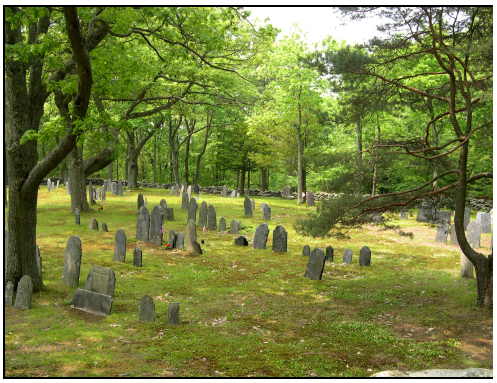
PRINCETON RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

FREEDOM'S WAY LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

MASSACHUSETTS HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY PROGRAM



Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Freedom's Way Heritage Association

PROJECT TEAM

Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
Jessica Rowcroft, Preservation Planner
Division of Planning and Engineering

Freedom's Way Heritage Association
Mary Whitney, President
Marge Darby, Chair, Advisory Committee

Project Consultants
Shary Page Berg
Gretchen G. Schuler

Local Project Coordinator
Joyce Anderson
Jeff Richards

Local Heritage Landscape Participants
Joyce Anderson
Phyllis Booth
Leslie Fanger
Alex Fiandaca
Hugh Field, FWHA
Nathaniel Gove
Abbey Guillot
Sandy Guillot
Kim Houde
Fred Pape
Kate Pape
Jeff Richards
Bobbye Samdahl
Bob Sauer
Lou Trostel

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Cover Photographs
Vista looking northeast from Thompson Road
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INTRODUCTION

The Freedom's Way Heritage Association includes 37 Massachusetts communities that are linked by historic events that helped to shape America's democratic form of governance and the intellectual traditions that underpin American freedom, democracy, conservation and social justice. Freedom's Way communities extend from Arlington on the east to Winchendon on the west. They represent a wide range of cities and towns, each shaped by the relationship between nature and culture.

Heritage landscapes are special places created by human interaction with the natural environment that help define the character of a community and reflect its past. They are dynamic and evolving; they reflect the 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. The 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 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 or an important river corridor. To this end, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the Freedom's Way Heritage Association (FWHA) have collaborated to bring the Heritage Landscape Inventory program (HLI) to communities in the Freedom's Way area. 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 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-FWHA consulting team. The LPC organizes a heritage landscape identification meeting at which interested residents and town officials offer community input by identifying heritage landscapes. This meeting is followed by a fieldwork session including the consulting team and the LPC, often 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 this Reconnaissance Report, prepared for each participating community. It outlines the history of the community; describes the priority heritage landscapes; discusses planning issues identified by the meeting participants; identifies planning tools available in the community; and concludes with preservation recommendations. A list of all of the heritage landscapes identified by the community is included in the Appendix.

PRINCETON HISTORY

Native Americans frequented hunting sites in Princeton as well as ceremonial sites on Wachusett Mountain. The name Wachusett translated from Algonquin means "by the great hill". During the Contact Period (1550-1620) Nipmucs used the mountain as had Native Americans before them, and during King Philip's War it was a Native American staging area. One of Princeton's best known sites is Redemption Rock where King Philip returned kidnapped victim, Mary Rowlandson for a ransom.

Princeton was part of the Rutland land grant known as the East Wing and was divided into 48 farms in 1718; the first settlers came from Lancaster in 1742. The first roads used by the settlers followed native trails from Rutland such as Brooks Station and Calamint Hill Roads and from Sterling along Sterling Road to Thompson Road towards Hubbardston. Connections from Worcester followed Redemption Rock Trail to Westminster. These early settlers and their successors cleared the heavily wooded land making good pasture land for sheep and cattle. The first grist mill was established in 1750.

The district of Princeton was set up in 1759 including Rutland's East Wing and an adjoining area known as Watertown Farm. A meetinghouse was constructed in 1764, a burial ground in 1765 and the town was incorporated in 1771. In this short period from the construction of the meetinghouse to the American Revolution the number of people living in Princeton jumped from 284 to 701 residents in 1776.

Industrial activity was confined to East Princeton along Keyes Brook where saw and gristmills emerged. A number of small businesses cropped up; abundant amounts of timber supported lumber, charcoal and potash mills and later chair manufacturing, particularly in East Princeton Village. Some minor shoe and boot, and hat and straw manufacturing were done as cottage industries. The only turnpike to serve Princeton was the Barre Turnpike (1824) which led from Barre Common through Hubbardston and into Princeton on Hubbardston Road; however it stopped two miles west of Princeton Center. The toll was in effect only until 1832 when it became a public road.

Stage routes passed through Princeton bringing summer sojourners as early as the 1830s. But it was not until the 1870s that Princeton became a summer resort renowned for its hotels, boarding houses, watering holes and dominated by its picturesque Wachusett Mountain. The 1870 Worcester-Gardner Railroad improved access for these summer visitors from Boston and its environs. A carriage road to the top of the mountain was built in the 1880s. By the late 19th century industrial activity declined and Princeton's economy was based on agriculture and tourism.

With the automobile came the improvement of some through roads including the north-south Route 31 connecting Holden with Fitchburg and Route 62 as the east-west corridor. At about the same time (1920s) the population began to

increase for the first time since the 1850s. By 1950 just over 1,000 people lived in Princeton. This rose by about 50% to 1,681 by 1970. Now the population is 3,722 residents.

PRIORITY HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

Princeton's Heritage Landscape Identification meeting, attended by approximately 13 residents, some representing town boards and local non-profit organizations, was held on May 24, 2006. During the meeting residents compiled a lengthy list of the town'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 priority landscapes to be visited by the consulting team during the fieldwork. Each of the priority landscapes is highly valued, contributes to community character and is not permanently protected or preserved.

These landscapes, which are listed alphabetically, represent a range of scales and types of resources from individual sites such as the Town Pound to a village center such as East Princeton. Some of these priority landscapes describe areas that have a number of layers of heritage landscapes. Such layering shows the complexity and interdependence of most heritage landscapes. The descriptions and recommendations included here are an initial step in identifying resources valued by the community and suggesting action strategies.

Bentley Trust Land

The Bentley Trust Land, so named for the recent ownership of the land, lies in the western part of Princeton along the northwestern end of Gates Road and the eastern end of Old Colony Road. The large property includes over 168 acres of land with 6,000 linear feet of frontage along these roads. Wooded land and fields make up the large acreage. One 15-acre hayfield is opposite Green Acres, the 1820 David Rice House (updated in the Victorian Eclectic/Queen Anne style) on the corner of Gates and Old Colony Roads. The Bentley Trust Land has been used as farmland historically and may have been part of a farm with which this 19th century house was associated.

Until recently the land has been farmed by the owners of the Stimson Farm (also a priority heritage landscape). The future of the Bentley Trust Land, which is for sale, is a critical concern to the town. Its use as agricultural land has been a significant part of the Stimson Farm business; a change in use would substantially affect the farm as well as those who enjoy the scenic vistas.

