# BOXFORD 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.

## BOXFORD HISTORY

Boxford's distinctive inland landscape features of rich soils and many water sources were instrumental in shaping the history of the community as an important regional farming area and the location of several mills – saw and grist - and the early factory that became the Diamond Match Company.

Boxford's early history of Native American activity is conjectured from known patterns in similar areas; however, there currently are no documented prehistoric archaeological sites. European settlement began slightly later than in nearby coastal communities. Boxford Center was settled ca. 1645 and known as Rowley Village, however the town of Boxford was not incorporated until 1685. It was named after the English town from where some of the first settlers came. Two meetinghouse centers emerged: one at Boxford Center where the First Parish was established and one in West Boxford, which was settled after 1670. These were referred to as the East Parish and West Parish respectively. The first meetinghouse in the East Parish was constructed in 1701, while the West Boxford meetinghouse was built in 1734.

In 1668, an iron forge was started on Fish Brook by members of the Leonard family from the Saugus Iron Works. It continued production until 1681.

Boxford's economic base remained primarily agricultural throughout the 19th century and well into the 20th century. By the 1860s there were about 125 farms in Boxford. This number and the number of acres in production as well as the production levels were maintained well into the 20th century. Farmland was used for cultivation of wet meadow and English hay. Dairy, poultry and wood products accounted for most of the produce taken to markets in nearby cities such as Haverhill, Lawrence and Salem.

For a brief period from the advent of the railroad in 1854 until after the Civil War some minor industrial activity contributed to the economic base, including small shoe factories, and textile, shoe peg and saw mills. After the Civil War in 1867 a match factory, first known as Carlton, Byers & Co., was established on Fish Brook and was the main manufacturing facility in Boxford in the late 19th century. In about 1885 the business was purchased by the Diamond Match Company and continued to produce matches into the early 20th century.

Population rose to over 1,500 in the mid-19th century and declined to just over 600 in the early 20th century. A substantial increase in the population in the second half of the 20th century – from 926 in 1950 to 7,921 in 2000 - was the result of a new pattern of development. The construction of Route 95 through the southeastern part of Boxford in the 1950s led to the shift to a residential community of single-family dwellings in the rural bucolic setting.

## 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 Inventory, Boxford's inventory includes 73 survey forms documenting properties that were constructed from 1683 to 1957. These include 65 building forms, four area forms and four structures forms documenting bridges. All of the bridges have been determined to be ineligible for National Register listing. Nearly all of the survey work was completed in the late 1960s with the exception of the forms for the First Period buildings, which were documented in 1985.

**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. National Register listings include three districts and five individual properties. Districts include the Boxford Center Historic District, consisting of 43 resources, Howe Village Historic District, having 14 resources, and the Rowley Village Forge Site. Individual listings comprise three First Period dwellings, the Palmer School (known as District School #2 or the Little Red Schoolhouse) and the Spofford-Barnes House. All National Register listings are automatically listed in the State Register of Historic Places. One property, the Spofford-Barnes House, is protected by a preservation restriction in accordance with MGL Chapter 183, Sections 31-33. The preservation restriction runs with the deed and is one of the strongest preservation strategies available. All properties which have preservation restrictions filed under the state statute are automatically listed in the State Register.

**Local Historic District**

Local historic districts, which are administered at the municipal level, are special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected by a local historic district commission. Boxford has two local historic districts; the Boxford Center Historic District, consisting of 43 resources and Howe Village Historic District, having 14 resources. All properties in local historic districts are automatically listed in the State Register.

**Planning Documents**

Using Community Preservation Act funds, the town prepared the *Community Survey Plan* in 2003 to make a case for obtaining funds to complete a comprehensive historic resource survey. The plan identifies themes and patterns of development as well as property types found within each theme. A list of 313 properties has been prepared and the next step is to hire a consultant to complete the documentation of these properties according to the MHC methodology.

In 1996, the *Boxford Master Plan* by Thomas Planning Services, Inc. of Boston was published to replace the 1961 Master Plan by the renowned Charles W. Eliot. Many heritage landscape issues are addressed in the Master Plan, which is explicit about establishing additional historic districts, conserving the historic character of buildings and village centers, preserving farmland, and preserving scenic roads and views.

