

FALL RIVER RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

TAUNTON RIVER LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

MASSACHUSETTS HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY PROGRAM



Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Taunton River Wild & Scenic Study Committee

Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District

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INTRODUCTION

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 or the Taunton River corridor.

To this end, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) and the Taunton Wild & Scenic Study Committee have collaborated to bring the Heritage Landscape Inventory program (HLI) to communities along the Taunton River. 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 three watersheds southeast Massachusetts in 2002. This project is outlined in the DCR publication *Reading the Land*. Experience from the 15 communities in the pilot project provided guidance for a similar program in 24 Essex County municipalities. Now the program has been extended to six communities along the Taunton River: Berkley, Fall River, Freetown, Raynham, Somerset and Taunton.

Each participating community appoints a Local Project Coordinator (LPC) to assist the DCR-SRPEDD 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.

FALL RIVER HISTORY

Before European settlement the Fall River area was occupied by the Pocassets who were members of the Wampanoag tribe. The Taunton River shore was a popular fishing ground and gathering place because it included freshwater and marine food sources, proximity to good agricultural land and water routes for transportation. Early accounts indicate that the Pocassets managed the land by periodic burning to enhance the understory and to make travel and hunting easier.

English settlers arrived in the Fall River area (which was originally part of Freetown) by 1680 but settlement was slow in this remote area. Subsistence farming was the mainstay of the Colonial economy, supplemented by cottage industries such as making shoes, hats or other products. Early industries were located along the tributaries of the Taunton, especially at Steep Brook where an early village was established. They included saw, grist and fulling mills, blacksmith shops and shipbuilding. Steep Brook became an important transportation hub with a stage coach stop, a ferry across the Taunton River and eventually a shipping port. Fall River remained sparsely settled through the Colonial period.

Fall River was incorporated as a town in 1803 from part of Freetown. The population of the new community was estimated to be somewhere between 700 and 1,000 with residents living in the small village at Steep Brook and disbursed throughout the area, including the Indian Reservation on the east side of the Watuppa Ponds.

When Fall River was established, textile production operated as a cottage industry, with most cloth woven at home on a hand loom. In 1811 Col. Joseph Durfee established a small cotton mill in Fall River. Two years later the textile industry began in earnest when the first textile mills were established on the Quequechan River. The success of these mills led to the construction of mills along the entire length of the river by 1850, using all of the available waterpower. By 1860 Fall River had surpassed Lowell as the largest textile producing center in the United States.

In 1854 Fall River was incorporated as a city. The mid-19th century was a period of unprecedented growth with a population of nearly 10,000 by 1870, including a large foreign-born population. Initially most of the immigrants came from the United Kingdom but by the early 20th century there was a rapidly growing Portuguese population and a small Jewish population, among others. Ethnic neighborhoods grew up around the city, many in close proximity to the mills, as well as a high style residential district along Highland Avenue in the northern part of the city. In the latter part of the 19th century many large church complexes were constructed, representing almost every imaginable denomination. The latter part of the 19th century was also a time of civic improvements – improved road system, city water and sewer and public buildings, as well as a park system designed by the firm of Frederick Law Olmsted.

By the 1920s the textile industry was moving south and there was a widespread decline in industrial employment in Fall River as well as a stable population for the first time in over a century. The garment industry moved into Fall River, partially filling the void left by the textile industry. In the 1960s, Route 1-95 was built through the middle of the city. It took away the heart of downtown and left a divided city center. The current population is about 90,000.

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>. The MHC inventory for Fall River is extensive, with 1772 entries documenting a wide range of resources that represent diverse aspects of the community's history.

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. All National Register properties are automatically listed in the State Register of Historic Places. Fall River has 66 properties that are individually listed in the National Register and 1163 properties in National Register Districts. There are also five National Historic Landmarks -- all boats anchored in Battleship Cove.

Also listed in the State Register are those properties protected by a preservation restriction, drawn up in accordance with MGL Chapter 183, Sections 31-33. A preservation restriction (PR) runs with the deed and is one of the strongest preservation strategies available. All properties which have preservation restrictions filed under the state statute are automatically listed in the State Register. Fall River has 31 properties protected by preservation restrictions.

Planning Documents, Bylaws and Other Tools

Fall River's first *Open Space and Recreation Plan*, completed in 1997, included goals for Fall River's parks, recreation needs and protection of open space. One important goal that has been accomplished is the creation of the Southeastern Massachusetts Bioserve protecting 13,600 acres of watershed land in Fall River

and adjacent communities. Other issues addressed in the plan were access to the city's waterways and waterfront; improvements to parks; new recreational opportunities; and a visionary plan to restore and release the Quequechan River. Another important document directly relevant to heritage landscapes is the *Taunton River Heritage Guide* prepared by Alfred Lima for Green Futures in 2002. Other planning and preservation tools include a *Master Plan* prepared in 1993, overlay zoning and a six-month demolition delay ordinance.

