ESSEX RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

ESSEX COUNTY LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

MASSACHUSETTS HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY PROGRAM

Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Essex National Heritage Commission

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INTRODUCTION

Essex County is known for its unusually rich and varied landscapes, which are represented in each of its 34 municipalities. Heritage landscapes are places that are created by human interaction with the natural environment. They are dynamic and evolving; they reflect the history of the 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 steps towards 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, an inland river corridor or the rocky coast. To this end, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the Essex National Heritage Commission (ENHC) have collaborated to bring the Heritage Landscape Inventory program (HLI) to communities in Essex County. The primary goal of the program is to help communities identify a wide range of landscape resources, particularly those that are significant and unprotected. The focus is on landscapes that have not been identified in previous survey efforts in a given community. 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. It is outlined in the DCR publication *Reading the Land* which has provided guidance for the program in Essex County. In short, each participating community appoints a Local Project Coordinator (LPC) to assist the DCR-ENHC consulting team. The LPC organizes a heritage landscape identification meeting at which interested residents and town officials offer community input by identifying potential heritage landscapes. This meeting is followed by a fieldwork session including the consulting team and the LPC, usually accompanied by other community members. This group visits the priority landscapes identified in the meeting and gathers information about the community. The final product is the Reconnaissance Report, prepared for each participating community. It outlines the history of the community; identifies the resources and documentation that provide background information; provides a short description of the priority heritage landscapes visited; discusses planning issues identified by the community; and concludes with a brief discussion of survey and planning recommendations. A list of all of the heritage landscapes identified by the community is included in the Appendix.

ESSEX HISTORY

Essex's distinctive coastal landscape features were instrumental in shaping the history of the community from the earliest Native American use of the land to the 19th century boat making, fishing and farming.

Native American sites date back to the Woodland period of development (1,000 B.C.E.-1,500 C.E.). The first European settlement in 1634 in Essex was known as Ipswich's Chebacco Parish. By 1673 the Essex River hosted grist and saw mills as well as boat building. The first meetinghouse was not established here until 1679 and was the center of Ipswich's eighth parish. The town remained a parish of Ipswich until 1819 when the area was incorporated as the town of Essex; however the final boundaries with Gloucester and Hamilton fluctuated until the 20th century.

The early agricultural settlement during the Plantation Period (1620-1675) in outlying areas of Essex was sustained by growing fruit and vegetable crops as well as hemp, flax and the harvesting of salt marsh hay. By the Colonial Period (1675-1775) fishing became an important part of the local economy. The saw mills on the Essex River were the sustenance of the substantial ship building industry here. Chebacco boats, characteristic of the area, were built on the Essex River and used for fishing. In fact at the turn of the 19th century there were more than 2,000 Chebaccos in Essex and nearby seafaring towns. In the early 1800s there was a shift to large ship building and ancillary businesses such as the manufacturing of ropes and lines, sails, masts, pumps and blocks. Fishing, including clamming, remained important to the economic base. For a brief time up to the 1870s, small shoe manufacturing establishments were successful, until the industry yielded to Lynn, the center of shoe making.

In the early 1800s several bridges were built over the Essex River including Great Bridge in 1824 which was a draw bridge carrying the Causeway over the River. The Essex Canal Company was established in 1820 and a canal was dredged from the Chebacco River to Fox Creek to bring lumber from the Merrimac Valley. Essex had three centers of industrial activity: at the Falls in the west, the Causeway at the central village near the mouth of the Essex River, and South Essex. These three districts were not well linked until the mid-19th century after the construction of Martin Street between the Falls and the Causeway, which already linked the central village with South Essex. The introduction of the railroad occurred in 1872 when the Essex Branch of the B&M Railroad was extended from Wenham to Essex Center. This railroad line was further extended in 1887 to South Essex and in the 1890s it connected with the Gloucester Street Railway and the Salem and Lynn Street Railway. In the early 1900s the Essex River was dredged to accommodate larger ships.

Essex's population fluctuated only slightly throughout the traditional periods of development. In the early 20th century there were 1,677 residents which dropped to 1,384 in 1940. In the second half of the 20th century the population rose substantially to 3,260 in 1990. However, this number is low compared to surrounding communities. This is accounted for in part by the lack of areas suitable for development due to the high water table, clay deposits (poor drainage) and rock ledges.