The *Boxford Open Space and Recreation Plan* (OSRP) was last updated in 2001. Many of the resources listed in this Heritage Landscape report also are addressed in the OSRP.

**Planning Bylaws and Other Tools**

All of Boxford's roads except the numbered routes have been designated as Scenic Roads in accordance with the Scenic Roads Act – M.G.L. Chapter 40-15C. Numbered routes may not be so designated according to this State statute. However, numbered routes can become scenic byways through the federal Scenic Byways program.

Boxford has a Community Preservation Committee (CPC) established after the Town adopted the Community Preservation Act in 2001 at a 3% annual surcharge on real estate tax bills. At least 10% of the funds must be used for each of the following disciplines – affordable housing, open space protection and historic preservation. The remaining 70% may be used for projects involving the same three disciplines as well as recreation. Each expenditure is recommended by the CPC and requires approval of a Town Meeting vote.

## PRIORITY HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

The Boxford Heritage Landscape Identification meeting, attended by over 25 residents, some representing town boards and local non-profit organizations, was held on June 8, 2004. During the meeting residents compiled a lengthy list of Boxford'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 the 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 Boxford. 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 individual sites to all the roads throughout the community.

### Little Red Schoolhouse – Palmer School

Located at 33 Main Street is the Little Red Schoolhouse which historically was called the Palmer School and District #2 School. It was constructed in 1845. The wood clapboard gable front schoolhouse rests on a granite block foundation, and has a small rear ell. The corner posts are well articulated. The six-over-six window sash have been removed and window openings now are boarded up. The schoolhouse is located on a corner of the Cole School property and is not in use. It was one of a collection of six mid-19th century schoolhouses and is significant since it is the only one that conveys a sense of this type of modest wood frame school building type in Boxford. The other extant schoolhouses have been converted into residences and no longer retain their original character. Originally, the school was located at 66 Main Street. In 1931 Mrs. Edna Morse purchased the schoolhouse from Chester Killam who had bought it at auction from the town and had moved it to its current site for use as a community house. The land had been donated to the town by Mrs. Morse the year before for the construction of a playground in memory of her husband, Lewis Kennedy Morse.

### Roads with Scenic Character

All of Boxford's roads have scenic qualities derived from their narrow winding alignment and the views along the way. Roads that pass through the village centers are lined with historic dwellings, barns, a church, a library or a school, while those outlying roads have vistas over agricultural fields, ponds, burial grounds or wooded areas. Important to the road character is the width, the meandering route, and the edges dotted with stone walls and mature trees among the natural vegetation. The town has a Scenic Roads Bylaw in which all roads were designated. Of concern to residents are the incremental changes in road character caused by widening, bridge reconstruction and removal of natural materials on the shoulders.

### Round Top

This 4.3 acre site, located on Round Top Road at Chapman Way, has been associated with the military history of America since the era of the American Revolution, when it served as a training ground for the town militia in ca. 1775. During the Civil War it was part of Camp Stanton and was used as a military campground and training area. In the late 19th and early 20th century the area near Round Top was used as the summer campground by the Second Corps of Cadets from Salem. In 1917 it was renamed Camp Curtis Guild and nearly 5,000 artillery troops used the area to train for combat in Europe during World War I. In subsequent years the State Guard also trained there. Today the remaining parcel known as Round Top is only a portion of the original camp grounds. No buildings are standing, only the tall pines on a knoll with heavily wooded areas surrounding this somewhat cleared area.

**Rowley Village Forge Site including the Bloomery on Fish Brook**

The Rowley Village Forge Site, an archaeological resource on Fish Brook, has been documented by Public Archaeology Laboratory and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The site included an iron bloomery, and was also known as the Bromingum Forge. It was established here in 1668 and run by Henry Leonard. After the iron works failed in 1681, saw and grist mills were established nearby on Fish Brook. Nineteenth century remnants of these mills are found in the mill race where a turn wheel remains, visible on the north side of Lockwood Lane. East of Fish Brook is a large property including the 1842 Daniel Andrews House and attached barn. The 22-acre field behind the house and east of Fish Brook has a conservation restriction which prevents development into house lots. Horse events are held at the site periodically.