For the past seven years, the Princeton Open Space Committee has been working to craft a preservation plan for the Bentley Trust Lands that involves conservation, recreation, limited development, and agricultural land uses. In 2005 – 06, this preservation planning was given a major boost with the participation of the Trust for Public Land, Princeton Select Board and Finance

Advisory Committee, and neighboring residents. Unfortunately, it was discovered recently (Spring 2006) that the Town's right of first refusal associated with the proposed sale of this Chapter 61A land had expired; it now appears that a developer is poised to acquire the land for housing development.

Recommendations

These farming fields have not been documented on MHC forms so that their place in the context of Princeton's agricultural history has not been established. However, the present use by one of the few extant working farms confirms the local importance of these fields. Partnerships between town land use agencies, local and regional land trusts and interested residents will be necessary to preserve the fields which are presently for sale, and may be under agreement to a developer.

- Identify features – environmental and physical – that are significant and characterize these fields in preparation of future planning or development of the property.

For additional information about agricultural landscapes and ways in which to minimize the impact if development cannot be avoided, refer to **Agricultural Landscape** in the General Preservation Planning Recommendations section of this report. A flexible zoning bylaw and a cluster bylaw would help to preserve key features of the land and to cluster the development in return for preservation of a percentage of open space.

East Princeton Village

East Princeton Village was a small manufacturing center from the second quarter of the 19th century into the early 20th century. The fast moving Keyes Brook, which flowed from Paradise Pond in northern Princeton, provided water power for early chair manufacturing. In 1841 Benjamin Stuart opened his chair company which eventually became Temple-Stuart Chair Company and operated until 1910. In 1849 James Brown also started to manufacture chairs in the village. In 1843 the first East Princeton District #3 school was constructed. This building was replaced in 1852 with the stately School District #3, which became Mechanics Hall in the 1890s. Many fine residences as well as modest mill housing were built along Main Street at the village center. At the turn of the 20th century sidewalks and streetlights were installed in the village, funded by the East Princeton Village Improvement Society.

Today East Princeton Village comprises over 100 resources along Beaman Road, Gleason Road, Leominster Road and Main Street. Keyes Brook flows thru the entire village, running parallel with Redemption Rock Trail (Route 31/140) in a southerly direction, through the Onion Patch Pond, under Main Street and past the old mill sites off Gleason Road. The center of the village is a busy intersection of main routes passing through the eastern part of Princeton and connecting this village with Princeton Center to the west and Sterling to the east

and southeast. Many of the historic houses and associated outbuildings are very close to the road.

Recommendations

The Historical Commission has documented resources in East Princeton Village and listed the village in the National Register of Historic Places. However there are no preservation strategies in place. The Historical Commission is the appropriate agency to pursue such measures. There are two historic district designations that may be applicable to East Princeton Village – a local historic district or a neighborhood architectural conservation district. The decision of which would be most appropriate requires an understanding of the processes involved in both and neighborhood input to determine the level of protection that residents will support. For additional information about these strategies, refer to **Village and Rural Neighborhood Character** in the General Preservation Planning Recommendations section of this report.

- Create an historic district study committee to consider local historic district designation or neighborhood architectural conservation district designation.

- Work with the Planning Board and the Highway Department to mitigate traffic concerns on numbered routes that pass through East Princeton Village while retaining the rural and historic village character. While a four-way stop sign (East Princeton Road, Beaman Road, Redemption Rock Trail and Main Street) may cause some delays, it may reduce speed through this part of town.

- Work with the Princeton Master Plan Land Use Element and Implementation process in crafting zoning bylaws appropriate to the preservation of the distinctive village character of East Princeton. Village zoning bylaws that address building orientation and placement on lots, parking and traffic have been used in other communities to retain the 19th and early 20th century (pres-zoning) organic development of mixed-use villages.

Gates House

The Olive Gates House is one of two houses on Wachusett Mountain that are owned by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. This house, located on Westminster Road on a property named *South Druim*, is part of a farm that dated back to the late 18th and early 19th century when it was owned by Aaron Perry followed by Nathan Perry and John P. Rice (1830). In the early 1900s after the house burned, Frank Macys purchased the farm buildings and converted one to a dwelling. In 1939 Olive Gates purchased the property and owned it until 1969 when the 211-acre *South Druim* was given (by Gates' will) to the Mount Wachusett Reservation in memory of William H. and Alicia F. Gates. There have been tenants in the past; however the property now is vacant and deteriorating due to lack of maintenance. The white-shingled, gable-front two and one-half story dwelling displays Greek Revival details. Remnants of gardens, an orchard and stone retaining walls surround the house.

Recommendations

The Gates House on Westminster Road has not been surveyed. Clear and accurate information on MHC forms is necessary prior to preservation.

- Prepare an MHC B-form for the Gates House.

- Form a partnership with the Friends of Wachusett State Reservation and work together with DCR to explore programs to preserve this house, possibly the Curatorship Program.

- Ask DCR to consider sale of house on small parcel (up to 10 acres) with restrictions (no further subdivision of land) and requirements to restore. The house is representative of important periods in Princeton's development. Leaving the house vacant has negative impact and it is unrealistic that the agency will be able to afford to repair the house or that a tenant would be

willing to invest the funds in a property one does not own. Therefore new ownership or a long-term lease arrangement with restrictive covenants appears to be one way in which to preserve this building.

Hall's Field

Hall's Field is located on the south side of Gregory Hill Road, which leads down the hill from Princeton Center towards East Princeton. The hillside east of Princeton Center includes farmsteads with dwellings, barns, wooded land, and acres of meadows with stone walls and a stream at the bottom of the hill. The twenty acres of rolling fields along the south side of Gregory Hill Road is called Hall's Field, named for the family that has preserved this landscape. The stream that passes through at the low point in the field flows southeasterly to Babcock Brook. A dry-laid low stone wall runs from the brook easterly to the forested backdrop of the fields. Presently this field is hayed.

Hall's Field is part of the adjacent property (14 Gregory Hill Road) where Nathan Reed established Red Bars Farm in the early 1900s. This field is a separate parcel of land in common ownership with the ca. 1824 Greek Revival house and barns.

Recommendations

The Princeton Historical Commission has documented nearly all properties lining Gregory Hill Road and included them in the expansion of the Princeton Center Historic District listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Hall's Field is a prominent part of the scenic landscape at Princeton Center and is identified in Princeton's Open Space and Recreation Plan as a significant character-defining and scenic resource. The OSRP credits the recent succession of private landowners with the successful continuity of this important resource. Its preservation as an agricultural field is critical to the rural character of this district. Partnerships between the land owners and town land use agencies, local and regional land trusts and interested residents will be necessary to preserve these

fields. For information about agricultural landscapes refer to **Agricultural Landscape** in the General Preservation Planning Recommendations section of this report.

