# SALISBURY 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.

## SALISBURY HISTORY

Salisbury's distinctive inland and 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 farming and later resort activities along the miles of beach front.

Salisbury is home to confirmed Native American sites over the last 3,000 years and it is presumed that there are Contact period sites from the 1500s or early 1600s along the Merrimack River, an inland transportation route. Native Americans that lived in this region were part of the Pawtucket group, locally called Penacook or Pentuckets. The first European settlement occurred in 1638, when the area was called Colchester. In 1640 the name was changed to Salisbury and included a large area of northern Essex County as well as territory in southern New Hampshire. There have been several boundary changes with the last in 1886 when Salisbury Falls and Rocky Hill were annexed to Amesbury to the west. The first meetinghouse was built ca. 1638 at Salisbury Green and a second was constructed in 1665.

Agriculture, particularly the production of hay and corn and animal husbandry, were the mainstay of the economy into the early 19th century along with the ancillary grist mills and slaughter houses, of which eight were reported in 1791. Early industries included lumbering (saw mills), ship building and fishing which remained viable until after the War of 1812 when small ports such as Salisbury gave way to larger shipping areas along the New England seacoast. Maritime industries were replaced by textile manufacturing which harnessed the waterpower of the Powwow and Merrimack Rivers.

Salisbury Manufacturing Company's first woolen mill opened in 1812 and had three mills by the 1830s. Most of the textile industry was at Salisbury Falls which eventually was annexed to Amesbury. Small boat building, carriage making and shoe and hat manufacturing contributed to the economy into the late 19th century with carriage and hat manufacturing emerging as significant industries at the turn of the 20th century. In the late 19th century Salisbury Beach became a resort town with hotels, summer cottages and an early amusement park. Some of the early "thrill" rides, such as the Dodgem Car, debuted at Salisbury Beach. Recreational activities continue today along the miles of barrier beach. The shoe industry also was sustained in Salisbury into the mid 1900s with Kristine Shoe Company and Sandlee-Goodman Shoe Company.

Early transportation routes followed Native American trails along the north-south Elm Street and the east-west Ferry Road and Seabrook Road. Water travel played a significant role into the 19th century. Ferry boats crossed the Merrimack from Newburyport to Carr Island and Salisbury until the end of the 18th century when the Essex Merrimac Bridge (to Amesbury) and the Newburyport Bridge (Bridge Road) were built over the Merrimack. Bridge Road (Rt. 1), a major north-south route was laid out in 1804 connecting Boston with New Hampshire. The Eastern Railroad line arrived in Newburyport in 1840 and was extended to western Salisbury soon thereafter. In 1847-48 a spur led from this line to East Salisbury parallel to Elm Street. And by 1890 Salisbury's villages were linked by street railway lines including one that ran the length of Salisbury Beach. Bridges carrying Rt. 1, Rt. 1A and the railroad over the Merrimack River were improved in the early 1900s. In the 1950s Rt. 95 was one more transportation improvement providing faster access to and from Salisbury.

Salisbury's population in the 1700s rose from about 380 in 1710 to 1,667 at the time of the American Revolution. The population figures fluctuated, rising dramatically to nearly 5,000 in the late 19th century; however these figures are misleading due to several boundary changes resulting in a reduced area of Salisbury by 1886, the main reason for a dramatic population decline from 4,840 residents in 1885 to 1,316. Immigrant groups in the late 19th century were predominately Irish, English, Canadians and Scots. By 1915 there were 1,717 persons and the largest immigrant groups represented were Italians and Canadians. By the mid 20th century population climbed to over 3,000 and more than doubled by the late 1980s to 6,645. Population figures continue to increase substantially to 7,827 reported in 2004. Much of this increase is due to improved access with opportunity to work in Boston or other parts of Essex County and to the conversion of many summer cottages to year-round residences.

## RESOURCES AND DOCUMENTATION

This section of the Reconnaissance Report identifies planning documents and tools that provide information relevant to the Heritage Landscape Inventory program.

