



Easthampton Reconnaissance Report

Connecticut River Valley Reconnaissance Survey

Massachusetts Heritage Landscape Inventory Program



June, 2009

Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
Franklin Regional Council of Governments

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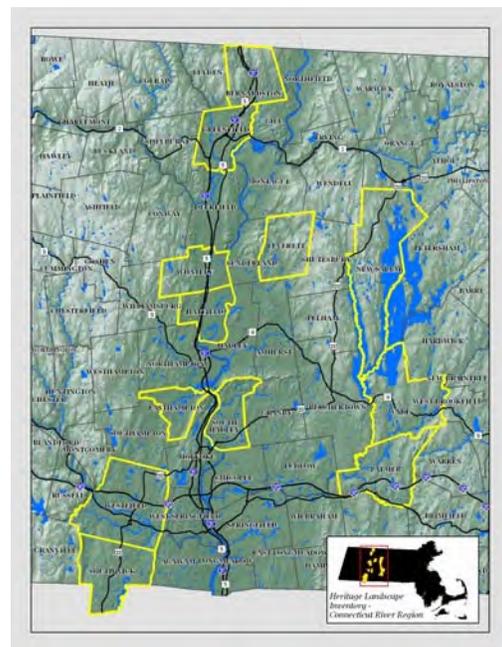
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INTRODUCTION

Heritage landscapes are special places created by human interaction with the natural environment that help define the character of a community and reflect its past. They are dynamic and evolving, reflect the history of a community and provide a sense of place. They show the natural ecology that influenced land use patterns and often have scenic qualities. This wealth of landscapes is central to each community's character, yet heritage landscapes are vulnerable and ever changing. For this reason it is important to take the first step toward their preservation by identifying those landscapes that are particularly valued by the community – a favorite local farm, a distinctive neighborhood or mill village, a unique natural feature or an important river corridor.

To this end, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and its regional partners, the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC), have collaborated to bring the Heritage Landscape Inventory program to twelve communities in the Connecticut River valley region of Massachusetts. The goals of the program are to help communities identify a wide range of landscape resources, particularly those that are significant and unprotected, and to provide communities with strategies for preserving heritage landscapes.



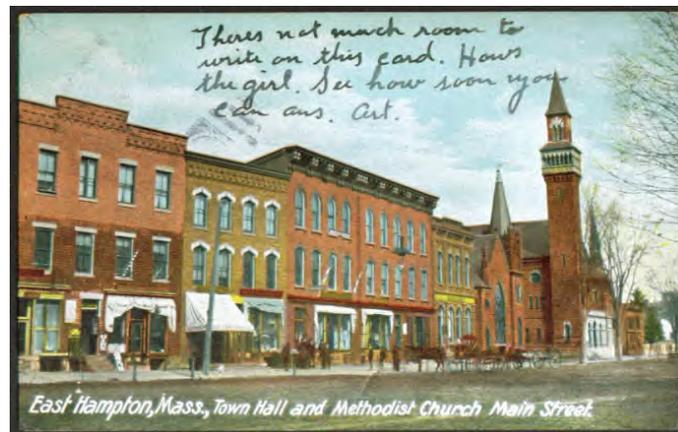
Connecticut River Valley Heritage Landscape Inventory Project Area

The communities within the Connecticut River valley region of Massachusetts are diverse in their settlement patterns and economic histories. What they hold in common is a foundation built on agriculture that was carried out in communities traversed by a series of major waterways and tributaries, from the Connecticut River to the Deerfield, Sawmill, Green, Millers, Quaboag, Swift, Mill and Ware Rivers. This region contains significant cultural and historic resources and uncommon natural beauty. For some of the communities, industry developed alongside agriculture, so that today the heritage landscapes reflect both agrarian and industrial pasts while providing recreational and educational opportunities. From scenic town commons and natural areas, to civic buildings and burial grounds, the heritage landscapes within the region collectively tell the story of their varied and often complex history.

Methodology

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 since its inception. In summary, each community organized a heritage landscape identification meeting during which residents and town officials identified and prioritized the natural and cultural landscapes within town that embody the community's unique character. This meeting was followed by a fieldwork session led by the project team, including the local project coordinator and staff of FRCOG or PVPC, accompanied by interested community members. During the fieldwork session the Priority Heritage Landscapes were assessed and opportunities for preservation were explored and discussed. The final product for each community is an individualized Heritage Landscape Reconnaissance Report. This report outlines the community's landscape history, describes the priority heritage landscapes along with associated opportunities, issues, and recommendations, and concludes with implementation strategies.

PART I: HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY



Easthampton's Commercial Row and former Town Hall on right, postcard, ca. 1890.

LOCAL HISTORY

Easthampton is an irregularly-shaped City with Northampton on the north, Southamptton on the west, and Holyoke on the east. A short fourth side on the south is bordered by both Southamptton and Holyoke, and Westhampton borders Easthampton and its northwest corner. The Connecticut River touches the town for a short distance at its northeast corner, and an oxbow from the river curves into its border. The Manhan River bisects the town, running from west to east along an irregular course, to empty into the Connecticut River.

The lower slopes of Mount Tom form the eastern border of the city. Running to the north and east from Mount Tom, Broad Brook, Brickyard Brook, Wilton, White, Rum and Brandy Brooks have been dammed up in the center of town to form three mill ponds: Rubber Thread Pond, Nashawannuck Pond and Lower Mill Pond. Rubber Thread Pond has a second section know as Williston Pond.



Lower Mill Pond looking west, 2009.

Originally part of Northampton, Easthampton's northern section was set off as the Pascommuck grant in 1699 and its southern half was made part of Southamptton in 1753. In 1809 it was united as the township of Easthampton.

Native Americans - the Norwottucks who were part of the Pocumtucks of western Massachusetts - are known to have occupied the Easthampton area in 1674; they submitted a petition to Northampton for permission to build a palisaded village for protection. The village is thought to have been located south and west slightly from today's center of town near the Manhan River. Native sites have been found on the lowlands west of Mount Tom and near the confluence of the Manhan and the Connecticut Rivers at the Oxbow. Fishing and farming would have been their main endeavors in this fertile floodplain. Around 1700 five English families settled together in an area called "Pascommuck", which ran along the foot of Mount Tom between Broad Brook and the Connecticut River. The families were attacked by Native Americans in 1704, which broke up the settlement, and it wasn't re-established for another ten years. However, Northampton residents took advantage of the water power of Easthampton's Manhan

River and built a sawmill ca. 1674 and a grist mill in 1686-1705. Others are thought to have worked in lead mines that are in the northwest section of the town at the border with Southamptton.

Between 1714 and 1774, homes gradually were constructed in town, and, in 1785, the first meetinghouse was constructed. The settlers were farmers, whose numbers doubled in the decade after the Revolution to 457 people, so it was a small town. The civic center developed around the meetinghouse in its current location on Route 10 at its crossing over the Manhan River. The town common may date from the meetinghouse construction in 1785.

Easthampton's industrial history began in 1832 when Samuel Williston moved his button works to town and hired women to make buttons in their homes. Industry was enhanced when the Hampshire Hampden Canal was put through Easthampton in 1835 and enhanced yet again when the Canal was replaced by the railroad in 1856. Samuel Williston was also part of the expansion of industry in Easthampton when he put up a large elastic suspender mill in 1848, the Nashawannuck Company, next to his button factory. To supply the suspender mill with elastic webbing, a series of other manufactories sprang up and Easthampton's industrial base grew considerably. First Williston added a cotton yarn mill, then the Glendale elastic web mill. In 1841 Williston founded the Williston Seminary for boys, further adding to the community. The Greek and Gothic Revival style buildings that are found in the center of town on Main and Park Streets date from this period of industrial expansion in the 1830s and 40s.



Williston's Button Mill, Glendale and Nashawannuck mills, & Nashawannuck Pond, ca. 1910.

The Civil War brought business to all Easthampton's mills for buttons, cotton and elastic webbing, and, with it, the need for more laborers. Immigrants to Easthampton came mainly from Ireland and Germany and settled in workers's housing that the companies erected along Pleasant, Ferry, and Lovefield Streets. Housing for the well-to-do continued to go up on Main and Park Streets, while the middle class filled in between. Current during this period during and after the Civil War were the Italianate, Stick Style and French Second Empire styles, and prosperous Easthampton has fine examples of these styles. Town Hall built in 1869 is a High Victorian Gothic building – also called Ruskinian Gothic – designed by Boston architect Charles Parker.