Mechanics Hall

Listed in the National Register as part of the East Princeton Village Historic District, Mechanics Hall at 104 Main Street is one of Princeton's most important, yet under-utilized, civic buildings and is an anchor of this historic district. Mechanics Hall is the best if not the only example of a Greek Revival municipal structure in Princeton. The two and one-half story templar gable-front building with monumental columned entrance porch was constructed in 1852 as the second building for the East Princeton District #3 schoolhouse. The first was built in 1843 and is believed to have been used in the construction of this building; hence the date "1843" in the gable peak. The school was constructed with two first floor classrooms and a second story hall. This hall was used by the Princeton Farmers & Mechanic Association until 1896. The first floor classrooms were used as an elementary school until the early 1940s. The building has also been used by the East Princeton Village Improvement Society and the American Legion.

Mechanics Hall is presently unoccupied. The exterior retains all of its character defining features such as its fenestration pattern including 6/6 sash, monumental columns carrying the templar gable end and wide corner pilasters. The classrooms retain blackboards and the second-story hall has a built-in proscenium at one end of the room, which is likely to have been added after the construction date.

Recommendations

Preservation of this building is the responsibility of the town and can be guided by the Historical Commission with assistance from the Historical Society. As a public structure that is within a National Register District, this is a building that is eligible for MPPF grant funding. One key aspect, accessibility, is a challenge in any historic structure; it is necessary to make the building wheelchair accessible particularly if rehabilitated by the town for public use.

- Contact the MHC to explore MPPF grant application process.

Alternatively, the Historical Commission might determine that such a project will be best carried out by a private user; however, every precaution must be taken in that event to secure permanent preservation of the building with a preservation restriction with its terms in place in perpetuity. A private developer may be able to receive Federal and possibly State Historic Preservation Rehabilitation Tax Credits if the rehabilitation is done according to the Secretary of Interior's Standards and is reviewed and approved by the MHC and the National Park Service. Mechanics Hall could be an interesting and challenging case study for an interactive rehabilitation or real estate class in a local preservation studies program (Boston University, Roger Williams University, University of Vermont) or real estate program (MIT).

- Contact local preservation studies or real estate development programs to request assistance as a case study for a re-use plan.

- Explore tax advantages to a private owner.

- Develop parameters of necessary preservation restrictions in case the property goes into private ownership.

Smith Farm

Hubbardston Road (Route 62) leads from Princeton Center westerly to Hubbardston. The Smith Farm comprises land on both sides of Hubbardston Road about a mile from the Center and east of the Wachusett Wildlife Sanctuary. Extensive rolling hayfields and meadows, hedgerows, the farmstead cluster and an early 20th century swimming pool form the scenic vista of Smith Farm. This former dairy farm operated by the same family for generations includes over 250 acres. The ca. 1780 Federal-style George Mason House and grouping of farm buildings are surrounded by 48 acres of fields on the north side of the road; and, on the south side of Hubbardston Road meadows surround a spring fed stone lined swimming pool. The early 20th century barns are distinctive in arrangement and construction. At the core is a long gambrel roof dairy barn with roof ventilators – built of stone with a wood second story. Two gambrel roof wings project from the east side; one a milk room; and the other an additional cow barn. At the road edge there is a side gabled barn also of wood vertical board siding above the first-story stone base with a long gabled roof rear ell attached to the main gambrel roof dairy barn. Behind the dairy barn there is a silo.

This dairy farm was known as Rollstone Farm where they raised registered Holsteins throughout most of the 20th century. Dairy farming in Princeton has all but ceased and this farm has converted to other types of farming. The fields are hayed; otherwise there are no farming activities here.

Recommendations

Given the size, relatively central location, and high importance of the Smith Farm, it will be necessary for all parties, be they private or public, to work together to craft a preservation plan for the property. Preservation is a three step process involving identification (documentation), evaluation, and protection.

The farmhouse has been documented. The Historical Commission is the appropriate agency to further document the entire farm complex including the history of farming at this site. For other preservation strategies refer to **Agricultural Landscapes** in the General Preservation Planning Recommendations section of this report.

- Identify key features and record the farm and its history on an MHC Area Form.
- Write a National Register nomination for the farm if determined eligible and if the owner supports NR listing.
- Work with owner to pursue preservation strategies for farm land such as a conservation restriction (M.G.L. Chapter 184, Sections 31-33) or an agricultural preservation restriction.

Stimson Farm

This 110-acre farm at 207 Thompson Road has been in the same family since first established in 1743 when Jedediah Brigham purchased 237 acres here. Eleven generations of the same family – now Stimsons – have lived here and in 1993 they celebrated 250 years of dairy farming. The farm, now about one-half of the original size, is on a scenic road lined with stone walls; fields along Thompson Road are separated by stone walls and hedgerows. The 18th century, center chimney Georgian farmhouse is at the end of a gravel drive lined with mature maple trees. Near the house are outbuildings including a large dairy barn and silo and sheds. This century farm once specialized in Holsteins. In 2004 the cows were sold and the owners turned to raising trees and shrubs.

In 1987 the present owners accepted an agricultural preservation restriction (APR) ensuring that farming activities will continue here in perpetuity. The economics of farming have depended upon the use of other fields to augment the crops. The leased Bentley Fields have been among those upon which the Stimson Farm owners relied to sustain their farming activities. Sale of those fields so that they can no longer be cultivated could have a serious impact on the future of the Stimson Farm. In addition the APR prohibits certain types of activities that could be income generating such as the installation of a windmill. Although the farm may be protected from residential development it is a challenge to maintain farming in today's economy.

Recommendations

The recently formed Princeton Agricultural Commission (Spring 2006 ATM) may be willing and best-suited to work with the Stimson family and assist in crafting strategies conducive to perpetuation of agricultural activities.

Although the house has been documented the Historical Commission should record the entire farm complex including buildings and fields on an MHC Area Form. While this will not preserve the property it will generate additional information that can be used to convey the significance of this property.

- Complete an MHC Area Form to describe entire farm complex as well as farming activities.

- Prepare National Register nomination if the farm is determined eligible during the inventory process.

The key recommendations to preserve the farming activities under **Agricultural Landscapes** in the General Preservation Planning Recommendations section of this report have been implemented as this farm is already under protection of an

APR. However, due to economic factors, other strategies that will encourage and support various types of farming are necessary.

- Explore purchase of the associated Bentley Fields by a non-profit, a land trust or the town with provisions for the Stimsons to continue cultivating those fields. This would be a way in which to help to preserve both of these priority heritage landscapes.

Thus a key will be fund raising for such a purchase. Generally, information generated through survey can be used to develop interest in fund raising. Furthermore, the property is likely to be eligible for National Register listing which would provide additional interest and recognition.