RESOURCES AND DOCUMENTATION

Inventory of Historic Assets

The Massachusetts Historical Commission's (MHC) Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets is a statewide list that identifies significant historic resources throughout the Commonwealth. In order to be included in the inventory, a property must be documented on an MHC inventory form, which is then entered into the MHC database. This searchable database, known as MACRIS, is now available online at http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc.

According to the MHC, Essex's inventory documents 98 resources dating from 1678 to 1927. Most of the documentation was completed in 1979; the survey is informative, but does not provide the level and type of detail than present day survey methodology requires. In December 2004 thorough documentation of Conomo Point as an area, prepared by a preservation planning consultant, was submitted to the MHC.

State and National Registers of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the official federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that have been determined significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture. Essex's National Register (NR) program began in 1983 with the listing of the David Burnham House on Pond Street. Subsequent listings include Cogswell's Grant in 1990 and two properties through the 1990 First Period Thematic Nomination: the George Giddings House and Barn as a district and the Benaiah Titcomb House as an individual listing. One other property, the Lt. Samuel Giddings House was recommended for listing under the First Period nomination; however only a determination of eligibility (DOE) was made. All National Register properties also are included in the State Register of Historic Places. Three Essex properties are protected by preservation restrictions drawn up in accordance with MGL Chapter 183, Sections 31-33. A preservation restriction (PR) runs with the deed and is one of the strongest preservation strategies available. All properties that have PRs filed under the state statute are automatically listed in the State Register. The Essex properties for which there are PRs include Cogswell's Grant (PR-1977), Essex Town Hall-Burnham Memorial Library (PR-1984) and the Reverend Theophilus Pickering House (PR-1982).

Planning Documents

The 1997 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) identifies land that should be preserved and establishes a time line in which to carry out the necessary actions to acquire land or interest in land. For instance one recommended course of action was to encourage the use of agricultural and conservation restrictions to preserve open space. This is directly related to the preservation of heritage landscapes. Besides guiding the protection of open space and natural resources, the town's OSRP set out tasks for expanding access to the town's natural

resources including developing trail systems to connect with regional paths, and improving access to town landings and other coastal access points.

PRIORITY HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

The Essex Heritage Landscape Identification meeting, attended by about seven residents, some representing town boards and local non-profit organizations, was held on June 18, 2004. During the meeting residents identified a lengthy list of Essex's heritage landscapes, which is included in the Appendix. Once the comprehensive list was created, attendees were asked to articulate the value of each landscape and the issues relating to its preservation. Based on the information gathered, community members identified a group of high priority heritage landscapes to be visited by the consulting team during the fieldwork. Each of the priority landscapes is highly valued, contributes to community character and is not permanently protected or preserved.

The following text describes the priority heritage landscapes that are the focus of the reconnaissance work in Essex. In most instances intensive survey work will be needed to fully document the physical characteristics and the historical development of the landscape. The heritage landscapes, which are listed in alphabetical order, represent a larger scale than a single property.

Conomo Point

Conomo Point is a small peninsula that juts out into the Essex River near its confluence with Essex Bay and the Atlantic Ocean beyond. The Point is sheltered by an area of land referred to as Robbins Island to the east (not to be confused with Robbins Island Road which is west of Conomo Point). Together these two points – Robbins Island and Conomo Point - form a tidal flats inlet. Cross Island is north of Conomo Point. The Conomo Point neighborhood is approached by Harlow Street to Conomo Point Road, which forms a loop out on the Point. Cottages are arranged along the inland side of the loop road on the north side, the water side on the south side and along the south side of Middle Road which bisects the loop of Conomo Point Road. The openness of Conomo Point, the nearby islands and peninsulas in the Essex River and Essex Bay, and the views of the River and the Bay make this neighborhood an important heritage landscape with a high degree of scenic quality. On the north side of Conomo Point Road is a small park-like greensward with benches, some shade trees and marsh land sloping to the water. The land at Conomo Point is owned by the town of Essex with long term leases (which will expire in 2011) to the cottage owners. While all the land bordering the water is public (town owned), there are two points of obvious public access to the water; a small public beach, which faces east and fronts on tidal flats; and a public landing at the northwestern end of the Conomo Point Road opposite Cross Island. Most of the houses on Conomo Point are modest late 19th and early 20th century summer cottages with some architectural elaboration. Shingled weathered sheathing covers many of the one and one-half and two story dwellings built on small lots and sited with picturesque views.