An important regional document is the 2004 *Taunton River Stewardship Plan* prepared by the Taunton Wild & Scenic River Study Committee to substantiate the need for designation of the Taunton as a National Wild & Scenic River. The plan includes extensive information on the hydrology of the river as well as related natural and cultural resources; identifies key river management issues; and offers detailed recommendations for river protection that have been endorsed by all communities along the Taunton River corridor. A key recommendation of the plan is to form partnerships among the watershed communities to work towards the goal of preserving and restoring the Taunton River corridor.

PRIORITY LANDSCAPES



Cook Pond

Cook Pond located on the southern boundary of Fall River was known as Laurel Lake until the 19th century when its waterpower was harnessed to provide water for industrial processes associated with the adjacent mills. It is a 154-acre state-designated great pond that is bounded by 2.6 miles of shoreline. The pond was reclaimed as a fishery in 1971 and is considered by the Massachusetts Department of Fisheries and Wildlife as one of the most fertile ponds in the state. However, fishing pressure is high and large game fish are scarce. The primary access point is at Henry Street on the east side of the pond. The boat ramp and wooden fishing pier built there in the 1970s have been vandalized and left in disarray. Cook Pond is also visible from Dwelley Street near where the mills are located but is otherwise surrounded by private property and largely invisible.

Recently Cook Pond has been a focus of Fall River Water Watch which has held community meetings to discuss prospects for cleaning the pond, written a “Cook Pond Care Guide” to educate the community on the history and needs of the pond, and held numerous cleanups, removing more than 30 tons of trash.

Fall River Country Club and North End Railroad ROW

These two adjoining areas comprise important frontage along the Taunton River in the northern part of Fall River and also link with Peace Haven, Mother Brook and Winslow’s Point in Freetown.

The Fall River Country Club juts out into the Taunton River just north of the Steep Brook neighborhood on the west side of the railroad tracks. It is a major landscape with extensive river frontage and is in private ownership and unprotected. The site is high in elevation and has spectacular views up and down the river. It is a glacially formed terrace (known as a kame terrace) that was part of glacial Lake Taunton. Similar geologic formations are also part of Pierce’s Beach and the adjoining landscape in Somerset.

The North End Railroad right-of-way includes the landscape between the river and the railroad tracks, which connects the Fall River Country Club property with the Peace Haven site in Freetown. Because the area has limited access (the railroad tracks being a barrier) it hasn’t been developed. However, it is desirable riverfront property that is vulnerable to development in the future.

Kennedy Park

Kennedy Park was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux in 1871. The design was updated and refined in 1904 by the successor firm of Olmsted Brothers, who kept many of the characteristic original features. The park has three distinct sections: a flat upper level used for active recreation; a long sloping middle section with dramatic views; and a wooded lower section fronting on Mount Hope Bay. Originally called South Park, it was renamed in honor of President Kennedy in 1963. Kennedy Park was renovated in the 1980s as part of the state’s Olmsted Historic Landscape Program and was listed in the National Register in 1983.

Kennedy Park is an important city landmark that provides a contrast to the dense urban neighborhood that surrounds it. While it retains many of its historic features, it has also been modified over time to accommodate increased recreational facilities, some of which are better integrated into the park than others. Tree cover, which is particularly important in a city as dense as Fall River, is sparser than intended particularly in the upper section. The biggest challenges for Kennedy Park are to balance the historic design with modern needs and to assure that adequate maintenance funding is available.

Peace Haven (including Mother Brook/Winslow's Point)

Peace Haven, located along the Taunton River in Freetown just north of the Fall River line, is an important Native American site with a long history of use that is also highly valued as open space. Archaeological investigations conducted by Roy Athearn and others in the 1950s provided extensive documentation of a Paleo-Indian settlement that dates back to about 11,000 years ago. Although it is located in Freetown, Fall River residents stressed that it is regionally significant. Peace Haven was also identified by Freetown residents as a priority heritage landscape.

Peace Haven, which includes the area from Barnaby's Cove to Hathaway's Cove, is a peninsula jutting out into the Taunton River. Winslow's Point is a peninsula located just north of Peace Haven. Also of interest is Barnaby's Peninsula, which is a glacial deposit known as an esker. Mother Brook, which runs along the southern edge of Peace Haven, drains an area of eight square miles and has a fall of 49'. Its headwaters are in Fall River but it enters the Taunton River in Freetown. The brook was pristine until a landfill was built near its upper end. As the landfill has expanded it has severely polluted the groundwater and surface waters that flow into the brook.