Superintendent's House

The Superintendent's House is one of two houses on Wachusett Mountain that is owned by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. The Superintendent's House was built in 1903 on Echo Lake Road at Mountain Road near the base of the mountain. When constructed it also served as the Park Headquarters. It was built for Guy Chase, first park superintendent on an 18.08 acre parcel purchased in 1901 from Frederick E. Reed for the Wachusett State Reservation. The house and ca. 1920s garage sit up above the road on a hill that has terraced stone walls and remnants of flower gardens in front. The Shingle/Colonial Revival style house, with a gambrel cross-gable form, has been vacant since 1969 and has lost much of its detail particularly all of the windows, trim and doors which are boarded up and its porches.

Superintendent Chase, a civil engineer, who was hired in 1900 to survey the land, lived in this house from 1903 to 1907 when he moved on to the City of Fitchburg to be director of public works.

Recommendations

DCR has documented the Superintendent's House on Echo Lake and Mountain Roads including the gardens and stone wall system. Preservation of this property will require cooperation among interested parties particularly DCR and the Friends of Wachusett Mountain. DCR has executed the first phase of plans to create an Environmental Education and Research Center (EERC) here. Necessary septic issues have been addressed and the garage has been remodeled to accommodate meeting space. To date there are no funds to rehabilitate the house for office and meeting space.

- Request NR eligibility of Superintendent's House individually or as part of a Wachusett State Reservation nomination.

- Form a partnership with the Friends of Wachusett State Reservation and work together with DCR to explore programs to preserve this house such as DCR's Curatorship Program including the EERC plans.

Town Pound

The Town Pound was constructed in 1768 just north of the Meetinghouse Cemetery on Mountain Road. This was the first town center – the location of the first meetinghouse (1764) and cemetery (1765). The first piece of land, which was a five-acre hilltop site, was given by John and Caleb Mirick in 1759 for a public meetinghouse and a training field; this was followed by Moses Gill's gift of 20 acres on the west side of Mountain Road for a burial ground and common land. The Town Pound was constructed as a 30-foot square with walls that were six feet high. Once the new pound was in place (1768), stray animals were brought here rather than to Caleb Mirick's farm which had been the animal pound.

Today the Town Pound is barely visible from Mountain Road due to substantial overgrowth between the road and the pound. The high walls remain in place and an aging but well built wooden gate remains at the entrance to the pound. Within the space there also are a number of voluntary trees and scrub under-story growth as well. Historic photographs of the Town Pound show it in a partially dilapidated state with only grass and scrub low to the ground around it. The vegetation has grown up over the last century and it appears that there has been some re-stacking of the stones forming the high walls. The Town Pound is on private property about 40 feet back from the road. It is an important artifact from Princeton's early agricultural development that should be preserved.

Recommendations

The Town Pound and the adjacent Meetinghouse Cemetery have been documented on MHC forms by the Princeton Historical Commission and both were recently listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the expansion of the Princeton Center Historic District. The next step is preservation, particularly of the Town Pound. The Historical Commission is the likely town agency to coordinate efforts to work with the property owner to preserve the Town Pound and to make it accessible to town residents.

- Work with property owner to develop a plan to preserve and maintain the Town Pound.

- Consider a preservation restriction using M.G.L. Chapter 184, Sections 31-33 on the Town Pound and an easement to pass between the Meetinghouse Cemetery and the Town Pound in order to visit both sites.

- Develop a walking brochure for a self-guided tour connecting this first town center with Princeton Center and other points of interest within the Princeton Center Historic District.

Wachusett Mountain

Wachusett Mountain is the highest point in eastern Massachusetts rising to 2,006 feet above sea level. The mountain includes approximately 10,000 acres (using

the 1,000 feet above sea level mark as the base). This is about 1/3 of the land area of Princeton and part of the mountain is in Westminster and part in Hubbardston. The Wachusett Mountain State Reservation comprises 1,350 acres of land with trails, roads, a ski lodge (partially in Westminster) and other natural and man-made features of note. Natural features include an old growth forest, Balance Rock and other glacial boulders along Westminster Road. Man-made features include 15 miles of trails (most laid by the CCC), six miles of fire roads, the Superintendent's House and the Harlow Outlook (a stone half-way house) and several chairlifts, one of which goes to the summit. This heritage landscape is a priority for its views from the mountain as well as views of the mountain which can be enjoyed in many surrounding communities.

Wachusett Mountain has been a focal point in Princeton since long before European settlement. Native Americans gathered here for ceremonial events; it was used as a staging place during King Philip's war. The mountain was in private ownership throughout the 18th and 19th century. The first surveyors climbed the mountain to map it in the 1830s and from that time on it became a tourist attraction as well as a respite for authors who memorialized the mountain in literary pieces. In the 1860s the summit was one of the trigonometrical stations in the Coastal Survey prepared by the federal government. The first Summit House was built in 1870 as a concession for summer hikers. This was expanded in ca. 1877 to become a hotel with a dance pavilion and was the beginning of a succession of hotels at the top of the mountain. In 1898 the Massachusetts State Reservation system was established and Wachusett Mountain State Reservation became the second park. It was surveyed in 1900 and the Park Headquarters and Superintendent's House was built in 1903. From then on the hotel at the top was owned by the state. In the 1930s the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) built trails, roads, bridges and some huts along the trails. The hotel burned in 1970. At about the same time a fire tower and four steel communications towers were erected at the summit. The Mountain Ski Center operates during the winter and the mountain is a hiker's destination during other seasons.

Issues relating to the preservation of the mountain relate to ownership and use. Most of the land around the mountain summit is owned and managed by DCR. However, some parcels remain in private ownership; protection of these parcels may be critical to preserving views of and from the mountain. Like many popular destinations the mountain may suffer from overuse particularly during the fall foliage 'season', when parking accommodations at the Reservation's

Hitchcock Visitor Center are totally overwhelmed. Also, during the winter when weekend skiers arrive, traffic levels frequently stress the capacity of local roads. Snow-making technology is another potential concern, as it relates to local water supplies.

Recommendations

The history of the mountain – its use and its features – has been documented and the result was a recommendation [in 1999 by the surveyor (Public Archaeology Lab) for DCR (then DEM)] that the State Reservation is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. While listing is not likely to solve issues relating to preservation, it may help to illuminate the significance of this resource that is well loved regionally. Other measures may require the coordination of various town land use agencies, area land trusts and the Friends of Wachusett Mountain, in cooperation with DCR to highlight priorities.

- Prepare National Register nomination for Wachusett Mountain State Reservation.
- Work with the Wachusett Working Landscapes Partnership (WWLP) in its efforts to develop a plan for the Wachusett Mountain region.
- Provide consultation for the various stakeholders to develop a master plan for management of this DCR property.

CRITICAL CONCERNS

In addition to the priority landscapes listed in the previous section, residents also identified concerns related to heritage landscapes and community character. Critical concerns are town-wide issues that are linked to a range or category of heritage landscapes, not to a particular place. In Princeton each issue is related to the roads – the places in which the public is able to experience these vital community characteristics. 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.