Town Hall, postcard ca. 1920.

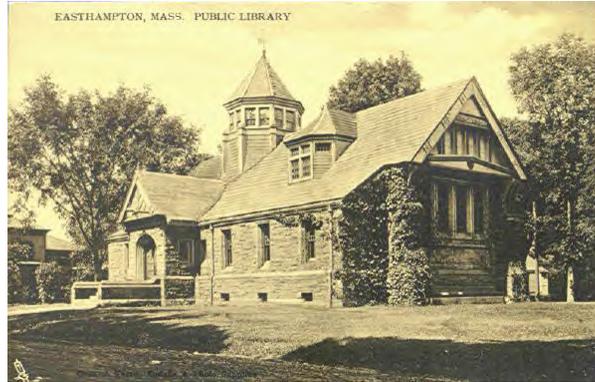
An Italianate style High School, now called Memorial Hall, was built across the common from Town Hall in 1864.

Between 1870 and 1915 immigrants continued to come to Easthampton to work in the mills as they expanded, including French Canadians, Polish, Austrian and English. Two- and three-family houses grew up around the center. Even with all the industry, farming continued along the Manhan meadows and on East Street from the Oxbow to the base of Mount Tom.



Farms at base of Mount Tom, postcard, ca. 1920.

As the town grew and its factories prospered, residents acted to improve education and the arts. In 1881 the famous Boston architectural firm of Peabody and Stearns designed the Easthampton library, an early Tudor Revival style building with an octagonal tower, and half-timbered gables.



Peabody & Stearns Library of 1881, postcard, ca. 1920.

A railroad depot was built in 1885 in the center of town, as rails passed by the major mill complexes. It is now a studio and office.

Easthampton prospered through World War I, its mills furnishing needed materials for soldiers. After the war consolidation of companies reduced their number, the remaining industries limping along until World War II brought new contracts and companies to Easthampton. United Elastic re-opened and Hampton Company revived as well. Frank Stanley Beveridge brought his Stanley Home Products Company of household goods from Westfield to Easthampton's mills in 1947. Easthampton's industry continued to perform profitably from World War II until the second half of the 20th century. Hampton Company closed in 1962; United Elastic in 1977 and the Stanley Company in 1995.



Stanley Home Products Mill, viewed across Lower Mill Pond, ca. 1950.

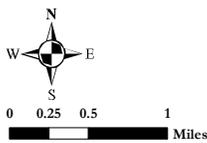
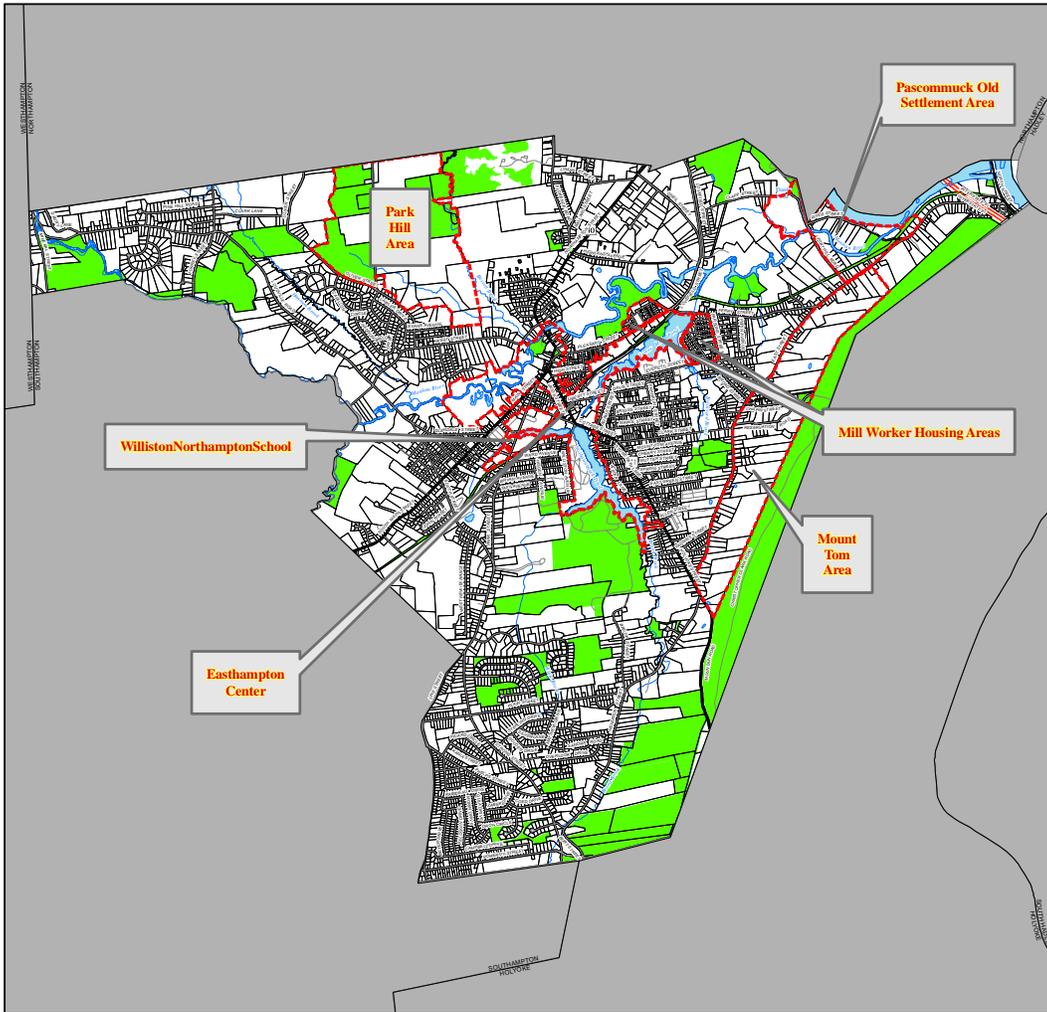
Easthampton retains a farming component to its economy, but it has become a commuter city with 75% of its residents working outside the city and 25% within. The service industries employ over half of the city's residents, with manufacturing second at over 30%. There are thirty-four manufacturing firms in Easthampton. The arts community is an increasingly important part of the local economy. In recent years, Easthampton has become the destination of many young families who work in the valley and are attracted to the schools, available housing, arts atmosphere and proximity to Northampton as a cultural and educational center.

Easthampton is a small city of only 13.6 square miles and 8,674 acres. Despite its relatively small size, it has considerable acreage devoted to recreation. Nonotuck Park and a portion of the Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary of the Audubon Society account for over 200 acres.

Williston-Northampton School, a private secondary school, ranks among the country's top private schools.

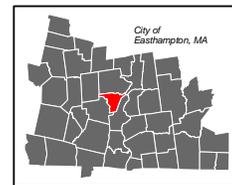
PRIORITY HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

Easthampton held its heritage landscape identification meeting on December 11, 2008, during which a master list of twenty-seven landscapes was developed. The priority landscapes the group selected were the **lower slopes of Mount Tom that border East Street as a viewshed and as a farming area**; the **Williston-Northampton School campus**, which includes historic residences as well as academic buildings important to the city; **the Center** from the library to Memorial Hall including the mill ponds and the rail trail, the mill buildings, dam, falls, fishing site; the **mill workers's housing at New City, Maple Street, Pleasant Street and the Green**; **Park Hill** as the sole intact agricultural area; and the **Pascommuck Old Settlement** area.



City of Easthampton

*Heritage Landscape Inventory Project,
Connecticut River Valley*



-  Historic Landscapes
-  Permanently Protected Open Space



Map Sources:
 Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, 2009.
 Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation, Massachusetts Highway Department,
 and
 the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and the Environment, MassGIS.

Funding:
 The Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and the Environment
 Department of Conservation Resources

Mount Tom



View of Mount Tom and its lower slopes, postcard, ca. 1930.



Mount Tom viewed from Clapp Street and Fort Hill Road, 2009.