This area has consistently been identified for its historical, ecological and open space significance. Water quality is already compromised by the presence of the landfill, which is likely to expand over time. The presence of a massive Stop and Shop distribution center nearby has brought large-scale industrial uses to the surrounding area which will likely result in pressure for more intense development, including along the Taunton River shoreline.

Quequechan River Corridor

The Quequechan River watershed includes North and South Watuppa Ponds, Stafford Pond and a series of smaller ponds as well as a portion of the Pocasset Cedar Swamp. With its dramatic drop of 130' within a linear distance of 2,300' the river was central to the 19th century development of Fall River as a major textile center. It had enough water flow to power mill machinery, yet was modest enough to protect against flooding. Its granite bed allowed foundations to be constructed directly on the bedrock and the water rights were owned by one family.

The Quequechan was the site of early grist, saw and fulling mills and later the site of large textile mills that led to the growth of Fall River as a major textile center. A dam was constructed at the top of the falls that raised the level of the feeder pond by two feet. During the growth of the textile manufacturing industry, when water power was the only way to power the mills, the river was virtually covered with structures. Today the once dramatic river is largely invisible, buried under buildings and in channels. Most recently Route I-95 has been built adjacent to the river, further obscuring the sense of place. Closely linked with the Quequechan are the adjacent Niagara and Flint neighborhoods.

Green Futures, a local advocacy group, is working to increase awareness of the Quequechan in Fall River. The organization has also established a bold vision to “daylight” the river, freeing it from its enclosures and restoring a sense of its presence in Fall River. The Urban Rivers Initiative of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs recommended a greenway along the river linking with the regional bike path system.

South End Railroad ROW (along Mount Hope Bay)

Railroad tracks can be found along the entire western edge of Fall River, in some places immediately adjacent to the river and in other places further inland. The railroad is currently used on a limited basis for freight. In most places the railroad blocks access to the Taunton River shoreline, which is largely inaccessible to the public except in the vicinity of the Heritage State Park. In the less developed sections of shoreline at the northern and southern ends of Fall River, the rivers edge is more natural and there is potential for recreational access. A recreational path along the bay is one of the goals of Green Futures.

St. Vincent’s Fields

St Vincent’s is a large institutional complex in the northern part of Fall River owned by the Catholic Diocese with multiple religious, educational and social service functions. Until recently activities at the property included a working farm that provided food used by the institution. The open fields are still hayed but they are no longer intensively farmed. These fields are visually and ecologically important along Baldwin Street where they are surviving remnants of open space. They also function as part of a regional wildlife corridor. Portions of the St. Vincent’s property along the Taunton River have been purchased as part of the proposed LNG site.

Steep Brook

Steep Brook is one of the main tributaries of the Taunton River in Fall River. It drains an area of six square miles that includes residential neighborhoods and the Fall River Industrial Park. Steep Brook has a fall of 67’, a factor that led to its harnessing for early saw and grist mills by European settlers.

Steep Brook was the site of the first village in Fall River. From Colonial times it was an important trading center and a major crossroads of ferry routes between Boston and New York. There are some remaining historic houses from the early years of the village and remnants of early industrial buildings but much of the rural village character of the area has been lost in recent years. O’Connell’s Boatyard at the junction of Steep Brook and the Taunton River is a popular local institution that serves as a center of activity for river users. Steep Brook itself is not highly visible. The gorge along the lower section of the brook is overgrown but gives a hint of the rushing power of the original river. Upper sections of the river have become an urban waterway degraded by non-point source pollution for adjacent development.

PLANNING

Preservation Strategies

Fall River is an urban industrial city with a remarkable diversity of landscapes. At its western edge is the Taunton River shoreline – a wooded corridor at its northern and southern ends and a vibrant waterfront with walkways, sailing program and heritage state park near the Braga Bridge. The tributaries of the Taunton were once healthy waterways but are now in varying states of pollution, partially covered over, invisible and inaccessible.

The western half of Fall River is a dense urban community with massive mill buildings and their associated industrial landscapes, as well as urban parks, cemeteries, boulevards and greens. The heart of Fall River is its residents and their neighborhoods which reflect the ethnic diversity of the community, with churches and schools at their center and a range of housing from tenements located near the mills to spacious houses in the northern part of the city. The eastern part of Fall River is another world – part of a regional biosphere reserve that includes farms, large ponds, forest, quarries and cranberry bogs.