Essex River Estuary

Essex boasts one of the most interesting, picturesque and sensitive estuaries along the North Shore. The estuary comprises the river, creeks and coves, salt marsh, and tidal mud flats, beaches and landings. The Essex Salt Marsh, which is part of the Great Marsh, consists of over 1,500 acres in the town of Essex. Great Marsh extends from Cape Ann into New Hampshire and includes 17,000 acres. An interpretive sign at Ebben's Creek on Eastern Avenue tells of the vitality of this Great Marsh. Essex salt marsh acreage is along the Essex River, Ebben Creek, Lufkin Creek and the many coves in Essex Bay. Clam flats are found throughout the coastal waters of Essex and are a vital part of this immense ecological system, besides providing economic vitality to the fishermen of the area. In addition to its environmental importance, the estuary embodies the community character of Essex with some of the most beautiful and complex vistas from many vantage points in town.

John Wise Avenue Farms

Some of the richest farmland in Essex County is in the western part of town along John Wise Avenue (Rt. 133). The scenic agricultural landscape over broad meadows from this long flat road is known to residents and visitors alike. The land has been farmed for centuries and some farms are reminiscent of these past eras with some extant First Period and Second Period farmsteads. Some properties retain large barns and the distinctive poultry barns, a property type not seen elsewhere in Essex.

Scenic Roads

Nearly all of Essex's roads reflect the character of the community with views of agricultural and marine landscapes across the vast estuary. One of the more scenic roads is Apple Street which links Western Avenue to Southern Avenue. On its western end it crosses Alewife Brook where there are remnants of the granite walls in a raceway of an early mill. This hilly windy road has views of agricultural fields and some farmstead settings with house and barns. Belcher Street is a winding narrow north-south road that leads from Choate Street south to Story Street, also scenic roads. The road is lined with stone walls and heavily

wooded areas. Most dwellings are setback with buffers between the road and structures. Some narrow roads lead from main routes to the water's edge with fine scenic views of the salt marsh and tidal flats. Examples are Island Road and John Wise Road, both off of Route 133 (John Wise Avenue), and Lufkin Street and Conomo Point Road in the northeastern part of town.

Town Landings

The Open Space and Recreation Plan records 17 documented landings in Essex. They appear on the assessor's maps and are all public landings. However, many are somewhat obscure — at the end of narrow lanes, some only wide enough for pedestrian traffic. Some terminate at a small beach, others have a landing built into the water for launching a boat. Several are obstructed or not useable due to encroachment of adjacent private property users. The town landing at the western end of the Causeway is the most prominent and best known of the public landings. It is adjacent to the Essex Ship Building Museum and has public parking for town residents. A paved ramp is used to drive boat-trailers into the Essex River. A narrow mud and shell path leads to the water at the end of Island Road off John Wise Avenue. At the end of Water Street there is a tiny sand and clamshell beach which also is a public landing. Private property signs are on the grassy marshland on each side of this small landing at the end of narrow Water Street. The landing on Conomo Point comprises a stone wharf and a beach.

PLANNING

Preservation Strategies

Essex has adopted no traditional preservation strategies such as a demolition delay bylaw or a local historic district bylaw. In addition Essex has no zoning bylaw. Preservation activities for the most part have been carried on by private non-profit organizations such as the Essex Historical Society and the Essex Ship Building Museum managed by the Society, the Manchester-Essex Conservation Trust, and the Essex County Greenbelt Association, which has its headquarters in Essex.

Planning Issues

In addition to the priority landscapes listed in the previous section, residents identified general issues related to heritage landscapes and community character. These issues are listed in alphabetical order. Community members also expressed interest in learning about preservation tools and strategies that have been effective in other Massachusetts communities and in identifying sources for preservation funding.

Agricultural Fields Protection

As farming becomes less lucrative and the value of land increases, farms are being sold for development. The farms lining John Wise Avenue, Apple Street, Southern Avenue and Lifkin Street are highly valued for the fine views that they offer from the roadways. Furthermore each of the farming areas is environmentally sensitive, so that development with septic systems, additional impervious surface and changing patterns of water run-off has a negative impact on the natural and scenic resources of the area.

Estuary Protection

The highly sensitive ecological environment of the coastal area in Essex requires vigilant attention. As noted above the scenic coastal environment is central to the community character of Essex. The estuary also contributes to the economy of Essex – for the livelihood of fishermen and for its recreational value as an attraction for tourists as well as residents.