Mount Tom on Easthampton's east border was an early settlement area along its lower slopes and extended plain, having been settled about 1700. Farming persisted from the early 18th century to the present in this area, as at least one market garden farm continues in operation and fields extending east of East Street are mowed and kept open. The mountain ridgeline is officially part of Holyoke, but its visual presence is a significant part of Easthampton's landscape.

Opportunities:

- Mount Tom provides a beautiful view to Easthampton residents, whether snow covered, deeply green or colored with autumn leaves.
- Mount Tom's slopes have several trails on the Easthampton side, which offer hikers a way to the top for views across the Connecticut River valley and a place from which to hang glide.
- The lower slopes are open green spaces that have kept much of their rural aspect and offer a contrast to Easthampton's city streets.
- Pastures on the lower slopes are still used to graze dairy cattle.

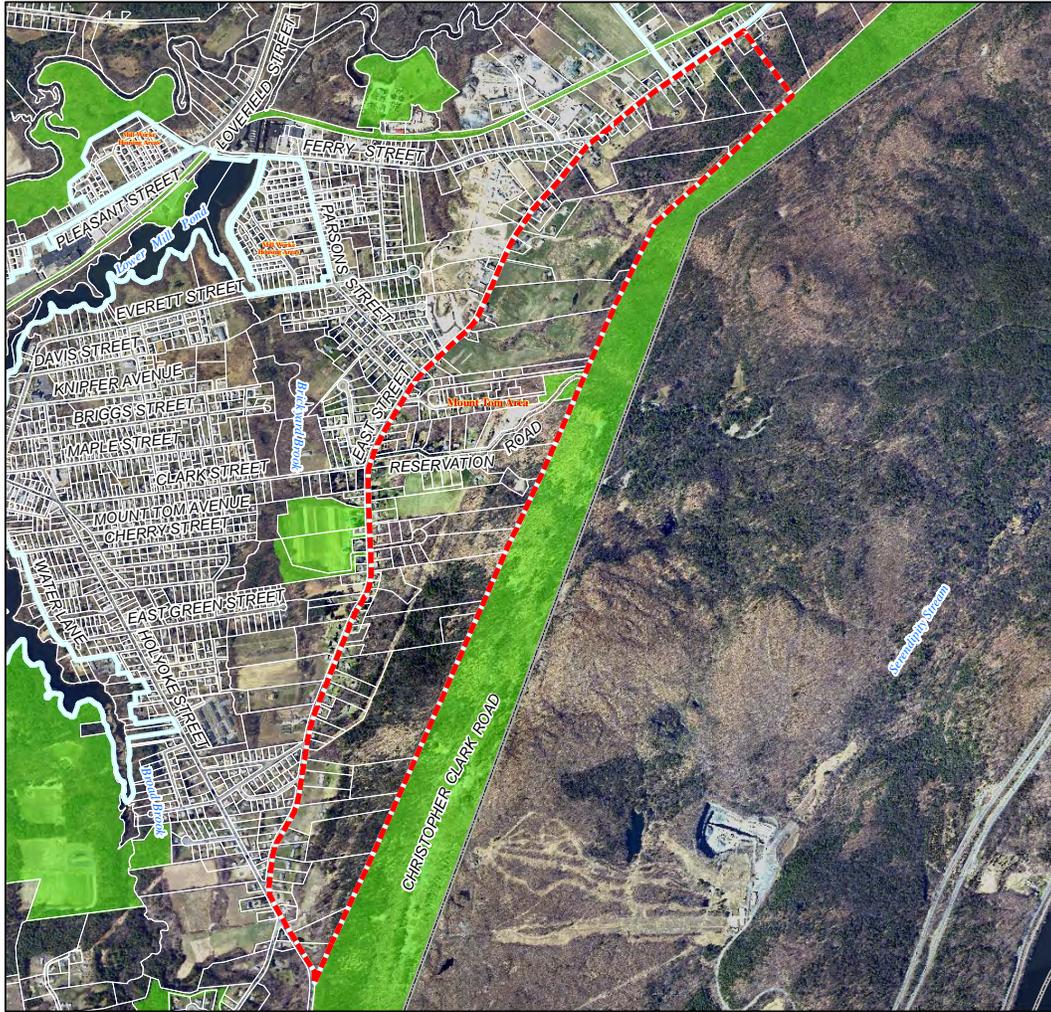
Issues:

- Only a relatively narrow strip of land on Mount Tom at the border with Holyoke is protected as a state park, while the largest portion of land on the mountain's slopes within Easthampton is privately owned and vulnerable to development.
- Most of the farms on East Street have been sold. Development has rapidly taken place along its frontage in the past decade including several new subdivisions, which are increasing the residential density of the area.
- There are only a few remaining farmhouses and barns where once there were many.

Recommendations:

1. Create an Easthampton Agricultural Commission to work with landowners on identifying threats to their farms, as well as to provide guidance on programs such as the Farm Viability Enhancement Program through the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, and other means of maintaining land and buildings as viable operations.
2. Easthampton should adopt a Right-to-Farm Ordinance as a means of expressing community support for its farmers, minimizing conflict between farmers and new residents, and encouraging others to enter farming.
3. Easthampton should continue to pursue a Scenic Upland Overlay District for the unprotected slopes of Mount Tom. The district would assure that new construction on the hillsides is blended with the landscape and meets other design standards through site plan review. Any new subdivisions would be clustered on the land that is least suitable for agriculture, would be screened by vegetative buffers, and existing views of open agricultural land would be preserved.
4. Easthampton should revise its Demolition Delay ordinance based on building age to make sure that it comprehensively includes the city's historic farm buildings.
5. The City might consider pursuing protection of remaining roadside vistas on the east side of East Street through easements or Backlot Development with Open Space Set-Aside zoning. Backlot Development places the roadside frontage land under conservation restriction and in exchange offers incentives for new construction to be built at the rear of the property where it is less visible. CPA funds may be set aside to acquire easements and conservation restrictions.
6. The City should work with farmland owners to place their acreage for permanent protection in the Agricultural Preservation Restrictions program, or work with them to adopt the Chapter 61 program for temporary protection of their unprotected land.

7. The City should continue its work to adopt Smart Growth Zoning districts for this section of Easthampton where there is considerable pressure for residential development.
8. Amend existing zoning of the land on the mountain side of East Street to Down Zone it with significantly larger lot sizes and require an Open Space Development approach for subdivisions.



Mount Tom Area

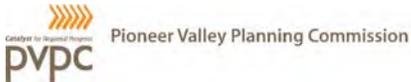
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*City of Easthampton, Massachusetts,
Heritage Landscape Inventory Project,
Connecticut River Valley*



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Feet

- Historic Landscape
- Other Historic Landscapes
- Permanently Protected Open Space



Map Sources:

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Easthampton Center



Easthampton Center from the library on Park Street north to Memorial Hall at the common, the mills on Cottage and Pleasant Streets, the mill ponds, and the Manhan River make up a heritage landscape that incorporates the civic, industrial, and 19th century residential and commercial core of Easthampton. It was in the Center near the town common that the first settlers took up land and where the first meetinghouse was built in 1785. By the first third of the 19th century it was becoming an industrial center built on its significant number of water sources. Once dammed up, the brooks and streams formed mill ponds that assured a steady flow of water for running the machinery in the new mills making buttons, elastic webbing, and processing cotton textiles. The ponds dominate the Center's landscape and, through races and past sluices, their water enters the mill complexes that make up the backbone of the Center.



Paragon Mills, 2009.

In addition to mill complexes and a water power system, a prosperous town brought about a striking Town Hall, High School, church, public library and row of stylistically

distinct commercial buildings around and near the town common. All were in place by the 1880s. A water-filled transportation canal, the Hampshire Hampden Canal, ran through the town in the 1830s and 40s to be replaced by a railroad line that passed close to the mills to pick up and deliver goods. Portions of the canal can still be seen outside the Center, and the railroad line has become a rail trail that winds between the mill ponds and the mills.



Section of former canal, 2009.



Rail trail north of Lower Mill Pond, 2009.