Fall River is one of the most urban communities in southeastern Massachusetts. It also has a rich array of natural and historic features that include coastal and inland waterbodies, forests, farmland and historic neighborhoods. The challenges are two-fold: to preserve the landscape features that are already strong and to strengthen those that need improvement. Through the Heritage Landscape Inventory program, Fall River is looking beyond the traditional historic resources to the landscapes, neighborhoods and other natural and cultural assets that define the overall fabric of the community.

Planning Issues

At the Heritage Landscape Identification meeting attendees expressed concern about the changing character of the community, which is directly related to the rich heritage landscapes that were discussed. Each of the critical planning issues affects at least one of the priority landscapes. These issues are arranged in alphabetical order.

Agriculture

Fall River residents place strong value on the remaining farms in their community and loss of farmland is an important issue for Fall River residents, particularly in the dense western part of the city. The city now includes only a few farms and most are farmed less intensively than in the past. Some are only used for hay while other fields are becoming overgrown.

Burial Grounds and Cemeteries

Fall River has two municipal burial grounds, North Burial Ground and Oak Grove Cemetery, which are both listed in the National Register, as well as a number of private cemeteries associated with various religious denominations. While some are well maintained, others are nearly forgotten. Maintenance of cemeteries is costly and the responsibility for inactive burial grounds is often unclear; however deferred maintenance leads to more expensive repairs in the long run.

Mill Buildings

Fall River's many textile mills are both an asset and a challenge. The city reached its peak as a textile producing center in the late 19th and early 20th century. Since the 1920s the mills have generally been underutilized. Some have found new uses related to traditional industries such as the garment industry or printing, while others are used as outlet centers or housing or for entrepreneurial activities such as startup businesses. The historical significance of the mills has been well-documented with many listed in the National Register as part of a multiple resource nomination prepared in 1983. The greatest challenge is that many of the mills are now vacant and in poor condition. In other cases their landscape setting is being eroded with rivers such as the Quequechan diverted to a tunnel and parking located everywhere.

The mills along the Taunton River were made of brick because it was cheaper to bring brick from upriver (from Taunton or Bridgewater) or from downriver from Providence. The granite quarries were above the hill. The only granite mill buildings below the hill, the Sagamore mills, were built of granite quarried from the Assonet quarry in the Bioserve. Key issues are preserving the architectural integrity of the mills, especially the original fenestration, which is most in danger and most altered.

Neighborhoods

The importance of neighborhood character was a major theme of the Heritage Landscape meeting. Fall River has many residential neighborhoods, which are rich in historic resources and essential to community vitality. Residents particularly value the large number of architecturally significant churches which serve as visual and social anchors in their neighborhoods. Schools serve a similar function in the community and many older schools are no longer in active use. Church and school closings have a significant impact. A large number of residential properties have been documented on MHC inventory forms but residential districts are not well represented in National Register listings.

Rivers and Ponds

The Taunton is a regional resource that is shared by many communities in Southeastern Massachusetts. After many years of hard work, all communities along the river have recently voted to support designation of the Taunton as a

Wild and Scenic River. The next step is for Congress to approve the designation, which should lead to funding to implement the recommendations contained in the Taunton River stewardship plan.

The major Taunton River tributaries in Fall River -- Mother Brook, Steep Brook and the Quequechan River -- are far less visible and each is compromised in some way. Goals articulated by the community are generally to make them cleaner, more visible and more accessible to the public. Community visioning charrettes have already explored ways in which Fall River's rivers can be preserved and enhanced as recreational and civic assets. Green Futures has developed a bold plan to "daylight" the Quequechan which currently runs largely underground.

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 Taunton Wild & Scenic River Study Committee's *Taunton River Stewardship 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.

The community will have to determine the best way to implement the recommendations presented here. One approach that might help Fall River 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 first, followed by recommendations that apply to specific properties. The general recommendations are listed in the order in which they are most logically addressed when applying the three-step preservation planning process as described above. Thus the goal will be to (1) identify, (2) evaluate, (3) protect.

Inventory of Heritage Landscapes and Other Historic Assets

The vital first step in developing preservation strategies for heritage landscapes is to record information about the resources on MHC inventory forms. One cannot advocate for something unless one knows precisely what it is -- the physical characteristics and historical development. Although Fall River has already done extensive survey work, many of the city's heritage landscapes have not yet been documented, and some of the older inventory forms are incomplete. All resources that have been recorded in the past should be reviewed, particularly those documented prior to the 1980s because survey methodology has changed

since that time. 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 Fall River's heritage.

- Compile a list of resources that are under-represented or not sufficiently documented, beginning with priority landscapes and neighborhoods.
- Organize the survey by property type and include a wide range of property types including the landscapes identified in the Appendix. Document unprotected resources first and prioritize by need/threat.