### 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, Salisbury's inventory documents 155 resources dating from 1662 to 1953. Many of the resources are described in area forms that link their histories and context providing a unified history of the town's development. Documentation was completed in 2001 by professional preservation consultants.

### 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. Salisbury has one property listed in the National Register (NR); Ann's Diner is listed as part of the Diners of Massachusetts Thematic nomination. It also is listed in the State Register, which is automatic for all National Register properties.

### Planning Documents

The Open Space and Recreation Plan has not been updated since it was written in 1986. However, it is interesting to review the goals and objectives and to realize that many still apply. Those associated with preservation of heritage landscapes include:

- Preserve and protect the town's important natural resources, i.e., forests, agricultural lands, streams and wetlands, floodplains, shellfish beds and wildlife.
- Preserve the scenic quality and rural character of the town.
- Preserve important historic buildings and sites.

### Planning Bylaws and Other Tools

Presently the Planning Board is considering the benefits of conservation residential districts in which a property owner could receive density bonuses for protection of other sensitive parts of a given parcel. The Residential Cluster Bylaw allows this in part but not to the extent that planners believe is necessary to protect specific features.

Two Salisbury farms are protected by agricultural preservation restrictions; 18 acres at 99 Main Street, which are planted in sweet corn and vegetables, and 21 acres at 4 Folly Mill Road where the main crops are grown for forage.

## PRIORITY HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

The Salisbury Heritage Landscape Identification meeting, attended by about seven residents, some representing town boards and local non-profit organizations, was held on November 8, 2004. During the meeting residents identified a lengthy list of Salisbury's heritage landscapes, which is 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 Salisbury. In most instances intensive survey work will be needed to fully document the physical characteristics and the historical development of the landscape. These heritage landscapes, which are listed in alphabetical order, represent a range of scale from a single structure to a neighborhood.

**Ben Butler's Toothpick**

Ben Butler's Toothpick, named after a Civil War general, is a pyramidal-shaped navigational marker dating from the late 19th century. It rises at the end of a jetty, which juts into the mouth of the Merrimack River and once provided warning to boats approaching from the Atlantic Ocean. It is a well-known point of reference to boaters, known simply as "The Toothpick." The marker consists of a wood, stick-framed, pyramidal structure mounted on a high, mortared, granite-block, square base. This highly visible place marker is within the Salisbury Beach State Reservation, which is owned and managed by DCR. It is an important feature of the maritime history of this community and the greater regional North Shore coastal area. Maintenance is an issue.

**Pettengill Farm**

The Pettengill Farm on Ferry Road consists of a ca. 1740 Georgian house, a barn, greenhouses and the surrounding agricultural landscape. Historically it was part of the adjacent Pike Farm, which was divided in the 19th century at which time this acreage was given to the Pettengills. The farm continues in its agricultural use and a farm stand or store is maintained in the barn. The land area is relatively flat, making tilling and planting of the fields fairly easy. The agricultural fields have rich soils due to its proximity to the salt marshes to the east and the Merrimack River to the south. Due to the high cost of running a farm and the willingness of developers to pay dearly for flat developable land, small family farms, like the Pettengill Farm, are endangered and vulnerable to being converted to housing developments.

**Rings Island**

Rings Island is a small maritime neighborhood at the end of Ferry Road situated on a low hill rising from the surrounding marshland on the north side of the Merrimack River, opposite Newburyport. It is a dense residential community with some marine related industrial properties. Houses date from the 18th and 19th century and represent predominant architectural styles of the time including Georgian, Federal and Greek Revival as elaboration for various house types from

capes to two and one-half story gable front and side-gable dwellings on granite foundations, most with wood sheathing. Marshland is found at the edges of many properties and views from these well preserved properties look across the Merrimack River to Plum Island (east) and Newburyport (south). Hedges and low picket fences mark many of the properties yet views are open. There also are a few garages and boathouses. One of the largest buildings is the 1892 Community House now occupied by the Union Chapel Museum. The building sign says "Rings Island Water District." In the early 20th century, noted poet Edna St. Vincent Millay lived in the 1680 Jonathan Dole House on 3rd Street. The Town Landing was rebuilt at 1st and 2nd Streets, an area that once was the end of Ferry Street and the location of the dock for the ferry to Newburyport. The neighborhood is named for Robert Ring who received the first land grant here in 1642. The fragile conditions of salt marshes, the water quality of the river, and the importance of context in the size and scale of development in this well-preserved maritime village must be recognized in order to preserve the neighborhood, which is one of Salisbury's rich heritage landscapes.