Easthampton remained an active mill town until the last major mill operation left in 1995. Gradually, the mills have begun to be reused as artists's studios and galleries, specialty stores, and restaurants, and the Town has officially become a City, working to find new uses for its historic industrial resources.

Opportunities:

- Easthampton has adopted a mixed-use mill/industrial district ordinance to encourage and facilitate reuse of its historic buildings in the Center.
- Easthampton has a beautiful industrial landscape of mill ponds with adjacent tree-shaded parks unlike any other city in the region.
- The City Center has a remarkable group of 19th and early 20th century buildings whose architectural styles make it an attractive place to be.
- The mill complexes are an asset for their fine architecture and for their ability to accommodate a lively variety of uses that will continue to draw people.
- Easthampton's rail trail makes good use of a railroad berm to provide recreation and to take people off the streets as they go in and out of the Center. It is a healthy means of travel and a beautiful route.
- The City of Easthampton was given a Smart Growth Governor's Award in 2005 for the adaptive reuse of the mill buildings now known as Eastworks for retail space, restaurant, offices and art school.

- The City has taken measures such as installing stylistically appropriate street lighting to draw people into the commercial area from the adjacent neighborhoods.
- Easthampton has adopted the Community Preservation Act, a potential source for funding heritage landscape preservation.
- The City is acting to preserve the ponds by dredging them. The ponds are actively used by the community for fishing year around, and an annual fishing derby is held on Nashawannuck Pond.



Vacant 1 Ferry Street Mill and Lower Mill Pond dam, 2009.

Issues:

- A number of the mill buildings are partially or entirely vacant and deteriorating.
- The Main Street National Register Historic District does not include the industrial resources, so rehabilitation for Investment Tax Credits is made more complicated.
- A feature of the water power system, the Lower Mill Pond dam, is deteriorating and in private ownership.
- The arts economy is in its formative stage and not yet fully self-sustaining, so the future of some of the reused historic buildings is tenuous.
- The rail trail is local only at this point and incomplete, though connections and expansions to the north and south are planned for construction.



Easthampton Town Hall, 2009.

Recommendations

1. The Main Street Historic District should be expanded to include the mills on Ferry, Pleasant, and Cottage Streets, the mill ponds and the workers's housing on Pleasant Street, and in New City, and on and adjacent to Everett Street. This would enable developers to take part in the federal and state investment tax credits and the New Market Tax credits and would expand the range of municipally owned properties that would be eligible to apply for Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund grants.
2. The City might support owners of historic properties in the Easthampton inventory by using the Community Preservation funds to establish a grant program or a low-interest loan program for exterior work that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.
3. The City might consider an interpretive project for the rail trail that would provide its users with historical information on the City and its resources. Interpretive signage, kiosks or other means of educating users about the City's heritage landscape will be a long-term benefit. A transportation enhancement grant is a possible funding source.
4. A Local Historic District is recommended for Easthampton's common, old Town Hall, Memorial Hall, and the row of commercial buildings on Main Street. This is a particularly fine grouping of buildings that should have the strongest level of protection, especially since some of them are undergoing changes of use.

5. The City should publicize its mixed-use mill industrial district to make sure residents, property owners, sensitive developers, and businesses looking to locate in the area are aware of it.
6. The City should continue to improve its storm water facilities to maintain the quality of the water in the Ponds.
7. Amend the zoning ordinance to Up Zone, or provide for infill and higher density of development in the downtown area.



Easthampton Library, 2009.



Easthampton Center

PVPC_87_2

*City of Easthampton, Massachusetts,
Heritage Landscape Inventory Project,
Connecticut River Valley*



- Historic Landscape
- Other Historic Landscapes
- Permanently Protected Open Space



Map Sources:

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, 2009.
Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation, Massachusetts Highway Department,
and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and the Environment, MassGIS.

Funding:

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and the Environment
Department of Conservation Resources

Pascammuk Old Settlement



Site of the Old Settlement with Mount Tom, 2009.



Dank's Pond East of the Old Settlement at Manhan River, 2009.

The Pascommuck Settlement site is on Fort Hill Road in eastern Easthampton, and the presumed site of its settlement, attack, and cemetery is located on the southwest corner of Fort Hill Road and Clapp Street. The settlement itself dates from 1699-1700 when five families are known to have settled in this section of Easthampton and laid out an unmarked cemetery. Close to the Manhan and Connecticut Rivers, it was an area that the Native Americans would have used for fishing and, indeed, there have been artifacts found in this general area of Easthampton. The settlement was short-lived, as an attack in 1704 caused it to be disbanded. The area was gradually re-settled after 1714 and it has remained in agricultural use since that time as fertile alluvial floodplain. The exact location of the settlement and cemetery has not been documented but it is thought to have been in the vicinity, and has been so marked by the Daughters of the American Revolution who were responsible for locating and marking cemeteries throughout western Massachusetts in the 1940s. The marker itself has become an historic monument representing the efforts of this organization to make public note of history.

Opportunities:

- There is an opportunity for archaeological study of this area, as fortunately it has not been built upon.
- The site is a particularly fine one with a view of Mount Tom, of the nearby rivers and rural road. So little has changed that it is still possible to interpret and imagine the area as it was used by Native Americans and early settlers.
- The Pascommuck Trust owns land at the confluence of the Manhan and the Oxbow, so it is protected. The Trust and the Audubon Society own land adjacent to this site on Fort Hill Road and Clapp Street, so it is also protected.

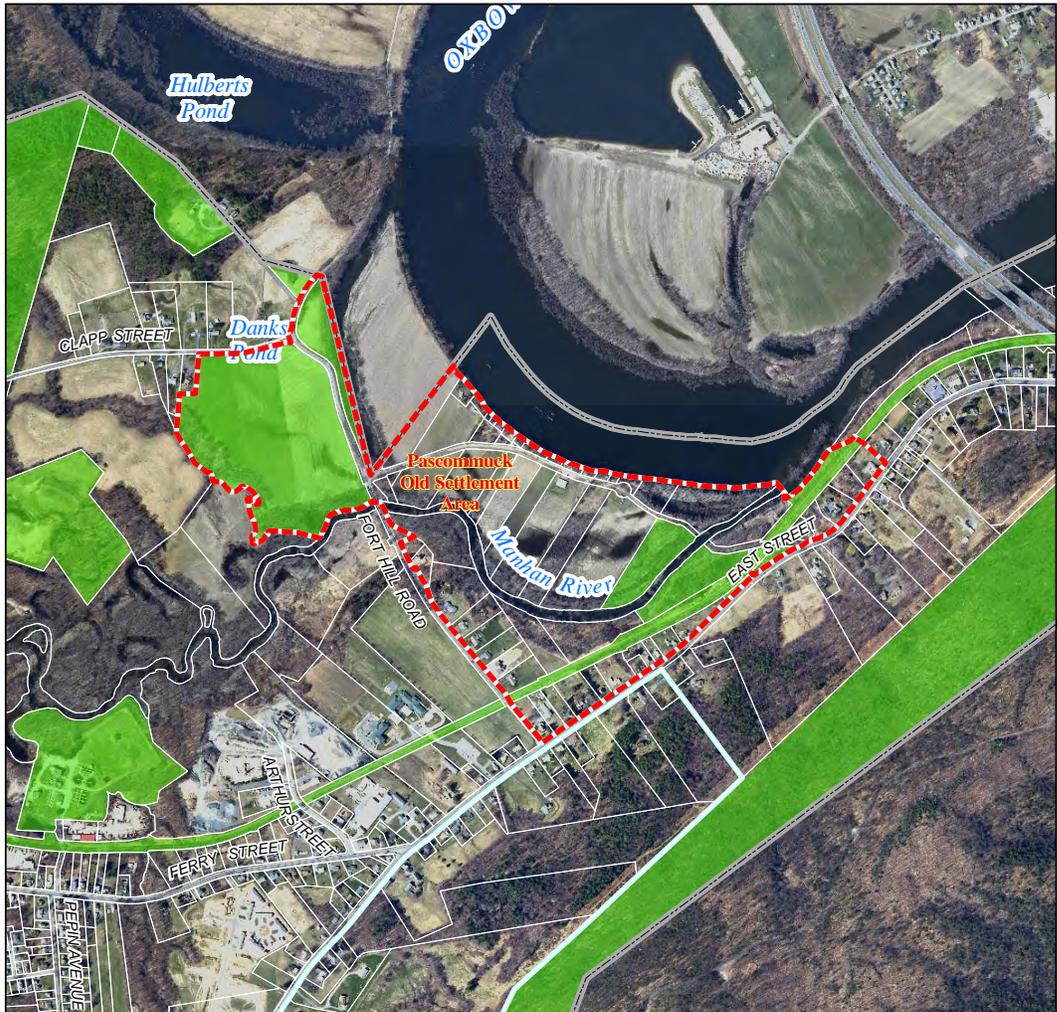
Issues:

- There is no protection in place for the privately owned field on the southeast corner of the intersection of River Street and Fort Hill Road, which is part of the

heritage landscape, nor for most of the lots on the south side of River Street. The lots are in private ownership, so could in the future be developed.