**Stiles Pond**

This 60-acre pond is an important town resource to which public access is vital. In addition to the Town Beach there are four private camps that own the waterfront property on the north and east shores of the pond. The four camps are:

- Danvers YMCA.
- Stepping Stones, also called Camp Sacagewea, which is owned by the Town of Boxford and leased to the Greater Lawrence Collaborative. It is a handicapped accessible camp on 35 acres.
- Wakefield YMCA, which is owned by the Boston YMCA.
- Rotary Camp, an international over-night camp.

The south shore of the pond is divided into small lots on which modest camps were built for vacationers from Lawrence and Lowell in the early 20th century. As these camps were built before zoning was adopted, most do not conform to the present bylaws. Several planning issues, particularly the effect of development on water quality, septic systems, and vistas across the pond, are being considered by the town.

**West Boxford**

West Boxford Village, comprised of residential, institutional and commercial properties and surrounding farms, represents an important heritage landscape. The architecture, pastoral agricultural views, and natural resources, such as Hovey's Pond, are significant. West Boxford also includes special places that have meaning to many Boxford residents, such as Benson's Ice Cream, the Village Store**,** Paisley's, Anvil Farm and the Ingaldsby Farmstand.

West Boxford's rich agricultural heritage is seen along the roads leading to and from the village, particularly on Washington Street, Lake Shore Road and Main Street. The cross roads at the village center is marked by several important historic resources. One can travel west on Washington Street (Route 133) and loop around to Lake Shore Road near the Boxford line circling Hovey's Pond

and join Main Street northeast of the Pond to return to the village. The agricultural fields viewed from the roads on this loop to and from West Boxford give the traveler a sense of the town's ongoing farming history. Farms along the way are marked by agricultural fields, farm stands where flowers and vegetables are sold, some greenhouses, at least one large dairy barn, and several historic dwellings.

## PLANNING

### Preservation Strategies

Boxford has made great strides in documenting and preserving the unique qualities of the community. Many parcels of land have been protected through various types of restrictions, purchase and good land management practices. Local historic districts have been in place in two village centers since 1971. Most roads were designated as scenic roads when the Scenic Roads Bylaw was adopted in 1994. Nevertheless, there is continued concern about the loss of agricultural land to residential sprawl as well as the general character of all roads due to policies and practices.

### 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. The 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.

#### *Demolition of Historic Buildings*

The issue here is two-fold: older houses are being destroyed to make room for new larger houses and outbuildings, such as barns, carriage sheds and wood

sheds, are being destroyed because they no longer are in active use or are deteriorated. Replacement dwellings tend to be large and not in scale with the character of the neighborhood and the town and generally outbuildings are not replaced, but are attached to dwellings in the form of multiple car garages.

***Pond Preservation***

There is grave concern about the preservation of the many ponds in town. Two key issues are water quality, particularly the potential impacts of adjacent development, and public access. Development can change the vistas near ponds, but the most detrimental affect is from pollutants that alter the water quality and in many instances provide a habitat for invasive species that take over a pond.

***Scenic Character of Boxford's Roads***

Nearly all of the roads that meander through Boxford retain scenic qualities, such as vistas of agricultural fields, of a roadside pond or wooded areas or, as is the case at the village centers, views of historic structures. In many cases these qualities are being compromised by policies that allow incremental road widening or by development at the edges, which alters views.

***Traffic***

The detrimental impact of traffic in the whole community was a most critical issue voiced by many in attendance. High speed, large volume of traffic and large vehicles, including tractor-trailer trucks, contribute to the negative effect. It was also noted that the main route through Boxford Center and West Boxford carries a significant amount of through traffic on narrow rural roads.

Community members also expressed strong interest in identifying effective preservation models for issues such as finding funds needed to preserve heritage landscapes through purchase or maintenance, and adopting regulations that are compatible with preservation of the heritage landscapes are concerns as well. In addition, issues concerning the Library's need for expansion and the ability of the community to continue to support the West Boxford branch, and the future use of the Palmer School (the Little Red Schoolhouse) were noted.

## PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

Preservation planning is a three step process involving 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 Boxford 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 goals and methodology of Boxford's 2003 Survey Plan and those of the Heritage Landscape Inventory program are similar and should be considered together. Many resources appear on both lists. 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. Plan to document all resources including those that have been recorded in the past since survey methodology has changed. This is an important point as survey methodology has changed substantially since the 1960s and new procedures are more comprehensive and link properties in a more coherent way than in the past. Thus, using the Massachusetts Historical Commission survey methodology, record Boxford's heritage landscapes on MHC inventory forms beginning with the priority landscapes listed in this report:

- Compile a list of resources that are under-represented or not sufficiently documented beginning with heritage landscapes.

- Document unprotected resources first, beginning with threatened areas.

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

- Document Boxford Center and Howe Village Historic Districts giving emphasis to the architectural descriptions, which provide useful design review information for properties in the two local historic districts.

- Record histories for the First Period dwellings – the 1985 documentation focuses on structural analysis only.

***National Register Program***

One critical step in the inventory process is the evaluation of each resource for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. In all likelihood, the documentation of West Boxford Village will yield information compatible with National Register listing. Other properties also may be determined eligible for listing. Thus using the information generated in the survey work and National Register evaluation, establish Boxford'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 district National Register nominations for West Boxford Village, Anvil Farm and other important resources identified during inventory.

***Agricultural Landscapes***

Preservation of agricultural landscapes means preservation of the farming activities; otherwise, it simply is the preservation of land as open space. There are instances in which up-to-date farming technology does not make it possible to preserve some of the elements of the settings such as historic barns and silos. 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.

- Establish an agricultural commission to advocate for farming.

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

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

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

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

***Burial Grounds and Cemeteries***

Boxford has eight cemeteries or burial grounds for which the town is responsible. The documentation and preservation needs vary for each site. 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 Boxford should:

- Survey all burial grounds and cemeteries that have been in use for more than 50 years

- List eligible burial grounds and cemeteries in the National Register of Historic Places.

- 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.

***Scenic Roads***

Scenic roads are an integral part of the historic fabric of the community. They are highly valued by Boxford residents and visitors alike. Yet roads must also accommodate modern transportation needs and decisions regarding roadways are often made with travel requirements as the only consideration. Boxford has adopted the Scenic Roads Act (MGL Chapter 40-15C) and designated roads for which there must be review and approval for 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 Boxford including the character defining features that should be retained.

- Amend the Scenic Roads Bylaw by adding 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.

- 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 the Scenic Roads Bylaw.

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

***Village Character***

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

- Adopt a demolition delay bylaw to apply to all properties that are 50 years old or more and to give the Historical Commission authority to invoke a delay of demolition of up to one year. In addition publication of demolition requests reminds residents of historic resources and reinforces the value of local historic resources; therefore, require abutter notification and advertisement of public hearings dealing with demolition of historic structures.

- Develop design review guidelines for local historic districts. Review bylaw to be sure that the Commission can and does review fences and walls, driveways, terraces and walkways. Consider expanding district to include entire parcels of land, particularly if visible from the public way, rather than just frontage along street.

- Develop a preservation restriction program with the local historical society or other non-profit group that is willing to adopt this challenge. Develop a step-by-step guide on how to donate or sell a Preservation Restriction including a sample restriction. State the benefits to the property owner and to the community. Involve the Community Preservation Committee in the process and contact the Community Preservation Coalition to learn how other communities are using preservation restrictions to protect certain properties.

- Review the zoning bylaw and subdivision regulations to determine whether there are incentives to preserve historic structures. Often the opposite is the case – such regulations generally are more easily followed if one gets rid of the historic structure. Consider flexible zoning bylaw to address important natural features and historic properties.

***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 varies from year to year. When planning Boxford's heritage landscape inventory program, contact relevant agencies to determine whether funding is available.

Boxford adopted the Community Preservation Act in 2001 with a 3% surcharge on each real estate bill, which is an excellent source of funding for many heritage landscape projects. Many of the recommendations in this report could be funded

with CPA money, including survey and National Register projects, preservation and conservation easements and agricultural preservation restrictions (APRs), which may be applicable to some of the more vulnerable landscapes.