**Salisbury Plains Farms**

In the northwestern part of Salisbury is an area that retains its rural beginnings with contiguous farms forming the agricultural landscape. The area is known as Salisbury Plains for its flat rich agricultural context. The most picturesque areas are along Elmwood and Congress Roads and Main Street. Some farms have given way to housing developments and are in marked contrast to the other pastoral views along these three roads. Eighteenth and nineteenth century farmhouses with rear ells and attached woodsheds and barns face south and are marked by white or unpainted wide board fences lining the northern side of Congress Street. Fields on the south side tend to be slightly lower in elevation than the farmsteads and have some fencing or hedgerows setting off sections. On Main Street near Congress Street are the Bartlett Farms – Elmknoll and Cold Springs – which are part of a farm established in 1659. Proximity to Rt. 95, which separates Salisbury Plains from the rest of the town, is a threat in that the land is highly valued for housing by those who use Rt. 95 to commute.

**Salisbury Square**

The town center, known as Salisbury Square, consists of several roads (Elm Street, Bridge Road, Pleasant Street, Beach Road and Lafayette Road) converging at the triangular shaped Common, a 1.5 acre town green, with residential, commercial and institutional properties lining the intersecting roads at the Square. Some of the prominent structures include the East Parish Meetinghouse (1834), the Parsonage (1820) at Minister's Corner (now owned by the Historical Society), Town Hall (1895), the Pike School (1882), an early 18th century house with a saltbox roof, and some well preserved Federal and Greek Revival dwellings. There are a number of modern buildings interspersed. The traffic pattern is one-way around each leg of the Common. Traffic management and modern development, particularly the desire to turn historically residential properties into commercial uses, threaten the stability of the historic resources at the Square.

### Smallpox Cemetery

The exact location of the Smallpox Cemetery is known to only a few and was not viewed as part of the reconnaissance survey work in Salisbury. It is in a wooded area on private property. It is reported that some markers remain. Clearly this is an important part of local history and will disappear unless recorded.

## PLANNING

### Preservation Strategies

Salisbury's varied landscape, including the long stretch of barrier beach; its location at the mouth of the Merrimack River; and the rich agricultural land in the northwest part of town, played a critical role in the settlement and historical development of the community. These features and the clusters of historic resources are important assets of the town. The preservation program in Salisbury is underway with the 2001 documentation of several important areas and individual resources. Through the Heritage Landscape Inventory program, Salisbury is now looking beyond traditional historic resources to the landscapes, neighborhoods and other natural and cultural assets that define the overall fabric of the community. Like most Essex County coastal towns, Salisbury is under intense pressure for development. Special places within the community such as beachfront property, the riverfront village, farms and the town center, which were once taken for granted, now are more vulnerable than ever to change.

### Planning Issues

In addition to the priority landscapes listed in the previous section, residents identified general issues related to heritage landscapes and community character. Each of the critical planning issues affects at least one of the priority landscapes. Three of the four issues are related to Salisbury Beach. These issues are arranged 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.

#### *Beach Access*

There are concerns about access to Salisbury Beach, particularly along some of the lesser known and poorly marked rights-of-way. The actual beach is owned by DCR to the low water mark. DCR owns some of the rights-of-ways, and in addition there are easements in effect allowing the public to pass over others that are privately owned. The purpose of the easements is to provide public access to the state-owned beach; however, there are areas of encroachment by abutting private property owners which physically block the rights-of way. Constant vigilance is required as abutters frequently fence them off from the public, attempt to disguise the fact that they are indeed rights of way or warn people away from them by telling them they are trespassing on private property. The

Salisbury Beach Betterment Association may shed additional light on this thorny situation.