Recommendations:

1. Easthampton should work with the Pascommuck Land Trust and the Audubon Society to maintain good relations with the property owners of this River Street/Fort Hill Road fields.
2. An Archaeological Resource Protection ordinance could be adopted to protect the landscape, which would mean that any proposed development of the land would require review by an Archaeology Advisory Committee or by the Easthampton Historical Commission.
3. If Easthampton set up a destination for Transfer of Development Rights, the property owners could sell their rights to develop the sites to a developer in a designated part of town, where a greater density would be welcomed.
4. The Easthampton schools should incorporate this Pascommuck area as part of their local history curriculum in the elementary grades.
5. The Community Preservation Act funds could be used to purchase an easement on the land, if not an outright acquisition.



Pascommuck Old Settlement Area

PVPC_87_3

*City of Easthampton, Massachusetts,
Heritage Landscape Inventory Project,
Connecticut River Valley*



- Historic Landscape
- Other Historic Landscapes
- Permanently Protected Open Space



Map Sources:

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Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation, Massachusetts Highway Department,
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The Williston Northampton School and Campus



Founded in 1841 the Williston Seminary was an all-boys school, which became Williston Academy. In 1971 it merged with Northampton School for Girls to become the coeducational Williston Northampton School. The school's original campus faced the common in Easthampton Center but moved to Payson Avenue and a large campus in the early 20th century, and contains many buildings in the Georgian and Federal Revival popular in campus architecture during this time.



Williston Northampton Chapel built 1965, 2009.

The school has made part of its campus many of the houses in its neighborhood which range from high style Greek Revival to Italianate, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival. The neighborhood houses that date from the 19th century are in use as faculty housing and

a dormitory as well as offices. The campus is organized around a central mall and extends on the south to land beside Rubber Thread Pond and Williston Pond fed by Wilton Brook.



Italianate style house now part of Williston Northampton School, 2009.



Italianate Palazzo style house now part of School, 2009.

Opportunities:

- The Williston Northampton School is a preservation-minded institution that acquired many fine 19th and early 20th century houses and has been a careful steward of them.
- When the school recently made an addition to a French Second Empire house, its addition was very well designed to maintain the context of the historic house while serving as a contemporary building.
- The school campus is landscaped with mature trees, grassy mall and flower beds, but also has maintained the natural landscape that occurs around Williston Pond.

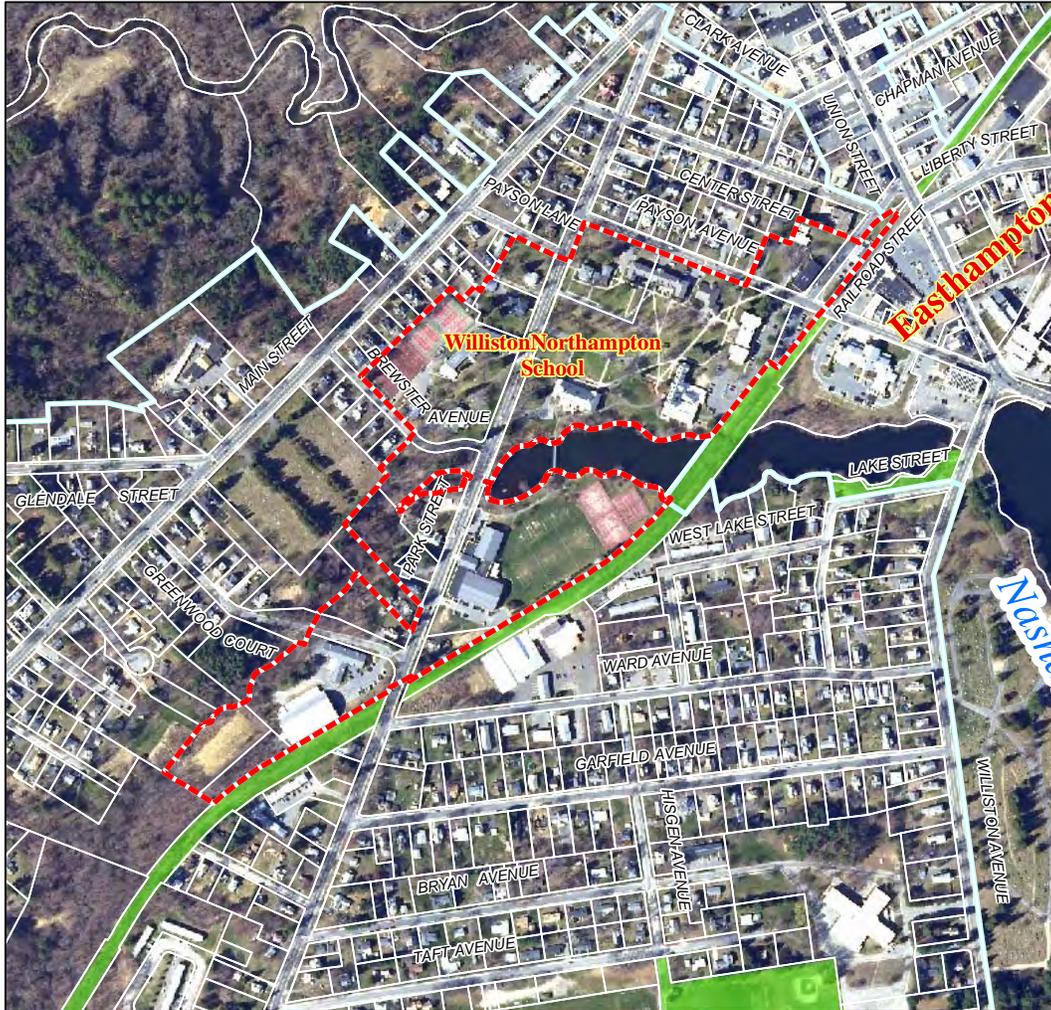
- The school has a reputation as a fine educational institution, which is a factor in its long-term contribution to Easthampton's economy.

Issues:

- Privately owned, Williston Northampton School has no formal protections in place for land or building preservation.
- As the school expands it may pose a threat to privately-owned houses in the neighborhood whose land would be worth more to the school than the older buildings on it. Acquisition of several of these houses in a row could lead to their demolition for a new larger school building.

Recommendations:

1. The school should be encouraged by the City to develop a preservation Plan for the campus, addressing both its buildings and its overall landscape, to help guide future campus development, and the City should continue to take part in the school's plans for development and maintain good relations with its administration.
2. The City should extend Village Center Zoning to Park and Main Streets in the area of Williston Northampton School to encourage the school to continue to reuse the City's historic buildings. The Village Center Zoning would encourage the school to keep any new buildings at the scale of their neighbors, with similar setbacks, and parking kept behind buildings rather than in front.
3. The Easthampton Historical Commission should prepare inventory forms on all the school's buildings, structures, objects and landscapes, including the library.
4. The City should work with the school to place preservation restrictions on its older buildings to assure their on-going exterior preservation and care. This would be especially important protection if they were to be sold at some point in the future.



Williston Northampton School

PVPC_87_4

*City of Easthampton, Massachusetts,
Heritage Landscape Inventory Project,
Connecticut River Valley*



- Historic Landscape
- Other Historic Landscapes
- Permanently Protected Open Space



Map Sources:

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Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation, Massachusetts Highway Department,
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Funding:

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Park Hill



View of Mount Tom from the crest of Park Hill looking over agricultural land, 2009.