Towns, like Boxford, which have a local historic district bylaw, may apply for Certified Local Government (CLG) status which is granted by the National Park Service (NPS) through the MHC. After the town completes an application and is accepted as a CLG, it files a report yearly on the status of applications, meetings, and decisions. In return the town is eligible for federal funding that is distributed by the MHC. The matching funds are competitive; however a proportion of the federal allocation must be distributed to CLGs for Survey and Planning projects. CPA funds can be used for match funds.

**Specific Recommendations**

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

***Camp Curtis Guild at Round Top***

- Historic resource survey work has been completed and a request for National Register eligibility resulted in a negative response from the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The town owns the land but it is not protected from development. There is no clear-cut course to preservation. Only education about the importance of the resource, persuasion of town officials and town meeting attendees, and finding another area for development will save the property.

***Palmer School - Little Red Schoolhouse***

- The Schoolhouse has been well documented and recently was listed in the National Register. No additional survey work is necessary.

- A new use is needed. Relocating the building to either Library site is an option; however, the Town should consult with the MHC to learn of any effect a move may have on the National Register status. Although the building was moved previously, the 1931 move was within the period of significance (1845-1947) of the National Register nomination and Criterion Exception B was noted in the nomination. A move at this time would not be within the period of significance and may compromise the integrity of the property.

- Reuse of this building may be discussed in a master plan of all town-owned property, where the needs of all town boards and commissions are assessed.

- Restoration of windows in the building should reflect the historic pattern for the building and should be completed after the location and use have been defined. The building is eligible for Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF) grants administered by the MHC, which would require a match from the town. Community Preservation Funds may be used for such a match.

***Rowley Village Forge Site including the Bloomery on Fish Brook***

- Develop an educational program that informs residents of unusual historical significance and the sensitivity of the site.

- Develop a maintenance plan for this unique and fragile site, which is on town-owned property. All measures to protect it against negative impact of traffic – biking and hiking – is advised.

***Stiles Pond***

- Document Stiles Pond on an MHC area form as a Heritage Landscape. Document each of the private camps, particularly those that were established by the 1950s.

- Consider requesting "in lieu of taxes" payments from each of the camps to support monitoring of Stiles Pond and improvement of water quality. (This assumes that they are non-profit organizations which do not pay taxes.)

- Work with Board of Health and Planning Board to regulate scale of development allowed on small lots near the water's edge. Consider supporting and requiring small scale waste water treatment facility for the area, but only after zoning has been reviewed and altered to prevent large scale development which may result with the use of small treatment facilities.

***West Boxford***

- Survey by completing an area form taking into account the civic center and the agricultural outlying areas. Complete individual forms for the key resources at the village center and for the historic farms. Some of the farms, such as Anvil Farm and Ingaldsby Farm, may be recorded more comprehensively on separate area forms to account for the varied characteristics of a farm, such as the farmhouse, barns, and agricultural fields.

- Consider National Register listing of West Boxford Village and some of outlying farms that may be eligible individually as well as part of a large West Boxford district.

- Adopt a local historic district for the village center. The existing Boxford Historic District Commission can serve as the Study Committee. Generate local support first. Use the inventory to educate residents about the importance of the resources.

- Purchase preservation restrictions to preserve vistas or purchase development rights on farm land using Community Preservation funds.

## CONCLUSION

The Boxford Reconnaissance Report is a critical tool in starting to identify the rich and diverse heritage landscapes in Boxford 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 boards and commissions will assist in making this one of the planning documents that guides Boxford in preserving important features of the community's character. The tasks that are recommended will require cooperation and coordination among boards and commissions, particularly Boxford's Historical and Historic District Commissions, the Planning Board, the Conservation Commission, the Highway Department and the Community Preservation Committee. It also is advisable to present this information to the Board of Selectmen, the applicant to the Heritage Landscape Inventory Program on behalf of the town. Finally distribution of the Report to the Historical Society, the Horticultural Society and Boxford Trail Association/Boxford Land Trust will broaden the audience and assist in gathering interest and support for Boxford'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 Boxford on June 8 and the follow-up fieldwork on June 23, 2004. This is a working list and can be updated by the community. **There may be other heritage landscapes that were not identified at the HLI meeting noted above.** Landscapes are grouped by type. The chart has two columns – the name of the resource and the location are in the first and notes about the resource are in the second. Abbreviations used are listed below.