***Beach Development***

Presently there are development pressures, particularly in the form of construction of large condominium projects near Salisbury Beach. The problems are twofold: the size and scale of new construction overwhelms the historic context and non-residential uses are displaced when they are replaced with larger-scale residential property. In each instance older properties are vulnerable to demolition. Many of the resort businesses are threatened due to the high land value for newly constructed residential units. The loss of such businesses not only results in the loss of buildings, but also in the loss of the sense of place – the character that is unique to Salisbury Beach. Large new construction also compromises views of the beach and the ocean and puts additional pressure on infrastructure such as roads, water and sewer.

***Beach Traffic***

The popularity of coastal areas in the summer combined with the fact that only a single road leads to the long stretch of Salisbury Beach makes traffic congestion on weekends difficult to negotiate and is a threat to the quality of life in the community. The marshland and meadows behind the miles of barrier beach in Salisbury make it nearly impossible to create new access to the beach. Management of the automobiles once they arrive in the beachfront area is an additional problem. Salisbury Beach State Reservation is often cited as the Commonwealth's most popular campground/recreation area, which only adds to the traffic gridlock on most sunny weekend afternoons during the summer season.

***Protection of Sensitive Parcels of Land***

Residents are concerned about sensitive parcels of rural farmland as well as marshland closer to the coast. The community is concerned about the threat of conventional subdivision as well as ways in which one can skirt around conservation regulations through mitigation to develop sensitive parcels that may have an important natural or historical feature or that may be critical to the overall environmental balance.

Farmland is threatened as farming becomes less lucrative and the value of land for housing development increases. Most of the farming areas are environmentally sensitive. Development with septic systems, additional impervious surface and changing patterns of water run-off have a negative impact on the natural and scenic resources of these agricultural areas.

## 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 a 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 Salisbury 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. Although Salisbury's historic resource inventory was substantially augmented in 2001, the comprehensive approach which links buildings and landscapes – the heritage landscape inventory methodology – may help to shed light on the overall landscape. Thus, using the Massachusetts Historical Commission survey methodology, record more of Salisbury'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 including heritage landscapes such as farms, coastal areas and neighborhoods.

- Document unprotected resources first beginning with threatened areas.

- Make sure to document secondary features on residential properties, such as outbuildings, garages, stone walls as well as the primary buildings.

### *National Register Program*

Recent survey work pointed out National Register eligibility. New survey work will require National Register evaluation. Thus using the information generated in the survey work, establish Salisbury'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.

- Consider National Register nomination for Rings Island, Salisbury Beach and many other important resources.

### *Agricultural Landscapes*

Preservation of agricultural landscapes means preservation of farming activities; otherwise, it simply is the preservation of land as open space. It is important to know what the features of an agricultural setting are and which features the community treasures in order to make a case for preservation of these settings. Some preservation tools are available that can assist communities in preserving the actual farming activities. Consider the following options.

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

- Consider a right-to-farm bylaw which allows farmers to carry on farming activities that may be considered a nuisance to neighbors, particularly for the Salisbury Plains area.

- Review the town's cluster bylaw for refinement of buffers, particularly 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 they would be required to donate preservation restrictions (PR).

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

***Burial Grounds and Cemeteries***

Salisbury has several burial grounds of which the best known is the Old Burial Ground at the corner of Beach and Ferry Roads. Documentation of others has not been recorded on MHC forms. 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 Salisbury 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 burial ground or 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.

- Contact private cemetery owners, such as the smallpox cemetery, to document before oral tradition is lost.

***Coastal Beach Area***

The goals are to control pollution and provide access to these fine resources. 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.

- Form public-private partnerships with neighborhood groups and Boy Scouts (or similar community groups) to develop stewardship programs for access points.

- Develop a public access brochure to remind abutters and town residents of the public access via these rights-of way.

- Adopt and enforce strict conservation and zoning bylaws that regulate construction in sensitive areas, and dimensional

requirements that preserve views and access. Consider regulations for waste water treatment and storm water run off that are more restrictive than those that are minimally acceptable under Title V and special dimensional requirements for this area.