Park Hill is located in the northwest section of Easthampton on the border with Northampton. It is a high plateau with good soil that descends to the south and a valley, ending at Oliver Street. This part of Easthampton has been agricultural since its first settlement in the 18th century. In 1860 there were only three farms on Park Hill. Where earlier it was used for a mixed agriculture, today it is devoted to orchards and livestock. On the south side of the hill (on the east side of Park Hill Road) 260 acres are in the Agricultural Preservation Restriction program. Opposite, on the west side a large portion of the slope and valley are City-owned, having been acquired outright. The balance of the hill is privately owned and much of it has been in the same families' hands for several generations.

Opportunities:

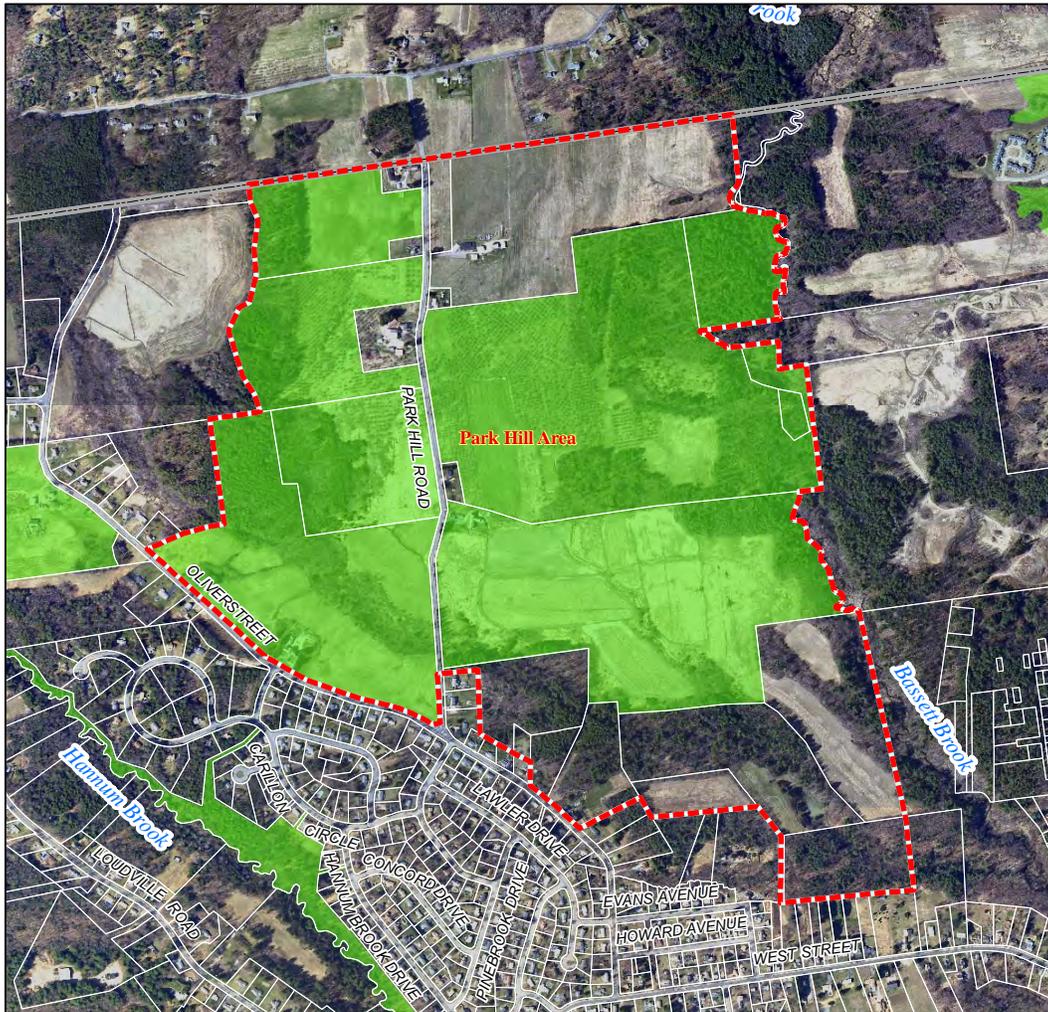
- Park Hill is a rural unspoiled section of Easthampton with spectacular views of Mount Tom in the distance.
- Growing heirloom apples from old stock is being pursued in a new, or revived, form of agriculture on Park Hill, which holds promise of being successful at a time in which many people are interested in eating heirloom fruits and vegetables for their flavor and local provenance.

Issues:

- The property on the crest of Park Hill on the east side is privately owned and, therefore, vulnerable to development.
- This is one of the last places in Easthampton where there is extensive, uncompromised, open space in agricultural use.

Recommendations:

1. The City might appoint an Agricultural Commission to work with all Easthampton farm owners to understand their economic problems, help find solutions, and support them in taking advantage of farm programs as they evolve.
2. The City should maintain contact with the owners of the private land to encourage them to place the land in Chapter 61A, in the Agricultural Preservation Restrictions program (APR) or to place conservation easements on it. Local and state land trusts should be enlisted in this effort as well.
3. The City should set aside Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds for the acquisition of easements or of additional land on Park Hill.
4. The technique of transfer of development rights should be considered for Park Hill as well as for the Pascommuck Settlement area. This would give the owners income from the sale of the rights and help the owners maintain agricultural use.
5. Park Hill should be zoned for open space preservation through one of the several options such as Conservation Subdivision Design or Open Space Zoning. Should the land be sold for development this zoning would allow the placement of the development to be reviewed and guided to the least sensitive areas of the landscape in exchange for greater density of development. These zoning techniques are presented in the Massachusetts Historical Commission's Preservation through Bylaws and Ordinances (Draft Copy), March 11, 2009.
6. Park Hill should be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as an historic agricultural district. This would enable farm owners to rehabilitate income-producing barns and other buildings for 20% investment tax credits.



Park Hill Area

PVPC_87_6

*City of Easthampton, Massachusetts,
Heritage Landscape Inventory Project,
Connecticut River Valley*



- Historic Landscape
- Other Historic Landscapes
- Permanently Protected Open Space



Map Sources:

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, 2009.
Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation, Massachusetts Highway Department,
and
the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and the Environment, MassGIS.

Funding:

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and the Environment
Department of Conservation Resources

Mill Workers's Housing



Pleasant Street with mill workers's housing, ca. 1900.

Easthampton's textile mills began providing workers's housing as early as the 1850s when the Williston and Knight Company built housing near its factory on Union Street in 1850. The Williston Spinning Company in the 1860s built workers's housing on Lincoln and Ferry Streets, and Emerald Place. During the same decade the Nashawannuck Company put up workers's housing on Cottage Street; Glendale Elastic Thread Company put up some housing in 1870 on Briggs Street. All this housing with the exception of at least one boarding house was in the form of two-family houses.



With the arrival of the West Boylston Company in Easthampton the stock of workers's housing increased exponentially between 1903 and 1922 when the company built steadily in an area that came to be known as "New City" for its size and density. The streets developed by the West Boylston Company were Arlington, Berkeley, Clinton, Dartmouth, Everett, Exeter, Federal, Grant, Hampton Terrace, Harrison, Hudson and Oakdale, Pleasant Green East, Pleasant, Ridgewood Terrace and Terrace View. Two-family houses of varying forms were constructed, so the different building campaigns are reflected in variations among the groups of houses.



Opportunities:

- The many streets of workers's housing contribute positively to Easthampton's character and add a variety of housing options.
- The housing is a significant part of the history of manufacturing in Easthampton.
- The overall quality of the construction is good and it provides affordable housing for a large number of Easthampton residents. It is concentrated in areas relatively near the downtown and represents a substantial investment in labor and materials that cannot be duplicated today.
- The areas of mill workers's housing form tightly knit and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods of people.