Scenic Roads

Scenic roads are the topic of interest and concern in a number of forums. The technical paper on Cultural and Historic Resources, written as part of the Master Plan, names 15 roads or features of roads that are scenic. They include: Ball Hill, Gleason, Gregory, Jefferson, Mirick, Mountain, Pine Hill, Rhodes, Thompson, Westminster and Worcester Roads and Sam Cobb Lane. Also included are sections of numbered routes: Fitchburg Road (Route 31), Redemption Rock Trail (Route 140) and Sterling Road's (Route 62) deciduous and evergreen tree canopy. Features of these roads are stone walls, the narrow width, winding path up and down hills and the scenic vistas on the sides of the roads. A scenic roads bylaw would help to preserve stone walls and trees on roads that are designated; however numbered routes cannot be designated scenic under such a bylaw. Information about preservation of these important parts of Princeton's character is included in **Scenic Roads** in the General Preservation Planning Recommendations section of this report.

Scenic Vistas

In this hilltop town there are many places from which the views are breathtaking and are the essence of this scenic town. While many communities in this area have noted that views of Wachusett Mountain are heritage landscapes worthy of note, Princeton boasts its own views of the mountain and from the mountain. In addition there are many hilltops from which one can enjoy distant views of other hills and mountains, ponds and even views of the Boston skyline from Worcester Road. The scenic views of the agricultural landscape – the near views from many roads – also define the character of this town. These many vistas are ever

changing with each season and the time of day which adds to the beauty of the place. Scenic vistas sometimes are regional issues as well as local and are best maintained through identifying those vistas; examining the zoning in the viewsheds; and forming partnerships within the community and region to work together to preserve certain key views.

Stone Walls

Stone walls line many of the scenic roads and form property boundaries or divide farm fields in Princeton. As is the case with scenic roads, stone walls were the subject of interest in the technical paper on Cultural and Historic Resources (a draft section of the Master Plan) and a topic of concern to those attending the Heritage Landscape Identification meeting. Particular concern was expressed about the stone walls along Thompson and Radford Roads and Sam Cobb Lane, the stone walls opposite Fernside on Mountain Road and the stone walls near the intersection of Princeton and Sterling Roads reported to have been built by Hessian soldiers during the 18th century. Other stone walls of note are those around the town pound and Meetinghouse Cemetery, the wide double walls along Worcester Road and stone walls on Wachusett Mountain such as those at the Superintendent's House. A scenic roads bylaw would help to preserve those walls along road edges; however those in fields or outside of the road right-of-way are vulnerable particularly if development is to occur. Documentation is critical along with certain regulations. For more information refer to **Inventory of Heritage Landscapes** and **Scenic Roads** in the General Preservation Planning Recommendations section of this report.

EXISTING RESOURCE DOCUMENTATION AND PLANNING TOOLS

Princeton already has important planning tools in place to document current conditions within the town; identify issues of concern to town residents; and develop strategies for action. This section of the Reconnaissance Report identifies some of the existing planning documents and tools that provide information relevant to the Heritage Landscape Inventory program.

Inventory of Historic and Archaeological 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, Princeton's inventory documents about 200 historic resources ranging from the mid 18th century to the 21st century, reflecting new construction in the National Register districts. The first survey work was done in 1973; however research for National Register district nominations led to the updating of many older forms and the completion of new forms for many properties within the last few years. Most recently thorough survey work was completed for Russell Corner and Princeton Center. There also are survey forms completed in the 1990s for large state-owned areas such as Wachusett Mountain and Leominster State Forest.

Princeton has four documented ancient Native American sites of unknown dates (Contact Period (1500-1620) for ceremonial sites) and 14 documented historic archaeological sites. Due to the known information about other parts of the region as well as the apparent Native American activity in Princeton, it is assumed that there is significant more archaeology potential.

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. The Town of Princeton's National Register (NR) program began with the listing of the Princeton Center Historic District (accounting for only 5 resources) in 1999. In 2004 the East Princeton Village Historic District was listed and in 2006 the Princeton Center Historic District was expanded and the Russell Corner Historic District was listed in the National Register. Princeton has one individual listing – Fernside – Vacation House for Working Girls. All National Register listings are automatically listed in the State Register of Historic Places. Bagg Hall (in the Princeton Center Historic District) is protected by a preservation restriction drawn up in accordance with MGL Chapter 184, Sections 31-33. A preservation restriction (PR) runs with the deed and is one of the strongest preservation strategies available. All properties that have preservation restrictions filed under the state statute are automatically listed in the State Register. There are no local historic districts in Princeton.

Planning Documents and Tools

Princeton's *Master Plan* is underway with an anticipated publication date of October 2006. Technical papers have been prepared which indicate the direction of the plan. Within the Cultural and Historic Resource section critical issues that need documentation and protection include barns, stone walls, scenic landscapes, heritage trees and cemeteries. The *Princeton Open Space and Recreation Plan* was completed in 2000 and is currently being updated. Another planning document is the 1991 *Land Use Development Plan*.

Princeton considered a scenic roads bylaw at town meeting in the 1990s; however it was rejected at that time.

Princeton's Zoning Bylaw describes a "Residential-Agricultural" district as an area in which agricultural and animal husbandry (some Board of Health regulations apply) businesses are allowed. Most of Princeton with the exception of two small business districts is within the residential-agricultural district. Lot size is a minimum of two acres and minimum frontage requirement is 225 feet. This is the zoning that affects all the rural agricultural land in Princeton.

GENERAL PRESERVATION PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations pertaining to priority heritage landscapes can be found beginning on page 3. This section of the Reconnaissance Report offers more general recommendations relevant to preserving the character of the community that would be applicable to a wide range of community resources.

Princeton's residents place high value on the community's strong sense of place, which is created by its varied natural features and land use patterns that made use of the rugged landscape. The town has already taken measures to document and evaluate its most significant buildings and natural areas. It is now looking beyond the traditional resources to the landscapes, streetscapes, rural roads,

neighborhoods and other natural and cultural assets that define the overall fabric of the community. Like most municipalities, Princeton is facing multiple pressures for change that threaten 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.

Preservation planning is a three-step process: **identification, evaluation** and **protection**. Four useful documents to consult before beginning to implement preservation strategies are:

- Department of Conservation and Recreation, *Reading the Land*
- Freedom's Way Heritage Association, *Feasibility Study*
- Massachusetts Historical Commission, *Survey Manual*
- Massachusetts Historical Commission, *Preservation through Bylaws and Ordinances*

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

Inventory of Heritage Landscapes and other Historic Assets

The goals and methodology of Princeton's previous inventory work, particularly in preparation for its National Register nominations, were similar to those of the Heritage Landscape Inventory Program and in some cases have addressed the resources in a similar fashion. Many resources will appear on both lists. A vital 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. The Princeton Historical Commission has been working with MHC staff to develop the Princeton Survey Plan which will outline next steps in the inventory process. The resources discussed in this Reconnaissance Report that have not been documented should be included in the next inventory project. Thus, using the Massachusetts Historical Commission survey methodology:

- Prepare the Survey Plan that includes a list of resources that are under-represented or not sufficiently documented, beginning with heritage landscapes.
- Document unprotected resources first, beginning with the most threatened resources.