***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. Three preservation tools that may be particularly applicable to Salisbury's historic neighborhoods are demolition delay, local historic district designation (MGL Chapter 40C) and neighborhood conservation district designation. A demolition delay bylaw provides a time period in which the town can consider alternatives to demolition. The two types of districts recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected. Each type of district is a local initiative, adopted by a 2/3 vote of Town Meeting, and administered by a district commission, appointed by the Selectmen. Local historic districting is the strongest form of protection for the preservation of historic resources, while neighborhood conservation districts are less restrictive but still embrace neighborhood character.

- 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 reinforces the value of local historic resources; therefore include a publication requirement in the bylaw.

- Appoint a local historic district study committee to consider adopting a local historic district bylaw and define appropriate districts such as Rings Island.

- Alternatively, pass a neighborhood conservation district bylaw. Such districts may be the most appropriate way to preserve certain land use patterns where there already are changes in materials but the overall size, scale and orientation of structures of the heritage landscape are retained. Neighborhood conservation district designation may be an appropriate protective mechanism for the Beach center.

***Scenic Roads***

Scenic roads are an integral part of the historic fabric of the community. They are highly valued by Salisbury 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 Salisbury including the character defining features that should be retained.

- Review and amend zoning measures that minimize the impact of commercial and residential development along gateway roads by considering setbacks, screening and height requirements.

- Adopt a scenic roads bylaw consistent with MGL Chapter 40-15C and designate certain roads as scenic roads. Examples may be Ferry Road and Congress Street. 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. Such policies may be particularly important for parts of Ferry Road crossing to Rings Island and other sensitive road segments near the salt marshes. This is an important public process in which the community may have to accept responsibility for some costs to implement certain 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, walking paths, posted speeds. A delicate balance is required.

***Funding of 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 can vary from year to year. When planning Salisbury's heritage landscape inventory program, contact relevant agencies to determine whether funding is available.

Cities and towns that have adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA) find it to be an excellent funding source for many heritage landscape projects; however Salisbury would first 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 are worthy of consideration. The CPA (MGL Chapter 44B) establishes a mechanism by which municipalities 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 city believes are appropriate and beneficial to the municipality. Information about the CPA can be found at www.communitypreservation.org.

**Specific Recommendations**

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

***Ben Butler's Toothpick***

- Prepare MHC inventory form.

- Work with DCR and a local committed friends group or the Historical Society to complete an historic structures analysis with a master plan for preservation.

***Rings Island***

The well preserved Rings Island neighborhood should be a focus for documentation and preservation in Salisbury's preservation planning. Due to the state of preservation and the integrity of the resources that make up this heritage landscape, the highest level of protection should be seriously considered.

- Evaluate for National Register listing.
- Complete a National Register nomination for Rings Island with attention to heritage landscape methodology.
- Adopt a local historic district bylaw and designate Rings Island a local historic district.

***Salisbury Square***

The diversity of resources in this town center is reason to consider a variety of tools from preservation strategies to zoning. Due to the modern intrusions the MHC has determined that Salisbury Square is not eligible for the National Register; however there are individual properties in the Square that may be eligible.

- Update inventory of resources using heritage landscape methodology combined with traditional MHC survey methodology.
- Develop a master plan for the square with consideration of village overlay zoning district that allows density and setbacks similar to those established by historic fabric.
- Work with local highway and Mass Highway to manage traffic while respecting resources such as Common, reduce signs, and select historically appropriate street lighting and signalization.

### *Smallpox Cemetery*

The known information about this cemetery is through oral tradition which may be lost with time. Therefore the Salisbury Historical Society and the Historical Commission could work together to contact the private property owners in order to gain permission to document the site.