Ridgewood Terrace, 2009

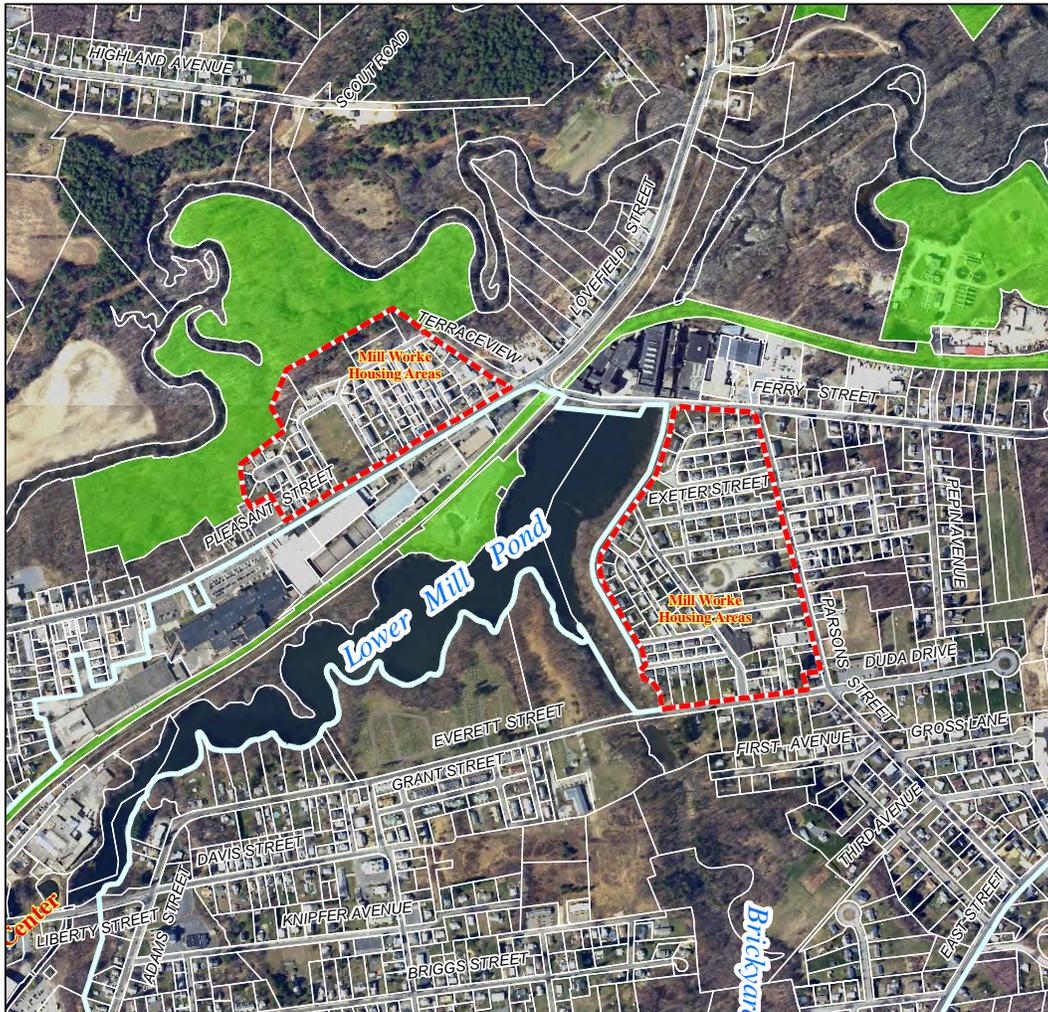
Issues:

- The majority of the housing is reaching or has reached a century in age, and as frame construction it requires investment to keep it in good condition. Many of the owners cannot maintain the houses suitably to preserve their historic character.

- Many of the houses have been artificially sided and vinyl windows have replaced original wood windows. Vinyl windows usually fail within about 20 or fewer years. The siding obscures the original materials and trim.
- Many of the streets have lost their trees, which shaded the neighborhoods, buffered noise and provided attractive views.

Recommendations:

1. The streets that make up New City, Pleasant Street and Pleasant Street Green should be designated as an Architectural Preservation District. This would mean that major alterations to buildings, demolitions and new construction would pass by an advisory review committee that would guide property owners to make historically-compatible alterations and additions and to make sure that the overall scale, massing, and feel of the neighborhood is retained. North Andover, Massachusetts recently established such a district for Machine Shop Village, a similar mill village, and might serve as a good model.
2. The workers's housing neighborhoods - with some attention to their greatest concentration and to the inclusion of other non-residential community resources - should be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
3. The City should consider setting aside CPA preservation funds that could be used to create a grant program for National Register-listed workers's housing projects, or a low-interest loan program for maintenance and repairs.
4. The Easthampton Historical Commission should extend its educational efforts to include programs on the history of workers's housing. They might develop an oral history project to record the history of life in the housing, for instance, and bring the importance of this heritage resource into public consciousness.
5. The City should work to replace and introduce street trees in the areas of concentrated workers's housing where they have been lost.



Mill Worker Housing Areas

PVPC_87_5

*City of Easthampton, Massachusetts,
Heritage Landscape Inventory Project,
Connecticut River Valley*



- Historic Landscape
- Other Historic Landscapes
- Permanently Protected Open Space



Map Sources:

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, 2009.
Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation, Massachusetts Highway Department,
and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and the Environment, MassGIS.

Funding:

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and the Environment
Department of Conservation Resources

PART II: PLANNING FOR HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

INVENTORY AND DOCUMENTATION

1. Massachusetts Historical Commission Records

Current Listings: There are currently 680 inventory forms from Easthampton on file at the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The town has one of the highest numbers of completed Massachusetts Historical Commission Area forms in the region with thirteen. The properties on the inventory range in date from four houses from 1750 to 1776, to 1965. The town has been intensively surveyed and its mill-related buildings are comprehensively covered, which is a fine achievement.

Recommendations:

The Easthampton Historical Commission should continue to add properties to its survey, concentrating on those from the 1930s-1960s as they exist but haven't been added in any number yet. The Commission should think about making the transition from hard copy forms to digital forms, when possible.

2. National and State Register Listing

Current Listings: There are two individual listings on the National and State Registers of Historic Places in Easthampton: the U. S. Post office at 19 Union Street and the Town Farm at 75 Oliver Street. There is a single building historic district: the Easthampton Town Hall at 43 Main Street and a district of 47 properties on Main Street between Northampton and Center Streets.

Recommended Listings: It is recommended that the Main Street Historic District be expanded as an Easthampton Center Historic District to include the mills, ponds, water power system and mill workers's housing along with residential areas on Park Street and side streets. A Local Historic District is recommended for buildings around the common, coinciding, perhaps, with the Main Street Historic District. A Conservation or Architectural Preservation District should be set up for the mill workers's housing on Pleasant Street, New City, Everett and other streets identified in the inventory.

3. Heritage Landscape Inventory List from Local Identification Meeting

Each town involved in the Connecticut River Valley Landscape Inventory held a local identification meeting to solicit input from a range of community members to identify potential heritage landscapes throughout the town. The lists were prioritized by the community, with help from the consultants, to create a list of five to ten priority areas, which were described in Part I of this report. The complete list of the town's heritage landscapes is included as Appendix A of this report and provides a sound resource list for future documentation activities and potential funding opportunities.

Easthampton’s meeting was held on December 11, 2008 and 5 community members were present. The historic, vernacular, ethnographic and/or designed landscapes of the town were grouped into eleven categories:

- Agricultural
- Civic
- Transportation
- Residential
- Archaeological
- Industrial
- Natural
- Commercial
- Burial
- Institutional
- Open Space and Recreation

TOWNWIDE PLANNING AND ZONING TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

Detailed descriptions of planning tools and techniques can be found in the Department of Conservation and Recreation Terra Firma #7 – Taking Action: A Toolkit for Protecting Community Character (2009). This document includes the following sections: Municipal Roles in Landscape Preservation; Thinking in Context: Comprehensive and Open Space Planning; Engaging the Public; and Defending the Resources: Laws, Ordinances and Regulations. This document should be used in conjunction with this report as a guide to acting on the specific recommendations for Priority Heritage Landscapes included in Part I.

The following Community Planning Checklist provides an overview of planning and zoning that currently exists within the city of Easthampton, zoning changes that are currently underway, and recommendations for further changes that were included in this report and other planning documents.