National Register Program

As additional survey work is completed, evaluate properties for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

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



Neighborhood Character

Nearly all preservation strategies address neighborhood character in some manner. As described above, thorough documentation on MHC inventory forms is an important first step in the preservation planning process, followed by National Register listing where appropriate. Fall River already has a demolition delay ordinance that is an important tool for preserving historic neighborhoods. Two other preservation tools that are particularly applicable to Fall River's historic neighborhoods are local historic district designation (MGL Chapter 40C) and neighborhood conservation district designation. Both types of districts recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected. Each type of district is a local initiative, adopted by a 2/3 vote of the City Council, and administered by a

district commission, appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. The strongest form of protection for the preservation of historic resources is local historic district designation, while neighborhood conservation districts are less restrictive but still embrace neighborhood character.

- Publicize all demolition requests (including abutter notification) to reinforce the value of local historic resources.
- Determine whether historic neighborhoods would be appropriate local historic or neighborhood conservation districts. Areas with a high level of historical significance and integrity should be considered as potential local historic districts, while neighborhood conservation districts would be more appropriate for residential neighborhoods that may have less integrity and where more flexibility may be appropriate.
- Designate historically significant neighborhoods as local historic districts to preserve individual properties as well as neighborhood character. In a local historic district, any proposed changes to exterior architectural features visible from a public right-of-way are reviewed by the locally appointed historic district commission.
- Alternatively, pass a neighborhood conservation district ordinance. Neighborhood conservation districts are special areas that are preserved by regulating scale, massing and materials of additions and new construction. Such districts may be the most appropriate way to preserve the land use pattern of an area where there are changes in materials but the overall size, scale and orientation of structures within the heritage landscape are retained.

Funding of Preservation Projects

Funding for preservation projects is an important aspect of implementing preservation strategies. Both the MHC and the DCR have had funding programs to assist communities in preservation related issues including:

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

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

Adoption of the Community Preservation Act, by a majority vote on a ballot question, fosters partnerships among historic preservationists, conservationists and affordable housing advocates. At least 10% of the funds must be used to preserve historic resources; at least 10% must be used to protect open space; and at least 10% must be used to advance affordable housing. The remaining 70% must be used for one of these three uses as well as recreational needs and can be distributed in varying proportions depending upon the projects that the town believes are appropriate and beneficial to the municipality. Information about the CPA can be found at www.communitypreservation.org.

Specific Recommendations

Agricultural Landscapes

Agricultural use in Fall River is concentrated in the eastern part of the city while there is little agriculture in the densely developed western area. Consider the following options.

- Establish community gardens in the western part of the city, perhaps on the former Diocese farm, to allow Fall River residents to grow their own food on a small scale. Explore opportunities for cooperating with Bristol Agricultural School on this effort, which might also include an outreach program for city children.
- Work with regional farmers to expand farmers markets in Fall River.
- Explore successful agricultural partnerships that have worked in other communities such as The Food Project (see www.thefoodproject.org) which links urban and rural communities, providing summer work opportunities for high school students and food for local restaurants.

Burial Grounds and Cemeteries

North Burial Ground and Oak Grove Cemetery are listed in the National Register, an important step towards recognition of their historical significance. However, National Register status does not provide a framework for preservation, which is the next step.

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- Develop a preservation and management plan for city-owned cemeteries, taking into consideration repair of stone markers, stone walls and fencing, repair of ironwork, removal of voluntary growth and on-going maintenance of plant material.

The history and current conditions of other cemeteries have not been documented.

- Prepare MHC inventory forms for other cemeteries that have not been documented, including small, lesser known ones.

Greenbelts

The western portion of Fall River is an extremely dense urban city with relatively little green space. Community open space initiatives have focused major attention on providing public access to natural areas, especially water bodies, and on creating greenbelts linking various parts of the city. The following greenways, most of which have already been proposed, support preservation of heritage landscapes as well as other community goals.

- Taunton River Greenway (from Peace Haven to the golf course on the land below the railroad tracks).
- Mount Hope Bay Greenway (from the port to the Tiverton town line below the RR).
- Quequechan River Greenway (on both sides of the river from the South Watuppa Pond to the center of the city, with a bikeway connecting the greenway with the Taunton River and harbor).
- Steep Brook Greenway (proceeding from the St. Vincent's Farm, including the farm fields on Highland Avenue, and proceeding to the Taunton River where the old Taunton River ferry was located at O'Connell's Boat Yard).
- Olmsted Greenway (South/Kennedy Park to the waterfront).
- Cook Pond Greenway (a tenuous swath of green from Cook Pond along the path of the underground stream that runs from the pond; it includes Father Kelley Park, where the first textile mill was located in the city and existing open space that runs down the hill that was once the site of the circus grounds, and on to the bay).

