearly federal funding allocation is distributed to CLG communities through Survey and Planning matching grants. To become a CLG, the town completes an application; after being accepted as a CLG, it files a report yearly on the status of applications, meetings, and decisions; in return the town may apply for the matching grant funding that the MHC awards competitively to CLGs annually. Presently 18 cities and towns in Massachusetts are CLGs. **NOTE:** CLG status is dependent in part on a municipality having at least one [Local Historical District](#) as evidence of the community's commitment to historic preservation.

Open Space Plans, with a requirement of updating the plan every five years, make a community eligible for **Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA) grants** and technical assistance programs through the Department of Conservation Services.

- ◆ The [Massachusetts Self-Help Program](#) of DCS assists local conservation commissions in acquiring land for the purposes of natural and cultural resource protection and passive outdoor recreation.
- ◆ The [Massachusetts Urban Self-Help Program](#), another DCS initiative, is geared toward assisting towns and cities in acquiring and developing land for park and outdoor recreation purposes.
- ◆ DCS [Conservation Partnership Grants](#) assist non-profits in acquiring interests in land for conservation or recreation, and have also been used in the past to help protect active agricultural lands.
- ◆ The [Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund](#), distributed through the DCS, can support heritage landscape protection by providing up to 50% of the total project cost for the acquisition or renovation of park, recreation or conservation areas. Municipalities, special districts and state agencies are eligible to apply.

The **Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)** administers a variety of grant programs that can help with heritage landscape preservation:

- ◆ [Urban and Community Forestry](#) grants fund projects which will result in sustained improvements in local capacity for excellent urban and community forestry management.

- ◆ The [Recreational Trails Grant](#) Program provides funding on a reimbursement basis for a variety of recreational trail protection, construction, and stewardship projects.

The Department of Agricultural Resources [Farm Viability Enhancement Program](#) works with farmers to develop sound business plans and funding assistance to implement them.

Regional and Non-Profit Funding Assistance

- ◆ The [John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission's Heritage Partnership Program](#) supports projects in corridor towns that further the Corridor goals of historic preservation, community revitalization, ecological restoration, land use planning, riverway development and educating people about the Valley's heritage. Communities and organizations located within the Corridor are eligible to receive funding, subject to availability.
- ◆ [Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers National Heritage Corridor](#) provides mini-grants to member towns, supporting preservation of heritage landscapes including projects involving sustainable agriculture, river clean-ups, open space planning and natural resource conservation.
- ◆ The [Greater Worcester Community Foundation](#) provides grants to non-profit organizations for community enhancements.
- ◆ [The Trust for Public Land](#) (TPL) is a national, nonprofit, land conservation organization that conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, community gardens, historic sites, rural lands and other natural places. TPL helps communities identify and prioritize lands to be protected; secure financing for conservation; and structure, negotiate and complete land transactions. TPL's New England Office recently launched the [Worcester County Conservation Initiative](#), to accelerate the pace of land conservation in central Massachusetts by helping communities plan and finance conservation projects.
- ◆ The [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#) offers a variety of financial assistance programs. Based on the availability of funding, the National Trust awards more than \$2 million in grants and loans each year for preservation projects nationwide.
- ◆ The [Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission](#) (CMRPC) does not administer grants, but can work with communities to write grants or help them find funding.

Federal Funding Assistance

- ◆ The [Farmland and Ranchland Protection Program](#) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture has protected 85 farms to date in Massachusetts on 6,335 acres with matching funds. Eligible organizations are federally recognized Indian tribes, states, local government, and non-governmental organizations. They are required to provide 50-50 matching funds for purchase of conservation easements in land with prime, productive soils that are subject to a pending offer, for the purpose of limiting conversion to non-agricultural uses of the land.