## CONCLUSION

The Salisbury Reconnaissance Report is a critical tool in starting to identify the rich and diverse heritage landscapes in Salisbury 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 Salisbury in preserving important features of the community's character. The tasks that are recommended will require cooperation and coordination among boards and commissions, particularly Salisbury's Historical Commission, the Planning Board, and Conservation Commission. 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 Salisbury Historical Society, the Salisbury Beach Betterment Association, other neighborhood associations, and any other preservation minded organizations will enhance Salisbury'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 Salisbury on November 8 and the follow-up fieldwork on November 8, 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.

APR = Agricultural Preservation Restriction
ECGA = Essex County Greenbelt Association
NR = National Register
TTOR = The Trustees of Reservations
CR = Conservation Restriction
LHD = Local Historic District
PR = Preservation Restriction
* = Priority Landscape

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| **Agriculture** | |
| ***Bartlett Farms **** <br> Main St. & Congress | On corner of Main and Congress there is Bartlett Farmstand and a sign stating that the farm was established in 1659. Elmknoll Farm and Cold Springs Farm. Part of the Salisbury Plains farms. Two APRs for Salisbury are now owned by Bartletts – one for 21 acres on farm on Folly Mill Road and one for 18 acres for farm at 99 Main Street. |
| ***Bolduc Farm*** <br> 19 Ferry Road | Originally the Pike Farm with Samuel Pike House, an 18th c. saltbox (ca. 1750) and barn. After Pike owned by Sawyers. Present owner, Bolduc is daughter of Sawyer. The two shingled houses and barn on two acres have been set aside – the rest will be a Chapter 40B affordable housing development. |
| ***Pettengill Farm*** <br> Beach Road | Partially protected by Essex County Greenbelt Association. Historic name of the farm was Dawson. |
| ***Pettengill Farm **** <br> 45 Ferry Road | Ca. 1740 Georgian house, barn, greenhouses and fields. Was part of Pike Farm (see Bolduc Farm above) – divided and this part given to Pettengills. House historic name is William S. Pettengill. |
| ***Salisbury Plains Farms **** <br> Elmwood, Congress, Main St. | Elmwood and Congress Roads and Main Street: In the northwestern part of Salisbury is an area that retains its rural beginnings with contiguous farms forming the agricultural landscape. Some farms have given way to housing developments and are in marked contrast to the other pastoral views along these three roads. According to MHC survey forms 16 Congress Rd. is ca. 1880 Earl Reynolds House, 22 Congress Rd. is 1845 Federal style Samuel Morrill Farm with large barn. 98 Main St. is ca. 1750 Georgian style Dole Farm and 103 Main St. is ca. 1800 Evans Farm with barn and greenhouses. |
| ***Stevens Christmas Tree Farm*** <br> 73 Murdock Road | Corner of Murdock and Elm St. Chapter 61 A (agricultural). Original land grant from 1640s. Same family continues to farm property. 19th century house on Murdock Road, flat plains with evergreen nurseries. |
| **Archaeological** | |
| ***Ferry Lots Lane Cellar hole*** | The cellar hole of the bridge keeper's house who worked the floating bridge (reported to be the first floating bridge in America). A ferry from Newburyport went to Carr Island and the floating bridge led from Carr to the mainland at Ferry Lots Lane. |