**COMMUNITY PLANNING CHECKLIST
CITY OF EASTHAMPTON**

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS	BUILDING BLOCK	NOTES
*	Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)	
	Transit Oriented Development (TOD)	
✓	Mixed Use Village Districts	
✓	Planned Unit Development (PUD)	
✓	Adaptive Reuse and Infill Development	Easthampton Center
*	Tax Incentive Programs and Business Improvement Districts	Federal and New Market Tax Credits
✓	Open Space Residential Development	Add Park Hill
✓	Accessory Apartments	
*	Inclusionary Zoning	
	Home Based Business Ordinance	
	Brownfields Inventory	
✓	Brownfields Redevelopment Projects	
✓	Transfer of Development Rights	Make these sending zones: Pascammuk Old Settlement; Park Hill; Mount Tom
*	Agricultural Commissions	Mount Tom; Park Hill
*	Right to Farm Ordinances	Mount Tom

✓	River Protection Overlay District	
✓	Community Preservation Act	Has community-wide application
*	Scenic Upland Overlay District	Mount Tom
✓	Bike and Pedestrian Features	
*	Traffic Calming Measures	
✓	Water Supply Protection District	Easthampton Center
*	Low Impact Development	Community-wide application
□	Stormwater and Erosion Control Ordinance	
*	Stormwater Utilities	
✓	Commercial Site Plan Review	
✓	Commercial Performance Standards	
	Urban Growth Boundaries / Limits of Sewer and Water Extensions	
*	Green Building Standards	
*	Municipally Owned Renewable Energy	
□	Adoption of Smart Growth Zoning Districts (Ch. 40R)	Mount Tom
✓	Intergovernmental Compact	Protection of Mount Tom and Mount Holyoke Ranges MOA; Barnes Aquifer Protection Advisory Committee
*	Local Historic District / National Register of Historic Places	Easthampton Center; Park Hill
*	Architectural Preservation District	Easthampton Center
*	Modify Demolition Delay Ordinance	Mount Tom; Easthampton Center; Williston Northampton School Campus
*	Scenic Roads Ordinance	River Street, Park Hill Road
*	Backlot Development Zoning	Mount Tom
*	Archaeological Resource Protection Ordinance	Pascammuk Old Settlement
*	Down Zoning and Up Zoning	Mt. Tom and Easthampton Center

- ✓ Successfully Implemented
- Under Consideration
- * Should Consider Adopting

Comprehensive, Open Space and Other Planning Documents

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

Current Plans: Easthampton has four recent planning tools. There is the most recent, the Easthampton Master Plan: A Reflection of the Past and a Vision for the Future, that was published in 2008; the Easthampton Hazard Mitigation Plan, of 2007, an Open Space and Recreation Plan that was completed in 2005, and a Community Development Plan that dates from June of 2004.

Recommended Plans: During this project, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission met with the Master Plan Committee to identify Heritage Landscapes. Committee members should be commended as they had identified Heritage Landscapes in the course of their work. It is the recommendation of this report that they continue to incorporate the Heritage Landscapes and any new tools suggested in this report into updates to the Master Plan. Comprehensive planning provides an important frame of reference for a community's land use decisions and incorporates all of its issues into an integrated plan. Heritage Landscapes need to be made a part of the comprehensive plan since the plan guides the city in activities related to community character, historic preservation, environmental health, economic viability and growth. The future of the Heritage Landscapes and the values they contribute should be addressed within these multiple perspectives, not solely as historical assets of the community.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Outreach, Education and Interpretation

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

Collaboration

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

Technical Assistance

Regulations and creative solutions for heritage landscapes are constantly changing and emerging. Public and private agencies offer technical assistance with the many issues to be addressed, including DCR, MHC, and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission.

Funding Opportunities

Funding rarely comes from a single source, more often depending on collaborative underwriting by private, municipal, and regional sources. Each town also has a variety of funding sources that are locally based and sometimes site specific. Community Preservation Act funding may be used for many of the activities recommended in this report.

CONCLUSION

The Heritage Landscape Reconnaissance Report for Easthampton has undertaken an analysis of the priority heritage landscapes identified by members of the community, their place in the city's history and how the city might approach their preservation and conservation. But many of the report's recommendations can also be applied to the

landscapes forming the master list, and – as the master list is by no means exhaustive - to those heritage landscapes that are yet to be identified.

One of the most important starting points for protecting Easthampton’s heritage landscapes is to place individual properties and districts on the National Register of Historic Places. The listing helps convey to city residents, city government members, and to the Massachusetts Historical Commission the importance of these buildings, structures, objects, and landscapes.

The three top recommendations for Easthampton are:

- to revise the Demolition Delay Ordinance to include a 12-18-month waiting period
- to nominate the Easthampton Center to the National Register as an historic district
- to create an Architectural Preservation District to encompass the workers’s housing neighborhoods.

The city has a strong advocate for historic preservation in its planning department and the many residents who are working to support the arts economy. Private individuals in Easthampton have taken measures to maintain their historic buildings and landscapes.

To capitalize on the work in progress, it is important to use this report to alert government members, committees and commissions to the existence and value of the city’s heritage landscapes, so distribution and discussion of the report will be an important next move.

This is all part of generating community support, as community support is essential to preserving the city’s heritage, be it a button factory, an old high school, a mill pond or fields that have been worked for several hundred years. Publicizing the report through a series of articles, presentations, and making it available to residents will be an important effort. Creating public awareness is public education and it can be approached through the schools, through the press, on-line and at special events. Above all, leading the community to recognize that it does indeed have heritage landscapes and that they make up the city’s attractive character are goals that this report can help accomplish.

RESOURCES

Reading the Land Massachusetts Heritage Landscape a Guide to Identification and Protection, Department of Conservation and Recreation, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, 2008.

Terra Firma #1- An Introduction to Historic Landscape Preservation Department of Conservation and Recreation Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, n.d.

Terra Firma #3- Putting Historic Landscape Preservation on Sold Ground: Identifying and Protecting Historic Roads, Department of Conservation and Recreation, Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, n.d.

Terra Firma #5 Putting Heritage Landscape Preservation on Solid Ground: Stones that Speak: Forgotten Features of the Landscape, Department of Conservation and Recreation, Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, n.d.

Terra Firma #7 - Taking Action: A Toolkit for Protecting Community Character
Department of Conservation and Recreation Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, 2009.

Massachusetts Historical Commission. Preservation through Ordinances and Ordinances, Draft Copy March 11, 2009, typescript.

_____. MHC Reconnaissance Survey Reports, typescript,

APPENDIX A

EASTHAMPTON'S HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

The following chart presents the master list of Heritage Landscapes drafted in the public meeting in Easthampton. Please note that the landscapes with asterisks are the Priority Heritage Landscapes selected at that meeting.

HERITAGE LANDSCAPES	NOTES
AGRICULTURAL	
*Park Hill	In north west Easthampton
East Street Farms	Later moved to Mount Tom in Natural
ARCHAEOLOGICAL	
*Pascommuck Old Settlement	Fort Hill Road
East Street marker at area of original settlement	
BURIAL	
Parsonage Way Cemetery	
Brookside Cemetery	
Polish Cemetery	
St. Bridget's Cemetery	
CIVIC	
*Town Center on Main Street from Lewis Library to Memorial Hall including rotary	
Water Department Pump House	Hendrick Street
INDUSTRIAL	
*The Ponds, mills, dam, falls, fishing site, Manhan River and rail trail corridor.	Part of Easthampton Center
Loudville lead mine	
INSTITUTIONAL	
*Williston Northampton School campus Main and Park Streets including Library	A private secondary school.
NATURAL	
Broad Brook Corridor	
*Mount Tom and old link to Summit House with vistas to the slope of Mt. Tom and the slopes themselves from the cliff down to the street	
Arcadia Nature Preserve	
Nonotuck Park	
Town beach	In Town Center on Nashawannuck Pond.
Nashawannuck Pond viewshed in mill pond area.	

RESIDENTIAL	
*Mill workers's housing on Maple Street, New City, Pleasant Street and Green	19 th and 20 th century housing areas
Pascommuck Club	Italianate style house on Union Street
TRANSPORTATION	
Northampton-New Haven Canal	also Hampshire Hampden Canal
Bridge at the Ponds	shifted to Industrial/Commercial