- Make sure to document secondary features on rural, agricultural 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 ancient Native American and historic occupation and to identify known and probable locations of archaeological resources associated with these patterns. Known and potential ancient Native American and historic archaeological sites should be documented in the field for evidence of their cultural association and/or integrity. All survey work should be completed by a professional archaeologist who meets the professional qualifications (950 CMR 70.01) outlined in the State Archaeologist Permit Regulations (950 CMR 70.00). 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 the Preservation Advocate, Fall 2005 which can be found at the following MHC link: http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcpdf/pafall05.pdf.

National Register Program

Survey work requires an evaluation as to whether resources meet the qualifications for National Register listing. Although Princeton has engaged in an active National Register program, there may be new information about the eligibility of properties. Thus using the information generated in the survey work and National Register evaluation, expand Princeton'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 National Register district nomination for West Princeton (under contract).

Village and Rural Neighborhood Character

Nearly all preservation strategies address village and 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. There are three traditional preservation strategies that have been effective in other communities similar to Princeton: a demolition delay bylaw, a local historic district bylaw (in accordance

with M.G.L. Chapter 40C) and designation, and a neighborhood architectural conservation district bylaw and designation.

- **Demolition delay bylaws** provides a time period in which towns can consider alternatives to demolition. Princeton should work with MHC staff to develop a bylaw that would best suit the town and should work with other town groups to publicize the advantages of a demolition delay bylaw to the community. Many demolition delay bylaws apply to structures that were built more than 50 years ago. The most common delay of demolition is six months; however many communities are finding that a one-year delay is more effective. A demolition delay bylaw requires a majority vote of Town Meeting.

- **Local historic districts**, adopted through a local initiative, recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected by the designation. These districts are the strongest form of protection for the preservation of historic resources. They are adopted by a 2/3 vote of Town Meeting and are administered by a district commission appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Princeton Center and West Princeton may benefit from local historic district designation.

- **Neighborhood architectural conservation districts** also are local initiatives that recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected. They are less restrictive than local historic districts but still embrace neighborhood character. Neighborhood architectural conservation district designation is appropriate for residential neighborhoods that may have less integrity and where more flexibility is needed.

Agricultural Landscapes

Preservation of agricultural landscapes means preservation of the farming activities, particularly in Princeton where there are working farms but some are declining and their character is integral to the community's past. It is important to know what the features of these agricultural landscapes are and which features the community treasures in order to make a case for preservation of these farms. Some preservation tools are available that can assist communities in preserving the actual farming activities even if only a few farms remain. Princeton recently (Spring 2006 ATM) adopted an agricultural commission to advocate for farming. Others are tools to preserve the landscape when the farm is sold.

- Document additional farms that may not presently be included in Princeton's inventory of historic resource, using MHC survey forms.

- Adopt a right-to-farm bylaw which allows farmers to carry on farming activities that may be considered a nuisance to neighbors. Refer to Smart Growth Toolkit at: http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/bylaws/Right-to-Farm-Bylaw.pdf

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

- Adopt a cluster bylaw that requires a buffer between development and farmland and requires a percentage of the land to remain as open space.

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

Scenic Roads

Scenic roads are an integral part of the historic fabric of the community. They are highly valued by Princeton residents and visitors alike and were listed as a critical issue. Roads must also accommodate modern transportation needs and decisions regarding roadways are often made with travel requirements as the only consideration. Princeton's Master Plan (which is in final stages) contemplates at least 12 roads for designation under a scenic roads bylaw which would provide review and approval for the removal of trees and stone walls that are within the right-of-way. There also are numbered routes in Princeton that are considered scenic and that would not be able to be designated under a scenic roads bylaw. 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 Princeton including the character defining features that should be retained.

- Adopt a scenic roads bylaw that designates at least those roads identified in the master plan draft and include design criteria to be considered when approving removal of trees and stone walls, such as a provision allowing only one driveway cut per property on scenic roads. Once adopted coordinate procedures between Highway Department and Planning Board.

- Consider a scenic overlay district which may provide a no-disturb buffer on private property bordering on scenic roads or adopt flexible zoning standards to protect certain views. Such bylaws could be written to apply to the numbered routes also, which are not protected under a scenic roads bylaw. Topfield recently adopted a scenic overlay district bylaw applicable to a section of Route 1 within its borders.

- Develop policies and implementation standards for road maintenance and reconstruction, including bridge reconstructions and roadways over cow passes, 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 the Massachusetts 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, walking paths and posted speeds. A delicate balance is required.

Funding of Preservation Projects

Funding for preservation projects is an important aspect of implementing preservation strategies. Both the MHC and 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.

- **Executive Office of Environmental Affairs** (EOEA) has a number of grant and loan programs that can be used for land protection purposes. For a compilation of programs, refer to http://www.mass.gov/envir/grant_loan/.

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

Towns that have adopted the **Community Preservation Act** find it to be an excellent funding source for many heritage landscape projects; however Princeton 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 makes the CPA worthy of consideration. Princeton projects eligible for CPA funding would include MHC inventory, National Register nominations, cemetery preservation, open space acquisition and preservation and restoration of public buildings. In addition a preservation restriction program could be established using CPA funds. 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 .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 as a ballot question proposed at a town 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 town believes are appropriate and beneficial to the municipality. Additional information about the CPA can be found at www.communitypreservation.org.

CONCLUSION

The Princeton Reconnaissance Report is a critical tool in identifying the rich and diverse heritage landscapes in Princeton and in evaluating preservation strategies. Princeton will have to determine the best way to implement the recommendations discussed above. One approach that might help Princeton is to continue the Heritage Landscape Committee, as described in *Reading the Land* and as the community did in preparation for the Heritage Landscape Identification meeting.

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 among municipal boards and agencies, local non-profit organizations, and state agencies and commissions.

Distribution of this Reconnaissance Report to the municipal boards and commissions involved in making land use decisions will assist in making this one of the planning documents that guides Princeton in preserving important features of the community's character. The recommended tasks will require cooperation and coordination among boards and commissions, particularly Princeton's Historical Commission, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Open Space Committee and Master Plan Steering Committee. It also is advisable to present this information to the Board of Selectmen, the applicants to the Heritage Landscape Inventory program on behalf of the town. Finally distribution of the report to the Historical Society, neighborhood associations, and any other preservation minded organizations will broaden the audience and assist in perpetuating interest and support for Princeton's heritage landscapes.

APPENDIX: HERITAGE LANDSCAPES IDENTIFIED BY COMMUNITY

This list was generated by local participants at the Heritage Landscape Identification Meeting held in Princeton on May 24, 2006 and the follow-up fieldwork on June 1, 2006. **There are undoubtedly other heritage landscapes that were not identified at the HLI meeting noted above.** The chart has two columns, the names and locations of resources are in the first; notes about resources are in the second. Landscapes are grouped by land use category. Abbreviations used are listed below.