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| ***Plank Road***<br>Under Beach Road | Built in 1866 to cross salt marshes leading to beach. Beach Road was laid over the early planks as remnants have been found during road work. A local legend maintains that a ship that was supposed to go to Newburyport pulled in to Salisbury and hid gold under the plank road. |
| ***Shipwreck Sites***<br>Off shore | Some are visible at low tide and can be a tourist attraction. The Jennie Carter went down in 1894. |
| **Burial Grounds** | |
| ***Long Hill Cemetery***<br>Beach Road | Privately owned. |
| ***Maplewood Cemetery***<br>Ferry Road | Early Industrial period. Privately owned. Slate and marble – small rectangular lot close to road with low picket fence, wood picket arch marks entrance. Families interred here include Pettengills, Pikes, Coffins. |
| ***Old Burial Ground***<br>Beach & Ferry Rd. | Laid out in 1639, also called First Cemetery or "Colonial Burying Ground." Retains old "wolf slabs" put over graves to prevent wolves from digging in burial ground. First five ministers buried here. Stones have been documented. |
| ***Small Pox Cemetery****<br> | In woods on private property. Little known to anyone in town. Some markers reportedly remain. |
| ***True Cemetery***<br>Lafayette Rd. | At Toll Road. |
| **Civic** | |
| ***Salisbury Square ****<br>Lafayette, Elm, Beach sts. | Town center. Common (1.5 acre Town Green) with commercial and institutional properties. East Parish, Parsonage at Minister's Corner (now owned by Historical Society). Town Hall, Pike School, an early 18th century house with a saltbox roof. |
| **Industrial** | |
| ***Potlid Square***<br>Elm Street | So named because residents are reported to have melted pots at this location to make bullets for the American Revolution. |
| ***Wonder Potato Chip Factory***<br>Beach Road | 1933-1983. Hardens had family run business where they made potato chips which were distributed to grocery stores until World War II and then sold at their factory only. The chips were cooked in large coke-fired cauldrons. |

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| **Institutional** | |
| ***East Parish***<br>8 Lafayette Rd**.** | In Salisbury Square. Established in 1638. Joined with Methodist Society in 1833 and built present church building in 1834. Any town resident can pay $1 to be a member and participate in meetings run by the moderator in which decisions are made, managing the land owned by the East Parish. The Parsonage at Minister's Corner at the intersection of Route 110 (Elm St) and Salisbury Square is where the minister of the East Parish lived until 2001 when the house was sold to the Historical Society. |
| ***Pike School***<br>17 Bridge Rd. | On Common. Traditional mid 19th century gable front Greek Revival schoolhouse, later used as central fire station. Restored to schoolhouse appearance with two single doors in gable front after removal of large fire apparatus doors. |
| ***Star of the Sea Chapel***<br>145 North End Blvd. | 1896. Shingle-Style Roman Catholic Chapel at the beach. (Main church in town on corner of Beach and Ferry Sts.). |
| **Natural Features** | |
| ***Back River*** | Back channel of the Merrimack River. |
| ***Marshland*** | Along river, barrier beach and ocean. Friedenfeis Rd. extends into marsh from Bridge Rd. Ditches in marshes were dug during the Depression to control mosquitoes. Ferry Road – crosses Mill Creek close to Rings Island. There are reported abutments at the opening of Mill Creek to the Merrimack, which are 5 to 6 feet under the current marsh level. Clamming areas, wild cranberries, phragmites taking over. Varied environment with ocean, marsh, river and upland and all of the birds, fish and vegetation that go with each environment. |
| ***Marshland at Town Creek*** | View from MBTA north-south right-of-way. |
| ***Merrimack River*** | Southern boundary of Salisbury. Views of river from Morrill's Rock. Mouth of river where it empties into Atlantic Ocean off coast of Salisbury. |
| ***Rocks*** | High Rock – in river. Badgers Rock, so called because fishermen think it resembles the back of a swimming badger. Located in Merrimack near mouth, a place where seals gather. Black Rock – at the end of the barrier beach. |
| ***Salisbury Beach*** | Barrier beach – 3.5 miles long facing the Atlantic Ocean. Beachfront owned by State as part of Salisbury State Reservation. The center beach area north of the State Reservation was formerly a large amusement park including a wooden roller coaster, a park devoted to kiddie rides, games of chance and independently owned concession stands and stores. At this time, some beach access points are unknown or inaccessible. See Salisbury Beach in **Residential** section of chart. |
| ***Salt Hay Fields & Marshes***<br>Off Beach Road | Salt marsh hay is harvested seasonally on the south side of Beach Road in the marshes west of the Salisbury State Reservation entrance. |