Scenic Vistas

The scenic vistas that are so fragile are of the agricultural landscape and the estuary; therefore protection of these two key characteristics of Essex will preserve the scenic vistas which draw so many to the community. The views of the Ebben's Creek house (formerly the Ebenezer Burnham shipyard workshop) from Eastern Avenue, the Hog Island Complex, the Ipswich coastline and the narrow Essex River making its way through the salt marsh are the subject of paintings, photographs and the memory of the mind's eye.

Village Center Construction and Parking

The characteristics that draw people to Essex – the scenic vistas, the recreation, the connections with the historical past of coastal life including ship building and fishing - are vulnerable. Changes necessary to accommodate visitors and residents alike often have an adverse effect on these heritage landscapes. Expansion of businesses at the Causeway and South Essex can inhibit the scenic quality of the villages. Traffic and parking also become an issue. A delicate balance is necessary to preserve the qualities that draw the people who in turn need additional or improved accommodations.

PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

Preservation planning is a three-step process: identification, evaluation and protection. Four useful documents to consult before beginning to implement preservation strategies are the Massachusetts Historical Commission's *Survey Manual* and *Preservation through Bylaws and Ordinances;* the Department of Conservation and Recreation's *Reading the Land;* and the Essex National Heritage Commission's *Essex National Heritage Area Plan*. Each publication provides necessary information for the identification, evaluation and preservation of the rich cultural heritage of the community. General recommendations are listed first, followed by more specific recommendations.

Each community will have to determine the best way to implement the recommendations discussed below. One approach that might help Essex begin the process is to form a Heritage Landscape Committee, as described in *Reading the Land*.

General Recommendations

Recommendations that apply to a broad range of resources are discussed below. These general recommendations are listed in an order in which they are most logically addressed when applying the three-step preservation planning process as described above. Thus the goal will be to (1) identify, (2) evaluate and (3) protect.

Inventory of Heritage Landscapes and other Historic Assets

The vital first step in developing preservation strategies for heritage landscapes is to record information about the resources. One cannot advocate for something unless one knows precisely what it is – the physical characteristics and the historical development. New procedures that are more comprehensive and link properties in a more coherent way than in the past may enhance Essex's survey that was completed 25 years ago. Thus, using the Massachusetts Historical Commission survey methodology, record Essex's heritage landscapes beginning with the priority landscapes listed in this report:

- Compile a list of resources that are under-represented or not sufficiently documented, beginning with heritage landscapes.
- Document unprotected resources first, beginning with threatened areas.
- Make sure to document secondary features on residential properties, such as outbuildings, garages, stone walls.
- Record histories for the First Period dwellings – the 1985 documentation focuses on structural analysis only.

National Register Program

Survey work will require National Register evaluation. This will provide new information about the eligibility of properties. The MHC has recently determined that Conomo Point is eligible for listing in the National Register as an historic district. Thus for Essex's National Register program:

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

- Complete district National Register nominations for Conomo Point which has been determined eligible and for other areas such as Causeway District, South Essex and John Wise Avenue if determined eligible after additional survey work and evaluation.

Agricultural Landscapes

Preservation of agricultural landscapes means preservation of the farming activities, otherwise, it simply is preservation of land as open space. It is important to know what the features of an agricultural landscape are and which features the community treasures in order to make a case for preservation of these landscapes. Some preservation tools are available that can assist communities in preserving the actual farming activities. However, the recommendations assume that a zoning bylaw is in place. Therefore in several instances, the recommendation may be premature for Essex due to the lack of a basic zoning bylaw. Consider the following options:

- Form an agricultural commission to address farm preservation in Essex.

- Adopt a right-to-farm bylaw which allows farmers to carry on farming activities that may be considered a nuisance to neighbors.

- Adopt a cluster bylaw that requires a buffer between development and farmland.

- Raise funds to purchase development rights on farms or to assist farmers in the restoration of historic farm buildings for which a farmer would be required to donate a preservation restriction (PR).

- Continue public-private partnerships to preserve farm land through purchase of farms or purchase of conservation restrictions (CRs) or agricultural preservation restrictions (APRs).