APR = Agricultural Preservation Restriction
LHD = Local Historic District
PR = Preservation Restriction
CR = Conservation Restriction
NR = National Register
* = Priority Landscape
+ = Part of a Priority Landscape

Agriculture	
Bentley Trust Land Old Colony & Gates Rds.	At Four Corners (Old Colony, Gates, Thompson Roads) in southwestern corner of town. 168 acres of land including 15-20 acres of haying fields seen from the road and forest behind the fields. 6000 feet of frontage.
Calcia Farm 275 Sterling Rd.	
Cow Pass Allen Hill Rd.	A passage used for cows to pass under a road that separates one field to another. An example is the cow passage under Allen Hill Road, which is reported to be high enough for a person to walk through.
Gleason Farm 73 Gleason Rd.	Established by Addison D. Gleason. Also known as the Mosher Farm for Clayton Mosher who is a descendant of Gleason.
Goodnow Farm	Built in 1786 by Edward Goodnow this farm became a summer retreat and "gentleman's farm" for Charles Crocker. In 1946 the Crocker family donated its farm and 1,100 acres to Mass Audubon which holds it as the Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary. Farm buildings and farmhouse remain on the property – a gambrel roof barn was built by Crockers. An historic structures report was completed by SPNEA (now Historic New England) on the house. See: Open Space-Wachusett Meadow.
Hall's Field * Gregory Hill Rd.	20 acres of farm fields on the south side of Gregory Hill Road just down the hill from Princeton Center. This large field is part of the land that made up Red Bars Farm (early 1900s name) and although a separate lot is in common ownership with house, barns and 10 acres at 14 Gregory Hill Road.
Hubbard's Farm 154 Houghton Rd.	
Red Fox Farm 261 Worcester Rd.	
Smith Farm * 110 Hubbardston Rd.	Open land with a long stretch of frontage. Owned for many generations of same family. No longer a working farm. Farmstead, barns and machinery around the barns. George Mason House is Federal style ca. 1780.

Stimson Farm * 207 Thompson Rd.	APR. Also known as Century Farm, it has remained in the same family since the construction of the farmhouse in 1743. The APR was put on the property by the Stimsons in 1987. Sale of other farm land in town (e.g. Bentley Trust Land) would have a significant impact on Century Farm owners who cultivate Bentley Trust Land and depend on those fields for farm revenue. Was a dairy farm; the cows were sold in 2001 and the farm was converted to a tree and shrub nursery. The APR prohibits the installation of windmill which would be revenue generating.
Town Pound * Mountain Rd.	An 18th century enclosure in which to put stray animals until the owner/farmer claims his livestock. The Princeton Town Pound is on private property next to Meetinghouse Cemetery.
Archaeological	
Joseph Wilder House Site	On Norco Rod and Gun Club property.
Methodist Church Site	Remnants of the foundation.
Mill Remnants Gleason Rd.	On Keyes Brook at East Princeton there are remnants of an 18th century grist mill and 19th century chair factories, dam.
Moses Gill Estate Foundation Worcester Rd.	The foundation is between 73 and 83 Worcester Road.
Burial Grounds and Cemeteries	
Boylston Burial Ground Hubbardston Rd.	NR (part of NR district). This was the Boylston Family Cemetery used between 1828 and 1893.
Meetinghouse Cemetery Mountain Rd.	NR, part of Princeton Center HD. Established in 1765 next to the first meetinghouse that was built in 1764. Cemetery established on land given to the town by the Hon. Moses Gill.
North Cemetery Mirick Rd.	
Parker Cemetery I Beaman Rd.	
Parker Cemetery II Parker Pl.	
South Cemetery Ball Hill Rd.	At Brooks Station.

West Cemetery Wheeler Rd.	Well known American painter, Edward Savage (1761-1817), is buried here.
Woodlawn Cemetery Boylston Ave.	
Civic/Centers	
Bagg Hall 6 Town Hall Dr.	NR (part of Princeton Center HD), PR. The Princeton Town Hall is a large Richardsonian Romanesque structure designed by architect, Stephen Carpenter Earle and built in 1885.
East Princeton Village * Main St. (Rt. 140)	NR District. Mechanics Hall (1852), East Princeton Congregational Chapel (81 Main Street, 1885, Stick Style) converted to residence, Brown Chair Factory (93 Main Street, 1850) and mill housing, water trough, Beaman Road Gasoline Filling Station (1935, now Captain Bob's), East Princeton Fire House (3 Leominster Rd., 1835, now a private residence), Hubbard's Garage (106 Main Street, now Town Line Garage). See Residential.
Princeton Center – The Common	NR – Princeton Center (and Expansion) HD. The Common, Town Hall /Bagg Hall (1884), Goodnow Memorial Building/ Library (1883), Congregational Church (1838, moved ca. 1883), Princeton Center Building (1906, originally a school), historic dwellings and commercial buildings constructed for summer community in the late 19th century. Important for its historic value, openness and views.
Russell Corner Merriam Rd.	NR District. Location of Moore Tavern where first town meeting was held. Named for Russells who settled here and built some of houses.
Industrial	
Old Mill Dam Gleason Rd.	Off Route 140.
Princeton Electric Light Building Hubbardston Rd.	The brick building is located opposite #19 Hubbardston Road and was the first electric light building in Princeton.
Wind Farm Off Westminster Rd.	There were 8 windmills located on an access road off Westminster Road, near the Harrington Farm. Now attempting to construct two at a higher elevation.
Institutional	
First Congregational Church 14 Mountain Road	NR part of Princeton Center HD Expansion on the Common built in 1838.

Goodnow Memorial Building 2 Town Hall Dr.	NR (part of Princeton Center HD). The land and building (once the library and school) were given to the town in 1884 by Edward D. Goodnow. The Romanesque granite and brownstone building had been built in the previous year (1883) and designed by Earle, the same architect for the Town Hall. Norcross Bros. of Worcester constructed the building that commands an excellent view.
Harrington Farm Westminster Rd.	This now is an event facility.
Mechanics Hall * 104 Main St. (Rt. 140)	NR (part of East Princeton HD). 1852 Greek Revival East Princeton Schoolhouse #3 that also was used by mechanics. Not used as a school since 1949 and has been vacant since 1960s with some meetings continuing there into the 1980s. The East Princeton Improvement Society used to meet here. There is only some parking which is restricted and the hall is located on a busy road. In some disrepair with a new roof six years ago. Not accessible. Highly vulnerable.
Old Post Office	NR (Princeton Center Expansion HD). Yellow building in Princeton Center at the intersection of Worcester Road (Rt. 31) and Gregory Hill Road (Rt. 62) that is privately owned.
Schoolhouse #6 Schoolhouse Rd.	This ca. 1799 schoolhouse is vacant and deteriorating. It had been converted to a residence before being vacated.
Superintendent's House * Mountain Rd.	This house is owned by DCR and used to house superintendents of Wachusett Mountain. The wood building on a high stone foundation has been vacant since 1969.
Miscellaneous	
The Flower Pot Main St.	NR. In the East Princeton HD. An old horse trough that now is used for flowers.
Views of Boston + Worcester Rd.	A four-mile stretch from which there are a number of views of the Boston skyline.
Natural	
Balance Rock +	Located on the back of Wachusett Mountain.
Princeton Esker Off Bullock Ln.	Along Route 31. A particularly high 40' esker – ridge running along the south side of Route 31. There are stairs at Krashes Field to get up on the esker.
Redemption Rock Redemption Rock Rd. (Rt. 140)	The location of the release from captivity of Lancaster's Mary Rowlandson by King Philip in 1675. Located at a cross-road of trails.
Wachusett Mountain Old Growth Forest +	Important part of mountain forest for the ancient trees there.