Mill Buildings and Associated Structures

Mill buildings are critical to Fall River's community character and economic well being.

- Document all existing mills, particularly clusters of associated mill buildings that create important urban and industrial landscapes and evaluate for integrity.
- List mills on NR where appropriate if not already listed.
- Investigate state and federal tax credits available for rehabilitation.
- Collaborate with a graduate program such as MIT Real Estate Development or BU Preservation Studies to develop reuse plan(s) for mill buildings in this area.
- Windows – Develop guidelines for dealing with mill rehabilitation particularly windows which are critical to the character of the buildings.



Rivers and Ponds

The primary goals are to control pollution and provide waterfront access. The coalition that has been established to advocate for the designation of the Taunton River as a National Wild & Scenic River already knows the important strategies for preservation of this rich resource. Continue to work towards solutions in the following ways.

- Define ownership of each segment of the waterfront including beaches, wetlands and marshes.
- Define public ways and parking areas for access to the river and the landings.

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- Form public-private partnerships with neighborhood groups to develop stewardship programs for access points.
 - Develop a public landings brochure to remind abutters and town residents of the public access to these landings, particularly the town-owned landings.
 - Adopt and enforce strict conservation and zoning bylaws that regulate pollution. These may be strategies such as waste water treatment and storm water run off that is more restrictive than is minimally acceptable under Title V.

CONCLUSION

The Fall River Reconnaissance Report is a critical tool in starting to identify the rich and diverse heritage landscapes in Fall River 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 and partnerships with municipal boards and agencies, local non-profits, and state agencies and commissions.

Distribution of this Reconnaissance Report to city land use boards and commissions will assist in making this one of the planning documents that guides Fall River in preserving important features of the community's character. The tasks that are recommended will require cooperation and coordination among boards and commissions, particularly Fall River's Historical Commission, the Planning Board, Conservation Commission and Open Space Committee. It also is advisable to present this information to the City Council. Finally distribution of the report to neighborhood associations and other conservation and preservation minded organizations will enhance Fall River'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 Fall River on June 29, 2005 and follow-up fieldwork on July 15, 2005. This is a working list and can be updated by the community. **There may be other heritage landscapes that were not identified at the HLI meeting noted above.** Landscapes are grouped by type. The chart has two columns – the name of the resource and the location are in the first and notes about the resource are in the second.

APR = Agricultural Preservation Restriction
LHD = Local Historic District
PR = Preservation Restriction