Burial Grounds and Cemeteries

Essex has several burial grounds, of which the best known are the 1680 Cemetery and Spring Street Cemetery. Only the 1680 Cemetery is documented on an MHC survey form, although minimally. There are long term stone maintenance issues and general burial ground care that need improvement. The DCR publication *Preservation Guidelines for Municipally Owned Historic Burial Grounds and Cemeteries* provides guidance on developing preservation plans for burial grounds including identification and evaluation of the resources as well as preservation strategies. Using this guide Essex should:

- Update existing or prepare new survey forms for all burial grounds and cemeteries that have been in use for more than 50 years.
- Develop a preservation and management plan for each cemetery taking into consideration repair of stone markers, stone walls and stone fencing related to cemeteries, repair of iron work, removal of invasive growth and on-going maintenance of plant material.
- In particular, investigate the past use of granite or concrete encasing to stabilize stones to determine whether there are new ways to preserve stones.

Coastal and Riverine Waterfront – Estuary

The key issues are access and protection. Continue to work towards solutions in the following ways:

- Define ownership of each segment of the waterfront – beaches, mud flats, salt marshes.
- Define public ways and parking areas for beaches and landings.
- Develop a brochure on use of beaches including the location of paths by which to access the public beaches.
- Form public-private partnerships with neighborhood or community groups to develop stewardship programs for access points.
- Develop a public landings brochure to remind abutters and town residents of the public access to these landings.

Neighborhood Character

Nearly all preservation strategies address neighborhood character in some manner. As described above, thorough documentation on MHC inventory forms is an important first step in the preservation planning process, followed by National Register listing where appropriate. Two preservation tools that are particularly applicable to Essex's historic properties are demolition delay and local historic district designation (MGL Chapter 40C). A demolition delay bylaw provides a time period in which the town can consider alternatives to demolition. Local historic district designation recognizes special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected. The strongest form of protection for the preservation of historic resources is local historic district designation.

- Adopt a demolition delay bylaw to apply to all properties that are 50 years old or more and to give the Historical Commission authority to invoke a delay of demolition of up to one year. Publication of demolition requests reminds residents of historic resources and reinforces the value of local historic resources; therefore include a publication requirement in the bylaw.

- Adopt a local historic district bylaw consistent with MGL Chapter 40-C and define districts. Potential local historic districts are the Causeway, South Essex, Conomo Point and John Wise Avenue.

Scenic roads are an integral part of the historic fabric of the community. They are highly valued by Essex residents and visitors. Yet roads must also accommodate modern transportation needs and decisions regarding roadways are often made with travel requirements as the only consideration. Under the Scenic Roads Act (MGL Chapter 40-15C) Salisbury could adopt a scenic roads bylaw that would address the removal of trees and stone walls that are within the right-of-way. Yet, in addition to roadway issues, much of what we value about scenic roads — the stone walls, views across open fields — is not within the public right-of-way. The preservation and protection of scenic roads therefore requires more than one approach.

- Complete an inventory with descriptions and photo documentation of each of the roads in Essex.

- Adopt a scenic roads bylaw consistent with MGL Chapter 40-15C and designate certain roads as scenic roads. Examples may be Apple Street, Belcher Street, Story Street and the southern end of Southern Avenue. Numbered routes cannot be scenic roads under Chapter 40-15C. Include in bylaw design criteria to be considered when approving removal of trees and stone walls. Add other design criteria such as a provision allowing only one driveway cut per property on scenic roads. Coordinate procedures between Highway Department and Planning Board.

- Develop policies and implementation standards for road maintenance and reconstruction, including bridge reconstructions, which address the scenic and historic characteristics while also addressing safety. This is an important public process in which the community may have to accept responsibility for certain costs to implement standards that are not acceptable to projects funded by Mass Highway Department. Such standards should have a section addressing the way in which the local Highway Department maintains roads, for example requiring a public hearing if any additional pavement is to be added to a town road during reconstruction or repair. Policies can be adopted by local boards having jurisdiction over roads, or can be adopted at Town Meeting through a bylaw. In developing policies consider factors such as road width, clearing of shoulders, the use of berms, walking paths, posted speeds. A delicate balance is required.

Funding Preservation Projects

Funding for preservation projects is an important aspect of implementing preservation strategies. In recent years, the ENHC has maintained a small grants program for Essex County communities. In addition, both the MHC and the DCR have had funding programs to assist communities in preservation related issues including:

- Survey and Planning Grants administered by the MHC support survey, National Register, and preservation planning work.

- The Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF) administered by the MHC funds restoration and rehabilitation projects.

- The Historic Landscape Preservation Grant Program (HLPGP) administered by DCR funds planning, rehabilitation, education and stewardship projects focused on historic landscapes, including cemeteries.