Open Space /Parks	
Midstate Trail	This 95-mile trail from Rhode Island to New Hampshire passes through the Wachusett State Reservation and Leominster State Forest.
Princeton Land Trust Properties	Various locations.
Salamander Crossing Hubbardston Rd.	
Thomas Prince School Ball Fields Sterling Rd. (Rt.62)	Added to this list by a young-student participant.
Thomas Prince School Nature Trails Sterling Rd. (Rt.62)	Trails around the school on the south side of Sterling Road.
Trails	Hiking and walking trails as well as some used by horses found throughout the town.
Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary Goodnow Rd.	1,200 acres with 11 miles of trails and a 200-acre pond. Includes Brown Hill, Little Wachusett Hill, See Agriculture: Goodnow Farm.
Wachusett Mountain *	Wachusett Mountain is in Princeton and Westminster and is an important part of heritage landscapes in surrounding communities. There are many fine views from various parts of town. It is just over 2,000 feet above sea level at its summit. Other features include Bullock Ski Lodge (Balance Rock Rd. 1936), old growth forest, CCC trails, a stone superintendent's house on Mountain Road as well as one at 90 Westminster Road, glacial boulders off Westminster Road. The Mountain has multiple ownership including private and public. The Wachusett Mountain State Reservation is managed by DCR. It includes 1,350 acres in the northwest part of Princeton, 15 miles of trails and six miles of fire roads. The Wachusett Mountain Ski Center is part of this heritage landscape.
Residential	
Boylston Villa 73 Worcester Rd.	Built by Ward Nicholas Boylston in 1819 on the former Moses Gill Farm. Asher Benjamin, the author of *The Practical House Carpenter,* and an architect in Charles Bullfinch's firm, oversaw construction of the house. Changes made in 1853 in time for the marriage of one of Boylston's daughters. Four generations of Boylstons lived here until 1918. Also known as Homeward Bound. Boylston farm had large barns, prize Jersey cows and 550 acres of land.

Fernside 162 Mountain Rd.	NR. This 1835 Federal style house built for Captain Harrington was enlarged and run as an inn for Harvard professors and later for working women (1890). It continued in operation until 1989 and now is owned by McLean Hospital, which is an institutional use.
Gates House* 90 Westminster Rd.	Now owned by DCR this was part of an early farm and in the 20th century was converted from a farm building into a dwelling by Frank (Matches) Macys. Sold to Olive Gates in 1939 and deeded to Wachusett State Reservation in 1969. Now vacant.
George Parkhurst House 112 Mirick Rd.	Known locally as the Garfield House, this ca. 1787 Federal style house is reported to have been designed by Nathan Merriam. It also is known for having been the home of Nathan and Amos Merriam. Amos Merriam was a map maker who created the 1830 Princeton map.
John Gleason House 68 Hubbardston Rd.	This ca. 1757 Georgian Cape with a large ell is located on Rt. 62 – Hubbardston Road near Goodnow Road just west of the town center. It was built in two parts – the first in ca. 1757, the other moved to the site in 1790.
John Mirick House 160 Mirick Rd.	A ca. 1780 Federal style house built by John Mirick who purchased the land in 1777. In the 1880s a large barn was constructed on the property and a cider mill. The house has been lived in by the generations of the second family since it was built.
Abijah Moore House & Tavern 16 Merriam Rd.	NR as part of Russell Corner HD. Built in ca. 1748 and served as a tavern. The house was the location of the first town meeting in 1759 when Princeton was a district (not a town). Later owned by Thomas Hastings Russell and known as Locust Lawn, it was converted to a summer residence (early 1890s) with an elaborate porch.
Stone House 264 Mirick Rd.	This house is made of stone and is one of two that Jonas Beaman built in ca. 1780. The other was demolished.
Transportation	
Old Mill Road	A paper street.
Scenic Roads	Cultural and Historic Resources Technical Paper of Master Plan names the following roads as scenic: Ball Hill, Gleason, Gregory, Jefferson, Mirick, Mountain, Pine Hill, Rhodes, Thompson, Westminster and Worcester Roads, Sam Cobb Lane, and Routes 31 and 140 (near the Lake). Of particular interest are those stretches of some roads that are tree-lined with a distinctive tree canopy – one of which is oak, maple and evergreen along Sterling Road from Cranberry Meadows to The Clearings (south of Sterling Rd.).
Stone Walls	Cultural and Historic Resources Technical Paper of Master Plan names specifically the following stone walls. Thompson Road, Sam Cobb Lane, walls opposite Fernside and stone walls built by Hessian soldiers along Radford Road. Worcester Road wide stone walls named at the meeting in addition to those above.
Worcester-Gardner Railroad	Also known as the Boston-Barre-Gardner Railroad, it came through Princeton starting in 1870 and continuing until 1953. Summer guests traveling to the many hotels and guesthouses on Wachusett Mountain used the train service from Worcester. The Blueberry Special brought blueberry pickers making day trips to Princeton. The railroad still runs daily freight trains along this line.

Waterbodies	
Crow's Hill Pond Fitchburg Rd.	A 10-acre pond in Leominster State Forest most of which is in Westminster on the east side of Route 31. Earth filled dam and trails at pond in kettle hole built by CCC. A section of the pond is open for swimming.
East Branch of Ware River	In western corner of Princeton. Drains to the Quabbin Reservoir. Early 20th century mills on this river.
East Wachusett Brook	
Keyes Brook +	Mill remnants along Keyes Brook. The Beauty Spot at the waterfalls off Gleason Road.
Onion Patch Pond + Main St. & Redemption Rock Trail	Keyes Brook flows through Onion Patch Pond at East Princeton.
Paradise Pond Fitchburg Rd.	A large pond in Leominster State Forest from which Keyes Brook flows. Owned and operated by DCR and open for canoeing and fishing.
Quinapoxet Reservoir	In southern most tip of Princeton, partially in Holden.
Snow Pond	Snow Pond is west of Bullard Road. Several brooks converge here including Wachusett and Babcock.
Wachusett Lake	Located primarily in Westminster with its eastern part in Princeton off Rt. 140 at the base of Wachusett Mountain.