CR = Conservation Restriction
NR = National Register
* = Priority Landscape

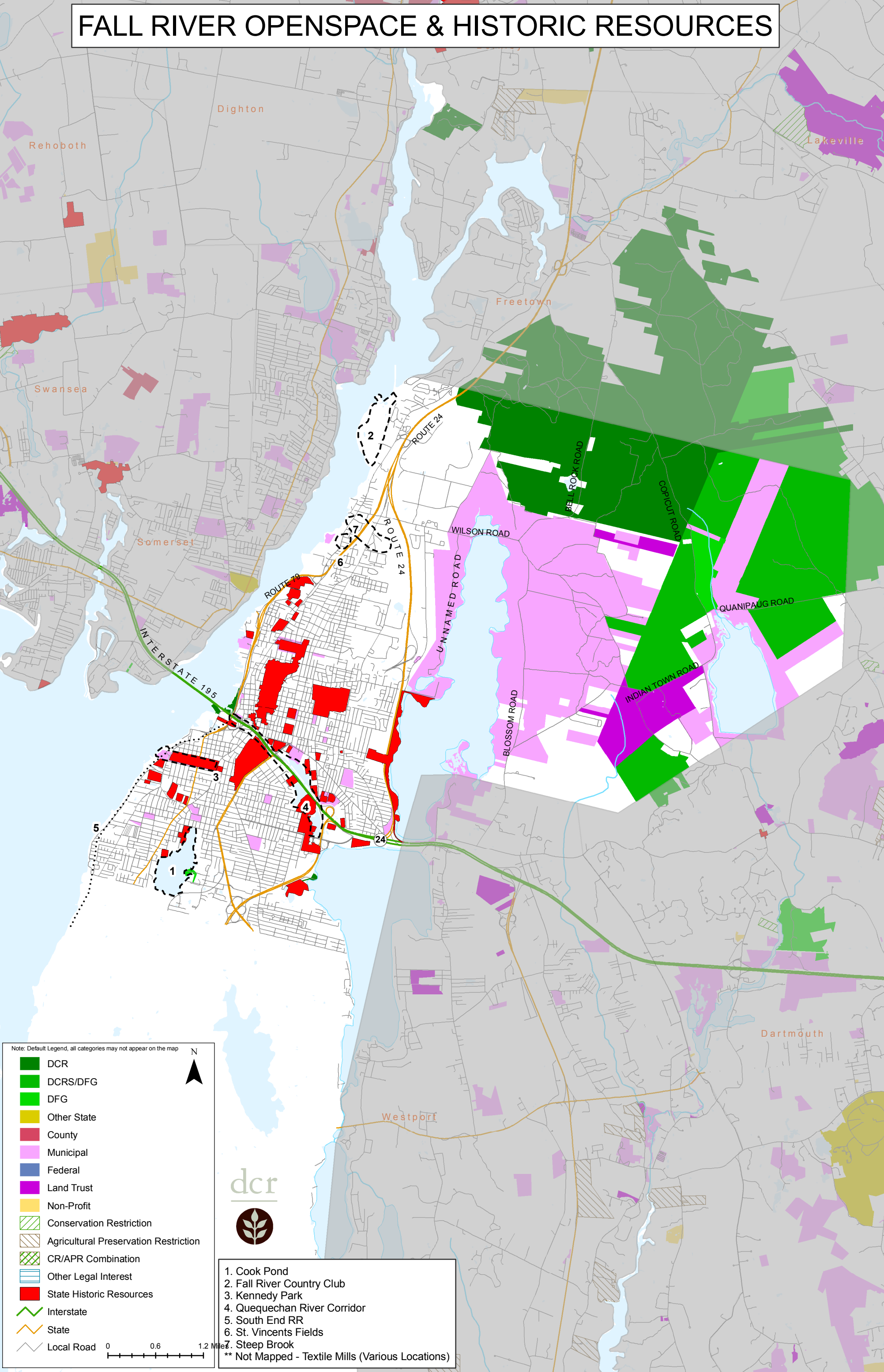
Agriculture	
Meridian St. Farm Meridian Street	Former farm, no longer active, development is planned.
St. Vincent's Fields * Baldwin Street	Fields in northern part of Fall River, owned by the Archdiocese of Fall River. Still hayed but no longer intensively farmed. Important as wildlife corridor. Portions of St. Vincent's property along the Taunton have been sold as part of LNG site.
Archaeological/Ethnographic	
Peace Haven and Winslow's Point * Freetown	The southwestern corner of Freetown, which includes Peace Haven, Mother Brook and Winslow's Point is an important Native American area. Although Peace Haven and Winslow's Point are in Freetown, the headwaters of Mother Brook lie in Fall River and Fall River residents identified the area as a regionally significant landscape.
Pocasset Swamp East side of town	Major cedar swamp spanning the Fall River/Tiverton border in the southeastern part of town. It drains into Cook Pond and South Watuppa Pond. Site of an important battle in King Philip's War.
Skeleton in Armor Hartwell Street	Skeleton was found in an embankment on the upper shores of the Quequechan River in 1832 and was immortalized in a poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.
Burial Ground/Cemetery	
North Burial Ground North Main Street	Burial ground established in 1810. Listed in National Register. The city's Revolutionary War soldiers are buried here, including Col. Joseph Durfee, who led the "Battle of Fall River" and who started the first cotton mill in the city.
Oak Grove Cemetery 765 Prospect Street	Large cemetery established in 1855. Listed in National Register.
Purchase Street Cemetery Purchase Street	Owned by Church of the Ascension.

Civic/Commercial	
Downtown/Civic Center South Main Street	Civic center area includes Durfee High School, library, courthouse, Jerry Lawton's Park. Route I-95 runs through the area. Includes a mix of 19 th and 20 th century buildings.
Industrial	
Granite Quarry State Forest	Granite quarry in Freetown-Fall River State Forest supplied stone for local building projects. No longer active.
Pardee's Wharf Waterfront	Associated with whale oil.
Textile Mills * Downtown	Fall River's mills were central to the growth and economic prominence of the community. The upper mills are granite, quarried from onsite stone, while the lower mills are of brick construction. Many are listed in the National Register.
Waterfront Piers	Including Ferry's Shipyard (pier/drydock) and Fall River Line.
Institutional	
Narrows Center for the Arts Water Street	Community art center in old mill building on the waterfront.
St. Vincent's Orphanage Baldwin Street	Large institution that is highly valued by the Highland Avenue community. Concern about what will happen to buildings, some of which are no longer used.
Miscellaneous	
Lizzie Borden House 92 Second Street	Greek Revival house where famous murders took place in 1892, now a city landmark operated as a bed and breakfast and open for tours. Also associated with Lizzie Borden is the French Street home where she lived after she was acquitted.
Natural Features	
Chase Pond	Cove in the Quequechan River, called Chase Pond because of Chase Mill located along northwestern edge.
Cook Pond *	Large natural pond in southwestern part of Fall River. Mill buildings along northwestern edge.
Copicut Reservoir	Located in southeastern part of Fall River. Partially in Dartmouth.