APR = Agricultural Preservation Restriction
LHD = Local Historic District
OSRP = Open Space & Recreation Plan
TTOR = The Trustees of Reservations
BTA/BOLT = Boxford Trail Association / Boxford Land Trust
CR = Conservation Restriction
NR = National Register
PR = Preservation Restriction
* = Priority Landscape

| **Agriculture** | |
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| ***Anvil Farm ****<br>665 Main St. | See West Boxford listing in Priority Heritage Landscapes. Former dairy farm overlooking Hovey's Pond. Currently a produce farm with a farmstand. |
| ***Davis Hayfield***<br>On Fish Brook | Located in Boxford Village Historic District, the Davis Hayfield is for sale and residents are trying to raise $65,000 to purchase this field for the town. |
| ***Griggs Farm***<br>Lake Shore Rd. | Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR). Hay is grown here. |
| ***Haynes Farm***<br>Herrick Rd. | Over 100 acres located between Main St., Middleton Rd., Georgetown Rd. Haynes Farm connects to Dorman Island and abuts 35 acres of Dorman land on Herrick Road. |
| ***Haynes Hayfield***<br>Main St. &<br>Middleton Rd. | Owned by the town and managed by the Conservation Commission. |
| ***Ingalsby Farm ****<br>Washington St. | See West Boxford listing in Priority Heritage Landscapes. Farm stand with agricultural fields here and on Main Street. |
| ***King Tree Farm***<br>Washington St. | Privately owned nursery that sells trees and shrubs. Contains wetlands |
| ***Morss Berry Farm***<br>Oak Ridge &<br>Lake Shore Rds. | Active farm which grows and sells berries – strawberries and raspberries. APR. |
| ***Paisley Farm ****<br>Washington St. | See West Boxford listing in Priority Heritage Landscapes. |
| ***Webster Farm***<br>Main St. | Also known as Twin Oaks. Has indoor riding facility. |

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| ***Woodspell Farm***<br>Main St. | This farm is south of Witch Hollow. It is not an active farm and is not protected. |
| **Burial Grounds and Cemeteries** | |
| ***Brookside Cemetery***<br>Main St. | In West Boxford Village. Old West Parish Burial Ground. From 1838. |
| ***Civil War Grave***<br>Off Great Pond Rd. | This grave is reported to be in a Boxford "meadow" off Great Pond Rd. This "meadow" now woods is owned by the town. |
| ***Harmony***<br>Ipswich Rd. | From 1717. Near the site of former Schoolhouse #3 and near Kesley Road. |
| ***Killam Cemetery***<br>Endicott St. | On the Masconomet Regional Junior & Senior High School property, next to Rt. 93. |
| ***Mt. Vernon Cemetery***<br>Mt. Vernon Rd. | Just west of Main Street, this 1716 cemetery is framed by a high stone wall with a small iron gate entrance. Markers are marble and granite, with some slate in the earlier section. |
| ***Old Burial Ground***<br>Main St./Mill Run | From 1693. Expansion of Boxford Village NR and LHD to include this burial ground is recommended in OSRP. Clean up and maintenance plan done in 2003 as part of an Eagle Scout project. |
| ***Russell Cemetery***<br>Bald Hill | Family burial ground from the Revolutionary War with three graves from that period. |
| ***Village Cemetery***<br>Georgetown Rd. | NR, LHD. On land that is site of first meetinghouse, now opposite First Congregational Church. Land donated by Asa Peabody in 1807. |
| **Institutional** | |
| ***Little Red Schoolhouse***<br>Main St. | See Priority Heritage Landscapes in Report. Original name is the Palmer School. |
| **Industrial** | |
| ***Howe's Pond Mill***<br>Fish Brook | Once a grist mill followed by a saw mill, the site has been converted into a Japanese garden. A small mill building with a wheel was reconstructed as part of the garden. A new bridge, completed in 2004, carries Mill Road over Fish Brook at this mill site. |
| ***Lockwood's Grist Mill***<br>Lockwood Lane | On Fish Brook the site of this grist mill is next to the Rowley Village Forge Site. This site is marked by a metal turn wheel still standing in Fish Brook mill race. |