Funding for these programs varies from year to year. When planning Essex's Heritage Landscape Inventory program, contact relevant agencies to determine whether funding currently is available.

Towns that have adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA) find it to be an excellent funding source for many heritage landscape projects; however Essex first would have to adopt the Act. While tricky to pass in lean economic times, the number and types of projects that are benefiting across the Commonwealth is worthy of consideration. The CPA establishes a mechanism by which towns can develop a fund dedicated to historic preservation, open space and affordable housing. Funds are collected through a .5% to 3% surcharge on each annual real estate tax bill. The Commonwealth has established a dedicated fund which is used to match the municipality's collections under the CPA.

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 town believes are appropriate and beneficial to the municipality.

Specific Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered for specific resources or areas that were either priority heritage landscapes or discussed as critical issues.

Conomo Point

Small summer communities like Conomo Point are found in several North Shore communities and are a significant part of the local land use pattern. The historical significance of Conomo Point has recently been documented and the MHC has determined that the neighborhood is eligible for listing in the National Register. It is likely that the Point also would make a viable local historic district. The land under the cottages is town-owned and some believe that they should be removed and that the land should revert to open space to be used by town residents; however, this option would not be consistent with preservation of heritage landscapes which is the focus of this program and report. Therefore in order to preserve this unique summer area it is imperative to find a solution that makes the rest of Essex residents welcome at the Point to use the beach, the small park on the north side and the public landing. This may require arrangements for parking which could be accomplished if the entire area is examined, lot by lot, and a plan is developed.

- Identify key features using heritage landscape inventory methodology.

- Develop a map showing features on each lot on the Point including ownership or interest in each area.

- Establish a committee to work with cottage owners and public officials and permanent Essex residents to find a compromise to preserve the summer community at Conomo Point.

- Develop a plan for the preservation of Conomo Point's natural and cultural resources and the improvement of access and hospitality for non-residents of the Point.

Village Construction and Parking

The issues of new construction and parking are challenging in the absence of a zoning bylaw. However it is critical to limit the height of new construction, and to impose stringent environmental controls on new construction near wetlands, salt marshes, river frontage and coastal habitats. In addition innovative parking solutions are necessary which will add parking without adding large amounts of impervious surface. New parking has been established near the Herbert J. Goodhue Memorial Park. Signs indicating this as public parking may assist.

- Develop a master plan to guide growth at the village centers – the Causeway and South Essex in particular.

- Limit building height to 35 feet and require views to be maintained by breaking up the massing of new construction.

- Strictly enforce all conservation regulations regarding construction in wetlands, near river frontage, and salt marshes.

- Require pervious surface parking.

CONCLUSION

The Essex Reconnaissance Report is a critical tool in starting to identify the rich and diverse heritage landscapes in Essex and in beginning to think about preservation strategies. However, it is only the first step in the planning process. Landscapes identified in this report, especially the priority landscapes, will typically need further documentation on MHC inventory forms. The documentation in turn can be used in publicity efforts to build consensus and gather public support for their preservation. Implementation of recommendations will require a concerted effort of and partnerships with municipal boards and agencies, local non-profits, and state agencies and commissions.

Distribution of this Reconnaissance Report to town land use boards and commissions will assist in making this one of the planning documents that guides Essex in preserving important features of the community's character. The tasks that are recommended will require cooperation and coordination among boards and commissions, particularly Essex's Historical Commission, the Planning Board, the Conservation Commission and the Essex Open Space Committee. It also is advisable to present this information to the Board of Selectmen, the applicant to the Heritage Landscape Inventory Program on behalf of the town. Finally distribution of the report to the Essex Ship Building Museum and Historical Society, the Manchester-Essex Conservation Trust, and any other preservation minded organizations will broaden the audience and assist in gathering interest and support for Essex's heritage landscapes.

APPENDIX: HERITAGE LANDSCAPES IDENTIFIED BY COMMUNITY

This list is a summary of all landscapes discussed at the Heritage Landscape Identification Meeting held in Essex on June 18 and the follow-up fieldwork on September 21, 2004. This is a working list and can be updated by the community. **There may be other heritage landscapes that were not identified at the HLI meeting noted above.** Landscapes are grouped by type. The chart has two columns – the name of the resource and the location are in the first and notes about the resource are in the second. Abbreviations used are listed below.