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| ***Smallpox Brook*** | At one time, Smallpox Brook was a favored freshwater fishing area stocked by the Commonwealth's Division of Fisheries & Wildlife. Unfortunately, in recent years, beavers have dammed this creek, stopping the natural flow and ruining the trout fishing for which it was well known locally. |
| ***Tidal Creeks*** | Town Creek, Black Rock Creek, Morrill Creek. |
| **Open Space / Recreation** | |
| ***Carr Island*** | State owned. |
| ***Ram Island*** | Ram Island State Wildlife Management Area. State owned. |
| ***Salisbury Beach State Reservation*** | 520 acre park including barrier beach, riverfront, saltmarsh, Ben Butler's Toothpick (see entry under transportation), camping area and picnic ground. State owned since 1930s. BSLA design implemented by WPA and CCC. All reworked in 1990s with only general layout of early park remaining. |
| **Residential (Neighborhoods)** | |
| ***Beach Grove Cabins*** Beach Road | Ca. 1950, administration building and 20 rental cabins on road to Salisbury Beach. Set among mature pines. Important part of development pattern of summer resort community. NR eligible. |
| ***Rings Island **** | South side of Merrimack – residential with some marine related industrial properties. Sea captains houses. 18th and 19th century Georgian, Federal, Greek Revival – capes, most on granite foundations, most with wood sheathing. Marsh land around houses looking across Merrimack River to Plum Island (east) and Newburyport (south). Hedges, low picket fences, views are open. A few garages and boat houses. 1892 Community House with Union Chapel Museum building sign says "Rings Island Water District." In the early 20th century Edna St. Vincent Millay lived in the 1680 Jonathan Dole House at 5 3rd Street. Town landing rebuilt at 1st and 2nd street (once the end of Ferry Street). Area named for Robert Ring who received first land grant here in 1642. |
| ***Salisbury Beach*** | Summer resort area. South End. The amusement park was an important part of the beach attraction. One of first 'Dodge-em' rides here, and early Ferris wheel and wooden roller coaster. Used to have diving horses and bicyclists on a high rope as attractions. Steamboats used to come to the beach. Some of the pilings remain. Black Rocks Hotel, a destination hotel, was at the south end. Well known dance hall was the 5 O'clock Club which is gone. Commercial part of Salisbury Beach is threatened – giving way to condos. Prior to 1850 only day trippers visit beach, then tents and finally cottages begin to be built in 1864. Land was leased by Salisbury Commoners and by 1870 there were 50 cottages and by 1888 150 cottages on 300 leased lots. In 1903 Edward Payson Shaw, proprietor of Cushing Hotel and narrow gauge railroad (Seaside Railroad) purchased east end of beach from the Commoners to develop transportation and places to stay – streetcar to beach followed by automobiles. See Salisbury Beach in **Natural** section of chart. |

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| ***Sweet Apple Tree Lane*** | Morrill's Creek and Morrill's Rock. 18th or early 19th century Cape on property. Excellent views of Merrimack River. Can see Ben Butler's Toothpick in an eastern direction. Marshland, clamflats of hard packed sand. Now State owned, Fish and Wildlife and Environmental Police. Had been a potential site for nuclear power plant – as Mass Electric tried to accumulate the land there was one land owner who held out and when issues of sensitivity of area came up it was abandoned by Mass. Electric and the plant was built at Seabrook. |
| **Transportation**<br>***Bridges, Landings, Roads*** | |
| ***Beach Access*** | Public access to beach. Some access points are marked by boardwalks – others are obstructed by private encroachment. Also referred to as rights-of way. |
| ***Ben Butler's Toothpick ****<br>State Reservation | Pyramidal shaped navigational marker dating from the late 19th century. Built at the end of a jetty and named after Civil War general. Provided warning to approaching boats. High granite block and mortar base with wood stick framing pyramidal structure on top. |
| ***Ferry Landings*** | Rings Island, Carr Island. Town landing at Rings Island (was the landing at the end of Ferry Road – now Second Street) recently rebuilt. |
| ***Railroad beds*** | North-south line and east-west line. MBTA north-south rail bed has excellent views of Town Creek and surrounding marshland. Line to Seabrook. Rails have been removed. The east-west trail connecting with Amesbury has been improved in part. |
| ***Trolley Line*** | Right of way of the early 20th century streetcar to the beach. Two trolley lines converged at the beach – one from the north and one from the west. |