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| ***Lowe's Pond Mill***<br>Off Depot Rd. | Once known as the Chapman Saw Mill and later as Kilham's, the site on Pye Brook includes a raceway, a dam, the mill pond called Lowe's Pond. It is near the old railroad station which was used to ship lumber. The dam has been reconstructed and the mill race is evident, however, no buildings remain. |
| ***Match Factory***<br>6 Lawrence Rd. | Located on Fish Brook is the superintendent's house which also served as a dormitory. The factory building, the dam and the pond no longer exist. |
| ***Mill Brook Site***<br>Main St. | This 1.5 acre site, owned by the Boxford Trail Association / Boxford Open Land Trust (BTA/BOLT) is near Hovey's Pond. |
| ***Morss Mill Site***<br>Lake Shore Rd. | This mill site is within the agricultural preservation restriction area of the Morss Berry Farm. |
| ***Pye Brook Mill***<br>Georgetown Rd. | Part of the stone work of the mill remains as evidence of the early history. |
| ***Rowley Village Forge Site ****<br>Lockwood Ln. | See Priority Heritage Landscapes in Report. Bloomery included at the site. |
| **Natural Features** | |
| ***Fish Brook*** | Viewed from Middleton Road. Headwaters include Mosquito Brook in North Andover, and Stiles and Towne ponds in Boxford. |
| ***Pye Brook*** | Viewed from Depot Road. Flows through Lowe Pond. Originates at Four Mile Pond |
| ***Baldpate Pond***<br>Boxford State Forest | The view of this pond from Great Pond Road, limited to certain times of the year, is one of the more spectacular views in town and can be seen from Baldpate Road also. |
| ***Cole's Pond***<br>Main St. | The pond is on the northeast side of Main Street near West Boxford Village. The pond's features are a significant beaver dam, many lily pads and invasive plant material. Pond contributes to the Parker River. |
| ***Hovey's Pond ****<br>West Boxford | See West Boxford Village in Priority Heritage Landscapes in report. |
| ***Johnson's Pond*** | Most of pond is in Groveland & Haverhill. Boxford's zoning regulating development at pond edges is more restrictive than regulations in abutting communities, particularly Haverhill. |
| ***Kimball Pond***<br>Main St. | Located north of Sheffield Rd. One of the ponds that is drained by Fish Brook and contributes to the public water supply of the Ipswich River. |
| ***Lowe Pond***<br>Off Depot Rd. | Connected to Pye Brook – See Industrial listings above. |
| ***Spofford Pond*** | Between Ipswich & Spofford Rd. The Pond is threatened by nitrogen loading due to septic systems along the shore. |

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| ***Stevens Pond*** | South of Ipswich Rd. Most of the surrounding 22 acres of land is protected under the ownership of BTA / BOLT. There are a few privately held house lots with water frontage. |
| ***Stiles Pond **** Main St. | See Priority Heritage Landscapes in Report. |
| ***Towne Pond*** | Part in North Andover. Located in the southwest corner of Boxford. Zoning is an issue with denser allowances along the North Andover shores of the pond. |
| ***Ipswich River*** Off Endicott St. | Along the southern border of Boxford through the Masconomet Regional School property. |
| ***Parker River*** Along Rt. 133 | Habitat for endangered turtle species, Blanding's Turtle. |
| **Open Space – Parks** | |
| ***Cleaveland Farm State Forest*** Rowley Rd. | CR protecting 17 acres. Owned and managed by DCR. Within the State Forest a key feature is the (former) Haynes Property Esker system. |
| ***Kelsey Arboretum*** 18 Kelsey Rd. | CR in perpetuity. This property is named for landscape architect Harlan P. Kelsey (1872-1958). The Arboretum was planted in 1929 as a display garden for Kelsey-Highlands Nursery. It is now owned by Kelsey Condominium Assn and open from dawn to dusk. The Horticultural Society of Boxford was formed to hold the CR, to preserve and restore the arboretum, and to educate people about the place. Plant inventory has been completed, now Society is considering its educational mission. The CR specifically allows the construction of a visitors' center for educational purposes. The Society must develop a master plan or long-term plan which may include the construction of a center. The old barn was the office for the Kelsey Arboretum. It has been converted to three condominiums. The property has many varieties of rhododendrons, azaleas, and mountain laurel. It is a stop on the Bay Circuit Trail. See also paper titled "Harlan P. Kelsey Arboretum" by Linda Laderoute. |
| ***Otis Curtis Meadow*** Main St. & Ipswich Rd. | CR held by Conservation Commission. Currently owned by Michael Smolak of North Andover, MA. |
| ***Round Top **** Round Top Rd. | At Chapman Way. See Priority Heritage Landscapes in Report. – Camp Curtis Guild. |
| ***Witch Hollow*** Main St. & Ipswich Rd. | Town owned property under Conservation Commission. The 1690s meadow is covered with deep meadow grass which has 6' to 20' roots into ground providing a fine habitat for wildlife. The fields are leased to the owner and resident of the Witch Hollow farmhouse fronting on Ipswich Road. He is developing a wildlife habitat and would like to have additional acreage on which he would remove hedge rows in order to create a place for meadow lark. |