APR = Agricultural Preservation Restriction
ECGA = Essex County Greenbelt Association
OSRP = Open Space and Recreation Plan
TTOR = The Trustees of Reservations
CR = Conservation Restriction
NR = National Register
PR = Preservation Restriction
* = Priority Landscape

Agriculture	
Bothways Farm Southern Avenue	Same as Turning Leaf Farm which is the new name for that part of Bothways farm that is on only one side of the road. Turning Leaf is a horse farm for which a huge indoor facility has been approved but is not yet built. Former Bartlett Estate.
Cogswell Grant 60 Spring Street	Owned by Historic New England (formerly known as SPNEA). First Period house overlooking salt marsh and Essex River. 19th century barns and sheds. Surrounding agricultural fields. Ca. 1735 house on the site of William Cogswell's 17th century farmhouse.
Cox Reservation 82 Eastern Avenue	Essex Greenbelt headquarters, 31 acres. 18th c. farm house with hayfields and apple orchards, saltmarsh, Clamshell Landing. Allen Cox was an early to mid 20th century artist.
Febiger Farm Forest Avenue	On east end of town – hayed – possible school committee interest – beautiful land that has been farmed for centuries – hayed now.
Giddings Farm John Wise Ave.	CR on land on northeast side of John Wise Avenue. Owned by Storeys now. 1678 Captain Samuel Giddings farm with 250 acres – land on each side of John Wise Avenue.
Hardy's Farms * John Wise Ave. & Island Rd.	Poultry farms since the 1940s. Poultry houses on both roads. Captain Samuel Hardy who was an ancestor of Lord Nelson settled here – farming and ship building. 19th c. owner was Cap't Parker Burnham who also built boats. 20th c. became poultry farms and by mid 20th c. Hardy had nationally known hatcheries. Hardy's Hatchery is at 50 John Wise Avenue.
John Wise Avenue Farms * Rt. 133	CRs on north side. Coastal colonial farming landscape with antique houses and agricultural fields – North side has some protection, south side – not as much protection. "Everybody's favorite drive." Mostly gentleman farms. Giddings Farm, Bernardi, Aprilow. Charlie Storey. Hardy farms also. Potential development threats.
Paynter Farm Lufkin St.	At one time same ownership as Poor Farm, Cross Island, and parts of Conomo Point. Raise goats now.

Poor Farm Harlowe St.	On the way to Conomo Point. Third Poor Farm in area. Now a private residence.
School Farm	Near the Cox Reservation – when Essex broke off on its own, 1000 acres set aside and the income of which would support the school.
Thorne Hill Farm Island Road	Potential development threats.
Cemeteries	
Bishops Grave	In Essex Woods.
Native American burial sites	Possibly near Essex Falls, near Apple Street.
1680 Cemetery	Second Parish of Old Ipswich – "Ancient Burial Ground" – not on NR. Oldest stones date from ca. 1708. Table tomb of the first minister is that of the Rev. John Wise.
Spring Street Cemetery	1852, consecrated by the Rev. Knoll.
Institutions	
Essex Ship Building Museum	Established in 1976 to preserve ship building records of local families. Managed by the Essex Historical Society. Owns the 1835 Schoolhouse, the Old Burying Ground, laid out in 1680 and the ca. 1840 Hearse House and the Museum Shipyard which is part of the old Story shipyard which was in business from 1813 to WW II.
Natural Features ***Freshwater and saltwater***	
Alewife Brook	View from Apple St. – raceway with granite walls. Rich bird sanctuary.
Chebacco Lake	209-acre great pond with two town landings. Headwaters of Essex River via Alewife Brook. Part in Hamilton. See Centennial Grove in Open Space.
Clammer's Beach	At Conomo Point.
Clamshell Landing 82 Eastern Avenue	Essex County Greenbelt, Cox Reservation. Large shell midden. Archaeology here.
Essex River	Tidal near Town Hall – 17 town landings all of which are identified in OSRP.