Mother Brook *	Mother Brook has its headwaters in Fall River but enters the Taunton River in Freetown. It was part of an important Native American settlement area that includes Peace Haven in Freetown. A landfill at the headwaters of the brook has polluted groundwater and surface water.
North Watuppa Pond	Large natural pond used for water supply. Ice houses were located on the shoreline. Remnants of them can still be seen from Route 24.
Quequechan River Corridor *	The Quequechan River has a fall of 130 feet in a lineal distance of 2,300 feet. It was the site of early fulling and grist mills and later its waterpower attracted large textile mills, making Fall River a major textile manufacturing center in the late 19 th and early 20 th century. Today much of the river is underground and invisible.
SE Mass Bioreserve East of downtown Fall River	The Southeastern Massachusetts Bioreserve is a 13,600 acre area of protected land in the eastern part of Fall River. The purpose of the Bioreserve is to protect, restore and enhance the biological diversity and ecological integrity of a large scale ecosystem; to permanently protect public water supplies and cultural resources; to offer interpretive and educational programs; and to provide opportunities for appropriate public use. A large part of the Freetown-Fall River State Forest is included in the Bioreserve.
Steep Brook * North Main Street near Millard Street	The northernmost tributary of the Taunton River in Fall River. Site of early settlement. Upper sections of the brook are channelized and polluted while lower sections retain a more natural character.
South Watuppa Pond South of I-95	This large pond forms the boundary between Fall River and Westport.
Taunton River/ Mount Hope Bay	The Taunton River waterfront runs along the western edge of Fall River and is central to community character. A proposal to designate the Taunton River as a wild and scenic river has recently won the approval of all communities along the river. The proposal now goes to Congress for approval.
Open Space/Parks	
Battleship Cove Waterfront	Taunton River waterfront in downtown area near Braga Bridge the location of the Fall River Heritage State Park. It is generally a vibrant area with boardwalk, ships, carousel, Community Boating. The Quequechan River enters the Taunton here.
Fall River Country Club Golf Club Road	The Fall River Country Club lies between the Taunton River and the railroad tracks in the northern part of the city. It is a major landscape with extensive river frontage that remains in private ownership and is unprotected. The site is high in elevation and has spectacular views up and down the river.
Kennedy Park * South Main Street	19 th century park initially designed by Olmsted and Vaux. Recently rehabbed as part of state Olmsted program. Listed in National Register.
North Park Main/Highland Sts.	Designed by Olmsted Brothers, circa 1902.

Ruggles Park Robeson Street	Designed by Olmsted Brothers, circa 1902.
Transportation	
Brightman Street Bridge Brightman Street	From 1678 to 1877, the Slade and Brightman families operated Slade's Ferry across the Taunton River where the Brightman Street Bridge is now located. The bridge was built in 1907-1908. A new bridge is being built upstream.
Eastern Avenue	Nineteenth century boulevard running north-south through town. Central median and a few replacement trees remain.
Mowry Path	An old Pocasset path on the eastern shore of North Watuppa Pond that led from New Bedford to Taunton. It was King Philip's escape route from the battle of the Pocasset Cedar Swamp. There was an Indian ferry at nearby Winslow's Point.
Plymouth/Brayton Avenue	Nineteenth century boulevard running north-south through town. Central median and a few replacement trees remain.
Railroad ROW *	Under-utilized rail corridor along the Taunton River waterfront with recreational potential.

FALL RIVER OPENSOURCE & HISTORIC RESOURCES



Note: Default Legend, all categories may not appear on the map

- DCR
- DCRS/DFG
- DFG
- Other State
- County
- Municipal
- Federal
- Land Trust
- Non-Profit
- Conservation Restriction
- Agricultural Preservation Restriction
- CR/APR Combination
- Other Legal Interest
- State Historic Resources
- Interstate
- State
- Local Road



1. Cook Pond
 2. Fall River Country Club
 3. Kennedy Park
 4. Quequechan River Corridor
 5. South End RR
 6. St. Vincents Fields
 7. Steep Brook
- ** Not Mapped - Textile Mills (Various Locations)

0 0.6 1.2 Miles