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| ***Wildcat Conservation Area***<br>Herrick Rd. | Off Ipswich Rd. Located southwest of Stiles Pond, the 319.2 acre Conservation Area is town owned and under the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission. It was originally taken by the Town for water resource protection. The vicinity has been identified as having archaeological potential. Historically the land was pasture, woodlots and orchards. White pine was harvested by the Diamond Match Factory at the end of the 19th century. Now the area is wetlands and wooded uplands. |
| **Residential (Villages, Dwellings)** | |
| ***Boxford Village***<br>Elm & Main St., Middleton & Topsfield Rd. | NR, LHD - Only that part of each property fronting on the street is included in the districts so that land behind the buildings is not part of the NR or the LHD. Issues confronting the district are potential expansion of the Central Library, an approved addition to the First Parish Church, preservation of the carriage sheds at the First Parish, and the way in which to preserve the houses and their settings of outbuildings and surrounding land. A property on the southeast corner of Elm and Main streets has recently been divided into three lots, one of which has the main house on it. The Old Reddington Inn now is the site of a horse farm. The Haynes Hayfield, opposite the school site, recently was purchased by the town. It has a path or trail around it. Now residents are trying to raise $65,000 to purchase the Davis hayfield. It is important not only for its visual pastoral quality but also to provide a connecting trail that will lead to Fish Brook. |
| ***Howe Village***<br>Ipswich Road | NR, LHD - This shoe making village is noted for its vistas. Once all one farm, the area now is divided into several residential lots with the backlands of each property forming one contiguous open field. It is surrounded by protected land, Perkins Woods which is owned by the BTA/BOLT, by Cleaveland Farm for which Essex County Greenbelt holds a CR, and by Cleaveland Farm State Forest & Willowdale State Forest. Howe Village is the site of an old Elm Tree where the renegotiation of Boxford lands with grandsons of Masconomet took place, thus there is Native American importance to this area. |
| ***Pre-Civil War Dwellings*** | There are approximately 113 extant dwellings built before the Civil War for which there is concern about loss of this housing stock through incremental changes, lack of maintenance, or demolition. |
| ***Spofford Barnes House***<br>20 Kelsey Rd. | NR, PR (2003). |
| ***West Boxford Village****<br>Main & Washington St. | See Priority Heritage Landscape List in Report. |
| **Transportation** | |
| ***Bay Circuit Trail*** | The trail passes through Boxford and is an important part of the town's trail system. |
| ***Ipswich & Spofford Rd. intersection*** | This intersection is the geographic center of Boxford and the site of newly constructed Town Hall and Police Station. |

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| ***Railroad Right-of-Way*** | The railroad right-of-way has been abandoned and may be developed into a rail trail. |
| ***Scenic Roads **** | See Priority Heritage Landscapes in Report. Rural character of roadside views. |
| ***Train Depot and Freight Sheds*** 129 Depot Rd. | At Pond Street. Now privately owned, the 1853 depot has been converted to a residence with a long rear ell. The tracks which were perpendicular to Depot Road ran in front of the depot, crossed Depot Road and ran parallel to the long side of the freight sheds. Both buildings retain their orientation to the railroad right-of-way. |
| ***Walking Trails*** | Boxford Trail Association (BTA) maintains a system of trails for passive recreation through the efforts of volunteers. Maintenance plans for a reduction in volunteer time would ensure the continuation of the trail system. |