Estuary *	Part of Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) – extended salt marsh, mud flats for clamming, Great Marsh, access issues – there are several beaches from which one can launch a boat, views are taken for granted.
Hog Island Complex	Known as the Crane Wildlife Refuge – several islands in Essex Bay – most owned by TTOR. Includes Choate Island (also known as Hog Island), a 135-acre drumlin in salt marsh; Long Island connected to Choate by a sandbar; Round Island; Corn Island; Cross Island. Cross Island was first owned by John Perkins in 1637, then Robert Cross, Sr. who farmed this and other areas – Conomo and Lufkin Points. Choates family then owned until early 20th c. built summer cottages. Part of a large house directly across from Conomo Point was dismantled and rebuilt in East Gloucester leaving chimney and part of foundation behind.
Salt marshes	2,200 acres around Essex River, estuaries, clam flats – vistas, rich wildlife and plant habitats.
Swamps	Cedar and Maple swamps – in Essex-Manchester Woods.
Open Space / Recreation	
Centennial Grove	100-acre recreational area on Chebacco Lake – fresh water beach – came by train in 19th c. to enjoy day by lake. Some small buildings remaining and ball fields. A former trolley barn was here. Self-guided nature trail on property.
Coolidge Trust Southern Avenue	In the 1870s summer people would take rides through the woods – a young woman of wealth decided that someone should acquire the 100-200' back from road to protect on Southern Avenue and Upper School St. Hence Coolidge Trust which was established by Thomas Jefferson Coolidge. Many do not know about this and in the 1960s roads were widened with no regard of conservation commission role, which is to regulate the work on the road through the land.
Essex/Manchester Woods	3,400 acres of upland, swamp and woodlands in Essex, Hamilton, and Manchester (Chebacco Lake, Southern Avenue, Rocky Hill Road) – About 1000 acres is protected but rest is privately owned and unprotected, Bear's Den, Baby Rock which is a huge cairn, cart paths and stone walls, historic woodlots, some unknown owners, pasture use but never farmed. Divided 1710-1711 and given to individual families – all natural wood lots – firewood and some ship building. Never put to play so there are whole layers of undisturbed ground which is excellent for wild life. When laid out pastures never pulled stumps or disturbed soils. Old wood cart paths now are trails.
Herbert S. Goodhue Memorial Park	Dedicated in 1949 – behind 1894 Burnham Memorial Town Hall and Library.
Lamont's Hill	Near the center village of Essex (the Causeway). Noted on historic maps; named for Lamont Burnham. Stavros Reservation.

Shipbuilding "motif #2" Off Rt. 133	Ca. 1810 gray house on the marsh of Ebben's Creek. Formerly the Ebenezer Burnham shipyard workshop and moulding loft. Converted to a house in the early 20th c. Referred to as Motif #2 as some say that it is the second most painted scene next to Rockport's Motif #1. Viewed from J.T.Farnham's on Eastern Avenue (Rt. 133).
Turf Meadow	Greenbelt protected, large house, privately owned. Part of the 760 acres in Essex protected by ECGA ownership, CR, or assistance to town or state ownership or other private protected ownership.
Residential (Village Centers)	
Conomo Point *	Eligible for NR listing. Summer colony. Land is town-owned, houses are privately owned, the land leases end in 2011 which means neighborhood is threatened. All clustered together. View at end is excellent. Interesting history but a sticky issue.
Causeway *	Essex village, Town Hall needs maintenance (PR), issues of new construction not blending with old, power lines.
Essex Falls	Mills and dams.
South Essex	Burnam Corner, referred to as "over river".
Transportation	
Andrews Street	Stonewalls, narrow – example of substandard road at 16 foot width.
Apple Street	Scenic way with old houses.
Belcher Street	Narrow winding road with some old stone walls, setbacks with buffers.
The Causeway	Views on both sides are important.
Southern Avenue	The Coolidge Grant which may have been the first protected land in MA – mid 19th c. Southern Ave. was straightened in the 1960s after Rt. 128 was developed. The Coolidge Grant strip was ignored.
Essex Airfield	Skyway, now pastures and hayfields.
Island Rd.	Estuary and agricultural views including the hill next to Cape Ann Golf Course which is incorrectly labeled "white's hill".
John Wise Avenue (Rt. 133)	Farms along both sides, vistas – scenic byway.
Laurel Lane	Southeastern end of town – once beautiful landscape, road was re-routed and one end has been industrialized with modern facilities.

Old Manchester Road	Scenic farms – was a trail – narrow and unpaved. 1905 improved for carriages. Agreements among owners into the 20th c. to improve to 18' wide open as carriage roads and keep cars out. These were the same who put up funds for the Coolidge Trust.
RR Line	Inactive – behind Town Hall – Open Space Committee was unsuccessful in attempt to develop a trail to Hamilton.
Scenic Roads *	Choate Street, 17th c. houses, farm and some recent development on pork chop lots which has ruined part of road's scenic quality. Other scenic roads are Apple Street, Story St., Belcher St., southern end of Southern Avenue.